

100 Years of Studebaker in Canada – 1910-2010

On June 5th, 2010, Studebaker and Packard owners celebrated 100 years in Canada at the Fleetwood Country Cruizein, hosted by Steve Plunkett. All Studebaker, Packard, E-M-F and Avanti owners and aficionados were invited to attend what must have been the largest gathering of the Studebaker family in Canada. Co-hosted by the Hamilton and Ontario Chapters of the Studebaker Drivers Club along with the Canadian Avanti Owners Association there was definitely a vast range of years and models.

As usual for any outdoor event, the weather was a mixed bag of tricks. Thursday and Friday saw some heavy rains (which unfortunately shut down the planned drive-in featuring American Graffiti) and Saturday was forecast as cloud, rain and sun. This did not lessen our spirit, as many owners parked their cars on the field Friday so that they would not be affected by inclement weather on the Saturday. It was all for naught. The sun peaked out several times in the morning and by ~ 11:00, it was out completely. The committee met with Steve Plunkett on two occasions in order to determine where to park and more importantly how. Steve Plunkett had graciously provided his lawns in front of the carriage, main and guest houses. While very picturesque, it provided some challenges determining how many could park. Harold Ferrier did an outstanding job directing cars to their proper spots. We only reserved a handful of spots to particular cars – this left Harold with the task of fitting the size of car to the size of spot – like a jigsaw puzzle. He even had to contend with people who do not follow directions, like a certain 1940 Champion Coupe. After it was all sorted out, we had three very full fields – 54 cars and trucks to be exact. The last vehicle arrived @ 9:30 and took one of the last spots in front of the main house. We had quite an assortment from stock to modified, Canadian to US, pick-ups to sports cars. Often heard comments from spectators were: “I didn’t know Studebaker made these”; “Studebaker made a 289?”; and; “My father/grandfather/uncle or neighbor owned one of these”. Avanti owners were commonly asked: “They were made of fiberglass?”; “Is that a factory supercharger?”; and; “Who makes them now?”. Many proud owners were up to the task and delighted many spectators. Paul Cronkwright printed all the display cards as being a teacher; he was the only one who could print legibly. Steve Tournay made up a display replicating the new Lions Club Burlington Mall Wednesday night cruise. Several members tried to sell the die casts to unknowing spectators, but Steve was watching. Stu Chapman (Director of Advertising and Public Relations for Studebaker 1964-66), author of “My Father the Car: Memoirs of my Life with Studebaker” was here, selling his book along with an autograph. He had more than a few stories to share. Old Autos TV did several interviews for an upcoming episode – Jordan Trovillion did a great job.

All participants who attended received a commemorative plaque marking this occasion. From previous visits the committee learned that Steve Plunkett had an extensive library. In order to educate him that there are more makes than Cadillac, we presented him with two books with annotations. One was from the Studebaker National Museum (Over a Century of Wheels by Andrew Beckman) and one from Stu Chapman (My Father the Car).

At the end of the day (some stayed for the concert that evening), we said our goodbyes and headed home. This was the second time that the three clubs came together for a common cause. The first time was the 2007 Canadian International Auto Show in Toronto, ON. Spectators noted that if there were three clubs present, it was not apparent as we all appeared as one big family. For many members, it was renewing old acquaintances or making new ones. And for many involved in the Studebaker hobby “so this is what you have now”.

Thanks have to go out to the committee comprising of members of all three clubs as follows: Barry Leppan, Paul Cronkwright, Roly Lusted, Larry Gibson, Bill Harris, Wayne Hamilton, Bob Easton, Harold Ferrier and Mike Emmerich. The committee also wants to thank the three Presidents (Barry Leppan (Hamilton), Will Norton (Ontario) and Roland Vardon (CAOA)) whose support was much appreciated. And most importantly, the owners who braved the weather forecast and made this day so special for all.

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Pictures say a thousand words...



100 Year Banner donated by Sheldon Rier.



Ian Graham's 1937 Coupe Express.



Darren Graham's 1946 Champion.



Mike and Judith Emmerich's 1940 Champion.



Jim and Linda Cumisky's 1955 PU.



Joe Dynes' 1949 PU.



Doug Worsley's 1950 Starlite coupe.



Harold McKendry's 1951 Champion.

By Mike Emmerich – Hamilton Chapter SDC

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Bob Suszek's 1954 Champion.



Basil Derrough's 1953 Champion.



Bob and Denise Stowell's 1957 Silver Hawk.



Mary Robson's 1958 President.



Larry and Barb Gibson's 1964 Daytona.



Fred Hall and Gloria Kozub's 1962 Daytona.



Terry and Sue Silcox's 1963 GT.



Kevin and Della Mullett's 1963 GT.

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Randy Naisbitt's 1966 Cruiser.



Paul and Lorraine Cronkwright's 1963 Wagonaire.



Mark and Jill Hill's 1963 Lark.



Earl and Marie Randall's 1964 Commander.



Dave and Barb Moxham's 1963 Avanti.



Hugh Campbell's 1964 Avanti.



Wayne Hamilton and Sharon Pearce's 1985 Avanti.



Millar and Gini Young's 1989 Avanti.

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Paul Johnston's 1951 Packhard.



Jim Ingersoll's 1955 Packhard.



Lorne Dickie's 1955 Packhard.



Registration, Burlington Cruise and Stu all under one!



Looking a little relaxed.



Just the facts!



Barry being interviewed by Jordan.



Judith with the celebrities – George Barris.

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There is always that one who does not park right!



Presenting Steve Plunkett with his gifts.



One side of the fountain.



And now the other!



You want to park where? See Harold...



The overflow in front of the Carriage House.



Smiling 'cause it is almost over.



The End!

For additional pictures and information please see <http://www.thehamiltonchaptersdc.ca/>
By Mike Emmerich – Hamilton Chapter SDC