

2001 Studebaker Odyssey - Red Wing, Minnesota

by Aleta Millette & Arlan Vollan, Co-Chairs

Nestled between the mighty Mississippi River and the quaint, river town of Red Wing, Minnesota, emerged the 37th SDC International Meet, *2001 Studebaker Odyssey*, held at Treasure Island Resort & Casino. The North Star Chapter is among one of the first groups to put on an international meet in small-town America. This concept seems to have been well-received as we have had numerous phone calls, e-mails and letters from people all over the USA thanking us for such a well-planned, enjoyable meet.

Red Wing is a quiet, restored, turn-of-the-century town. It has become a year-round destination for visitors from all over the United States. It is known for its unique architecture, antiques, Red Wing Pottery, and Red Wing Shoes. Rated as one of the best small towns in America, it boasts of numerous activities such as boating, biking, downhill and cross country skiing, golfing, miles of snowmobile trails, eagle watching, dining and the theatre. It's a hidden treasure as far as small towns go, for it literally has it all.

The kickoff for the 37th SDC International Meet began only two years ago, when the North Star Chapter was approached by the SDC International Board to consider hosting the 37th meet due to a change of a prior

commitment by a Canadian Chapter. Since we were already one year behind in the planning, we hit the road running, putting all aspects of an international meet into high gear.

Sunday - Day One of the 37th International Meet

There were a total of 623 family registrations for the meet. Prior to the opening of the registration desk, our staff made final touches to the packets, set out the souvenir Red Wing tankards for each registered family, and the participant plaques for each displayed car at our meet, ensuring that each person's packet was accurately assembled before it left the table. The Registration Desk opened at 9:00 a.m. with many vendors at the door eager to pick up their packets and name badges so that they could set up their tables for vending. Reaction Management, our meeting management team comprised of Teresa Bacal, Kathi Healy and Mark Wheeler of Kustom Registration, were on site with us for the entire week. They covered all food and beverage needs, supplied detailed reports, set up and manned the Registration Desk, provided vendors support for all setup requests, arranged all the tours with metroConnections, and arranged and provided signage for all our meet

needs. They did an outstanding job of keeping things on time, assuring that we had enough food at our events and, with their "can do" attitude, they provided our participants with a week of no hassles and no glitches. They even provided new name badges on the spot for 141 walk-in families during the week.

Monday - Board Meeting

President John Begian called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. and the SDC Board went through a huge agenda in record time. This was one of the very few meetings that actually finished in time to enjoy the opening Gala.

Memorabilia Room

In 1994 the North Star Chapter had a large and very popular Studebaker Memorabilia Room. It was repeated on a smaller scale this year and was once again a hit. Many thanks to Jim Ringquist, Steve Remick and Jerry Pearson who helped display and oversee the many items in the room. Thanks, too, to the people like Ernie Loga, Chuck Naugle, Keith Rust, Jim Ringquist, Todd Langenfeld and others who brought items from Studebaker's past. This gave Stude enthusiasts a chance to see many of the items from the factory and dealer show rooms not ordinarily seen.

Welcome Gala

If you missed this event, you missed a **great one**. We had FUN!! In '94, when we held the 30th International Meet, we had Brook Stevens, who unveiled the 1964 Studebaker models, taking everyone back to the year 1964. Our idea for this year's meet was to return to the '50s. We found a DJ, Mike Murphy, who played all the old-time favorites, and did he ever make the music come alive. It was a fantastic and nostalgic evening, taking everyone down "olde" memory lane!! You could tell that with each song, not only were people getting into the



Photo by John Cosby

Arriving at the meet after 2,000 mile adventure with no problems!



Photo by John Cosby

Meet co-chairs at Welcome Gala.

music (in fact, lots of people got up and danced), people who hadn't danced in 10 years were even dancing. Many times you could see words on people's lips, being whispered in the ears of their dance partners. So many people commented, "This was the real music, great words, great sound and so much fun to dance to!!!"

The Indigo Bay Ballroom was decorated to portray a turned-back page of the '50's with pink and black balloons and napkins. As the guests entered, they were given black sunglasses, the tables were decorated with hula-hoops and slinkies with favorite candies from the '50s scattered on the tabletops. Several times during the evening we stopped the music to give out door prizes donated by the North Star Chapter. The big event of the evening was a hula-hoop contest that featured three outstanding finalists. They put on a great show and, because they came forward



Photo by John Cosby
Hula Hoop champion Karen Cosby.

to supposedly help on a project (they didn't know it was a hula-hoop contest), the contestants were rewarded with some great gifts for their willingness to have some fun!!

Tours

Our full week-of-tours was serviced by metroConnections, a deluxe bus service from Minneapolis. They provided guides on each tour as well as manned a table in our registration room Monday - Friday. We were so impressed with the service they provided at our '94 meet that we chose them again because we wanted to duplicate a worry-free week of tours for our guests. Everyone seemed pleased, and we received lots of compliments on our

tours for the week. The Amish tour, our longest tour, was well received. The folks who went on this tour were able to observe the Amish culture as well as purchase many of the gifts and crafts for sale. The Minnesota Zephyr train tour was another well-attended tour that took its guests back in time to the era of the mighty train.

Treasure Island arranged all of the *Spirit of the Water* boat cruises offered throughout the week. They featured tours that appealed to many different groups: breakfast cruise, wine and cheese cruise, women's tea cruise and a wonderful evening dinner cruise. Because these tours were offered at different times of the day, it gave many more people the opportunity to take part in one or more of the cruises.

Tuesday

The featured Red Wing Day bus tour took the participants around the Red Wing area and then to the St. James Hotel where they had lunch and spent the afternoon shopping. They found many unique Shoppes offering everything from candles to books to antiquing at its finest.



Photo by John Cosby

Dedication of Studebaker Park

The site of the former Worden Crandall Studebaker dealership is now a parking ramp and has been named **Studebaker Park**. A dedication of this facility was held Tuesday afternoon; many Studebakers were parked in the ramp stalls. Steve Setzer, Red Wing Historic Preservation President, organized the Studebaker Park Dedication and Brian Peterson, Red Wing City Planning Director, coordinated the events in Red Wing. Mayor Vern Steffenhagen read his proclamation of July 24th, 2001, as Studebaker Day in Red Wing. Aleta Millette read the official Proclamation from Governor Jesse Ventura proclaiming *July 24th as Studebaker Day in the*



STUDEBAKER PARK
This was the original site of a livery barn. In 1920, C. J. Ahler & Co. started one of the first Studebaker dealerships in Minnesota at this location. It was operated by Clark Randall and Donald Worden as the Worden-Crandall Auto & Electric Co. This was Red Wing's Oldest continuously operated automobile dealership. Packard joined with Studebaker in 1954. Packards were no longer produced as of 1958 and Studebaker ceased production in 1966. This plaque was donated by the North Star Chapter of the Studebaker Drivers Club and Dedicated on July 24th, 2001.
Red Wing Heritage Preservation Commission

Photos by John Cosby
Left: Mr. and Mrs. Donald Worden.
Above: The plaque at Studebaker Park.

State of Minnesota. Studebaker will long be remembered in Red Wing as a result of this action.

Jimmy Dorsey Orchestra

A pre-show dinner was held at the Historic St. James Hotel which was built in 1875. This event was enjoyed by many, with the view from the fifth floor of the beautiful Mississippi River Valley. The Grande Finale of the evening was the Jimmy Dorsey Orchestra which played before a full house in excess of 400 people at the Historic Sheldon Theatre in downtown Red Wing. There were more than a few couples who took advantage of the opportunity to swing and sway, and some who took to the dance floor.

The day was one that will be remembered and it was great to see so many Studebakers on the streets of Red Wing.

Wednesday Seminars

Jim Pepper, in addition to being our chief judge on concourse day, gave a seminar on bell housing alignment. It was well-attended, and those in attendance gave it high marks. We heard comments from many who said they had no idea how important it is to dial in a bell housing.

Mark Salz, Miller Welding (with support from Mississippi Welding) gave a seminar on plasma cutting and tig welding. Again, more than 40 people saw the demonstration. Sidney Magee, 3M, entertained with two sessions on buffing & polishing. The title of his seminar said it all, "Work Smarter, Not Harder". About one hundred people attended his two



Photo by John Cosby

Jim Pepper conducts tech session.



Photo by John Cosby

sessions. Another seminar was held Friday afternoon with the Cooperator Group, giving the SDCers an opportunity to ask technical questions.

The Auction

Wednesday night was the continuation of the Board meeting at the Membership Meeting and the always-popular Auction. There was a large crowd and about \$3,800 was brought in for the club. The highlight of the auction was a "lot" of items donated by Don Worden, the former Red Wing Stude dealer. Included was some memorabilia, his personal Studebaker shop coat, a cane with the "Studebaker" name printed on it from the last drive-away in Hamilton, Ontario, a tissue dispenser, an Avanti cushion. The money from these items was designated for the SDC Museum Capital Cost Fund.

Thursday Concourse Day

Prior to Concourse Day, we recognized SDC members who were going to "display" their cars by presenting them with a Participant Trophy when they picked up their

registration packets. These trophies were similar to the ones given out at the Awards banquet for judged vehicles. Recognition for displayed vehicles, to my knowledge has never been done at any previous meet. People seemed pleasantly surprised and very appreciative of the recognition. The trend seems to indicate that display vehicles are a growing class; in fact, at this year's 37th International Meet we had more display than concourse vehicles. The final tally was 173 judged and 197 displayed vehicles for a total of 370 vehicles on the grass Thursday.

Judges

Jim Pepper, this year's new chief judge, did a great job on a field that was spread out over many acres of grass. As you can see by the pictures, there was a very large group of cars and trucks. The judges did a wonderful job of assessing the 172 vehicles in all of the classes.

Women's Tea

This boat cruise was another highlight tour, a unique tour for SDC women. I was able to take this tour with the



Photo by Art Unger

Studebaker Band conducted by Larry Swanson.

women and found it so gratifying to hear how much the women appreciated a special event just for them.

It was a beautiful day to be on the water - blue skies and great fellowship. The luncheon featured a special menu of dark and white chocolate dipped strawberries, coffee cake, petit fours, luscious choices of fruit, including champagne grapes, and of course tea and coffee. It isn't often, as we discussed on our tour, that we women of the SDC International Meet have an opportunity to "get away" by ourselves. As some remarked, it allowed them a break from the rush of everything else that was going on at Treasure Island. With that many women in one place having the ability to talk without interruptions, I can't tell you how fast the time went. It seemed we had only just begun the cruise and we were back at the dock to disembark. My recommendation would be to have a special women's event/tour as a yearly event at all International Meets. An anticipated women's event will surely

become a *favorite* for women who attend an International Meet.

The Studebaker Band at Red Wing 2001

Musical members of SDC once again recreated the original Studebaker Factory Band to perform at the International Meet. Band Director Larry Swanson programmed music for two completely different concerts.

A new feature this year was that the band played "O Canada" in honor of our many Canadian SDCers. The afternoon concert during the Concours was an old-fashioned "concert in the park" with a patriotic theme. It featured an audience sing-along to Irving Berlin's "God Bless America." The US and Canadian

veterans present were honored with a "Salute To The Services," with each veteran being asked to stand when the theme of his branch of the service was played--Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard and Army. It was inspiring to see how many SDCers have served their country.

The evening concert had a Studebaker theme. The audience joined in to sing Studebaker's famous theme song during the 1800s, "Wait For The Wagon." Also featured was "The Studebaker March" written by Marda in the early 1900s that was arranged for our band by SDCer Glenn Shull. The Meet Committee unexpectedly provided many door prizes to be given away at the concert. An impromptu quiz was held after each song, and the door prizes were awarded to audience members who answered questions about the music and its relation to Studebaker history.

Members of the 2001 Studebaker Band were: Clarinets - Karen Cosby, John Cosby, Dennis Day, Joseph Schappel and Don Worden; Saxophone - Gloria Richard; Trumpet - Bruce Connor; Trombones - Andy Beckman and Mark Wheeler; Baritone - Dan Olson; Tuba - Hezzy Kappus; Percussion - Steve Connor, Charlene Hatcher, Dave Reid and Stu Chapman. Larry Swanson was band director this year for Brad Kuchan, who will be back next year.

All Band musicians in SDC are invited to join when the Studebaker Band reconvenes at the 38th International Meet in South Bend, hosted by the Michiana Chapter during the week of June 23-29, 2002. Bring your instruments!

Fun Night

Four hundred and forty-three (443) people jammed the Indigo Bay room to listen and dance to a very popular Twin Cities Band called the White Sidewalls. We surprised the guests by having the Meet logo made into (removable) tattoos. Staff members were busy most of the evening putting these neat tattoos on men and women. It was great fun, especially for those of us who had never entertained the idea of ever having one.

The dance floor was crowded to capacity, and people stayed until the very end. This was one of the best bands



Photo by Art Unger

Band members waving to the photographer who is on the roof of the hotel..

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ever, and people were very appreciative of a group that could play music to appeal to the cross-section of Studebaker owners present. When the dance floor was opened to the public, no one gave up their seats. *"Music doesn't get any better than this!"*

Friday Literature / Memorabilia Swap

This year there were twelve vendors of literature and toys at the Friday morning swap and some unique items were sold that were not available during the week. Having these treasured items available is always exciting to the true "hunter" of that special piece of history.

Models Cars / Pocket Watches

The model display had 15 different displays from scratch-built to kits to the diorama display. These are not easy to do and the creativity was evident. Some models even had mirrors under them to display highly detailed chassis.

Some 30 watches from the South Bend Watch Company were displayed with the winners selected by the SDC participants voting for People's Choice. All sizes were represented and they were all extraordinarily beautiful. "Best of Show" in the watch category went to Wayne Francisco.

Awards Banquet

If you have ever been part of organizing an International Meet, you know what goes on behind the scenes, so when the day of the banquet arrives, one has mixed feelings; one of relief because you have made it to Friday and one of emptiness, knowing that all the excitement and hype is coming to an end. Yes, our week was coming to an end - the doors were opened to the banquet hall for the social hour which gave everyone another opportunity to share stories and friendships.

This year, with the help of Jim Pepper, and Nathan Keech of LookMedia, there was a constant collage of Studebaker pictures done by PowerPoint presentation. During the awards, the owner and the vehicle were put on the screen so everyone could see which vehicle was getting an award.

The North Star Chapter planned the memorable banquet for all participants and their families. The sit-down dinner was catered to 480 hungry SDC diners with a choice of three entrees.

We were delighted and want to thank Triva Lundberg, who entertained us with spontaneous piano dinner music at our Awards Banquet.

We were fortunate to have LookMedia, a firm that specializes in video and photography, with us throughout the week. They took photos of the SDC displays and concourse vehicles in front of a '50s life-sized rendition of a Studebaker garage that was on Grand Avenue in St. Paul, Minnesota.

SPECIAL THANKS

Since forming the Meet Committee in November 1999, we embarked on a fast track for the meet. We especially would like to thank the Meet Committee members who volunteered many hours of their personal time. This combined team involvement and commitment was instrumental in the success of this meet. The following are to be commended for their contribution:



Arlan Vollan and Aleta Millette, meet co-chairs.

Photo by Brian Millette

by Aleta Millette and Arlan Vollan, Co-Chair Persons

Advertising/Meet Book, Bob & Carol Stude; **Promotional/Merchandise/Trophies**, Todd Langenfeld, Arlan Vollan, & Gary Ottman; **Concourse/Parking**, Keith Rust, John Lidberg, Jim Rock, Bob Smith, Maynard Lemke, Steve Remick; **Registration**, Mark Wheeler, Kathi Healy, Karen Rust, Jim Rock, Jean Skomoroh, Dorothy Anderson, Jerry Pearson and Aleta Millette; **Memorabilia Room**, Jim Ringquist and Steve Remick; **Hospitality Room**, Lovina Goetzke, Jackie Harrison, Lyn Vollan, Andy Ringquist and Rita Pearson; **Driving Tours**, Maynard Lemke; **Merchandise Sales**, Bill Wahland, Craig Harrison; **Extended Meet Members**, Jerry Pearson, Paul Anderson, Dean Elstad, Ed Skomoroh, Cheryl Rock and Joan Lemke; **Vendors**, Brian Millette and Ernie Loga.

Special thanks to Doug Brown for the design, construction and building of the photo facade, a replica of a St. Paul Studebaker dealership. Doug single-handedly made this backdrop for the official car photos. The only time Doug asked for help was when he realized he needed help getting the pieces to Treasure Island. We salute you Doug - your contribution for our meet was much appreciated. Also, thanks to the many volunteers: Kim and Rick Leonhardt, Betty and Harry Grimley, Ernie and Jean Loga, Denny and Carol Borich and Dean and Connie Merrell. We also owe a debt of gratitude to some Red Wing area volunteers who contributed to the success of the meet. We apologize in advance for anyone we may have missed.

We want to extend a big thank-you to "Community" Mike Murphy for providing the Music at the Welcome Gala (at no charge), and providing us with sound equipment wherever needed. Thanks Mike, we needed you. Nancy Murphy, for her painting rendition of the Red Wing Studebaker dealership (again at no charge) that we used as our meet book cover. Incidentally, prints are available.

The North Star Chapter would like to thank everyone for their part in making this a great and memorable meet. It was a meet for renewing old friendships and making new relationships.