



Brickyard Bulletin



Vol. 35 Issue 9 A Monthly Publication of The Indy Chapter of The Studebaker Drivers Club September 2010

Ted Harbit's Teacher's Pet



"The Rest of the Story"

By Bob Palma (aka/ Paul Harvey)
Pictures by Ted Harbit

A couple folks asked what became of the 1940 Mercury shown on the front cover of the June *Brickyard Bulletin*, with yours

truly as the 15-year-old purchaser in 1961. I bought the car to play with and resell, in that I would have wanted a Studebaker (seriously) for a "first car" to drive.

Without e-bay or the internet, one of the few national venues for advertising in 1961 was classified advertising in *Hot Rod* magazine. *Hemmings Motor News* was being published and would have been a good outlet, but I was not aware of that publication. So I

mailed an advertisement to *Hot Rod*. It appeared in the November 1961 issue.

Learn to be a CARBURETOR and IGNITION SPECIALIST and engine diagnostician

SELL — '40 Mercury 4-door, very good original upholstery. Good body, repainted once. Original V8 runs good, drives anywhere. Entire car stock. Highest cash offer. Bob Palma, 312 East Court St. Paris, Ill.

DEALER INQUIRIES INVITED

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That Mercury would today be considered a nice survivor. The body was unusually good and the original upholstery was very nice. There was a minor crease in one fender, slight enough that it would be acceptable today on a survivor. Even the Mercury-exclusive die cast grille was unbroken.

But in January 1962, when I sold the car, it went to Kansas to be parted out, to help refurbish a 1940 Mercury coupe. The buyer told me he was working on a coupe (I don't think anybody was "restoring" a 1940 anything in 1961) and asked about specific trim pieces on the sedan before buying it.

The advertisement specified no price, but solicited the "highest cash offer." The "highest cash offer" (from the Kansas buyer) was \$90! I had \$77 in the car,

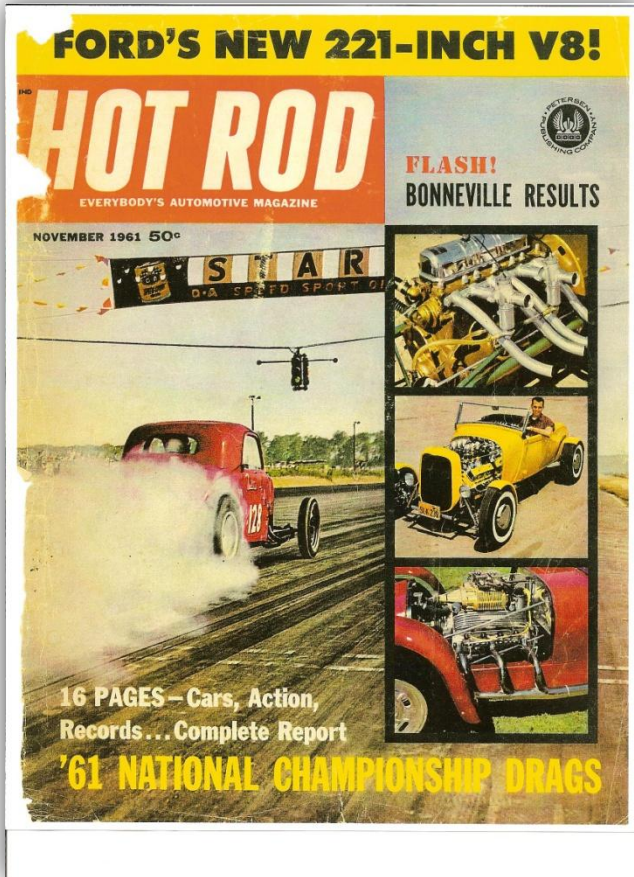
including the classified ad and a couple incidentals, so I made a whopping **\$13** profit. That may not seem like much, but it represented a 17% return on investment! How many of us would like to have a 17% ROI every six months? Not bad for a "first deal," bought and sold before "the dealer" had a drivers license!

The late-teens / early twenties buyer and his girl friend and another young couple (all with properly-slick ducktail haircuts) drove to Paris IL from Kansas non-stop in his black **1955 Ford Crown Victoria** with long cruiser skirts, Olds spinner caps, and wide whites...very period! I don't remember it having a Plexiglas roof, though; it was just a solid-top Crown Victoria with the big stainless-steel basket handle over the roof. It sure looked cool in solid black, lowered in back with the cruiser skirts to such an extent that you could barely see the rear tires...and four of them in the car lowered it even more.

Further, the Crown Victoria was a V-8 stick/overdrive with glass-packs and chrome exhaust extensions. I still remember the burble as it lugged away with the Mercury in tow and four people in the car. (They probably could have driven the Mercury back to Kansas, but one water pump -there are two pumps on those flathead V-8s- was leaking badly, so I had told him to either plan to tow it or bring a pump.) They brought a tow bar and drove away, flat-towing the Mercury sedan behind the Crown Victoria. That's the last I ever saw or heard of the Mercury.

Curiously, the November 1961 *Hot Rod* also included a report on the 1961 NHRA National Drags, the first time the event had been held at **Indianapolis Raceway Park**.

There's a future element of Studebaker racing history hidden in that report, for it



reports the 1961 Class Champion in K/S: Bill Senft of Dallastown PA. Bill and his 1950 Olds 88 won with an elapsed time of 17.74 seconds and a terminal speed of 76.92 MPH. The runner-up in Class K/S, the car Bill defeated to win the 1961 K/S Class Championship, was a 1951 Commander Convertible piloted by a then-obscure Studebaker racer from Frankton IN, Ted Harbit. Team Oldsmobile should have celebrated that 1961 class win, because it would be their last for several years. At age 27, runner-up Ted sold the heavier convertible and bought and built a lighter 1951 Commander Starlight Coupe for the 1962 National Drags. He retired the convertible's name, *Teacher's Pet*, and named his new car *The Chicken Hawk*.



Some readers may remember a fictitious Oldsmobile Division advertising icon in the 1960s and 1970s, one **Dr. Oldsmobile**. Dr. Oldsmobile usually appeared in a white lab coat in Oldsmobile high-performance-theme advertisements. He always seemed to have something demonic up his sleeve to make factory Olds muscle cars just a little faster. Beginning with the 1962 National Drags, however, Dr. Oldsmobile almost became a serial proctologist, looking at The Chicken Hawk's rear end during the 1962-1972 Class Championship Drag Races at The National Drags, when Ted and The Chicken Hawk beat an Olds in 7 of the 11 years.

The Chicken Hawk ran as a stocker for the last time in 1972. In that final year, Ted didn't beat an Oldsmobile. Rather, he beat a 283 Chevy station wagon. Ted's weight class was dropped after the 1971 event, so he was forced to run "up" one class with no handicap, against cars with more favorable horsepower-to-weight ratios. So in many ways, Ted's last win was his best, in that he had been placed at a distinct disadvantage.

Oh, and Ted's 1951 Commander Convertible, "*Teacher's Pet*?" Today, it is still owned by SDCer Luther Barnes of Elwood, to whom Ted sold it in 1962. It's painted a dark metallic blue, although it was a light powder blue when Ted raced it through 1961.

And now you know "*the rest of the story.*"BP

Muscle Car Review Magazine hears our side.

This short article I wrote appeared in *Muscle Car Review* June 2010 issue. It started as a letter in response to an earlier issue on the 2009 *Pure Stock Drags*, in which *Ted Harbit* and I were mentioned

but no other *Studebaker* racers and no pictures of Studebakers appeared even though nine were racing that year.

MCR editor *Drew Hardin* received several letters and was reported to have indicated that *Studebakers Larks* or any other *Studebakers* were not Muscle Cars anyway.

Drew and I have communicated back and forth several times and he now is interested in correcting the oversight in last year's coverage.

Thanks to *Drew* and MCR for letting us set the record straight.
Richard Poe

your turn

By Richard Poe

The Studebaker Muscle Car

First, let me thank MCR for your coverage of the 2009 Pure Stock Muscle Car Races by Tom Shaw (Jan. '10). Tom always does a great job. We have participated in this race with my '63 R1 Lark over the past several years, and it is a topnotch event put on by Bob Boden and Dan Jensen. Not enough can be said about these two and the work they do each year, so I'll just say thanks.

I'm a Studebaker Lark owner, and this annual event is a unique opportunity to expose a large group of people to the Studebaker version of the muscle car. To some of the competitors and spectators, this may be the first contact they have with high-performance Studebaker muscle cars, but they do exist, as you can see. Over the years at the Pure Stock Drags, Studebakers have been very competitive and will continue to be.

My experience: I pull up and stage, bring up the rpm, prepare for the tree to come down, and launch, hoping to hit it just right and the tires will hook so I can roll into the throttle and go wide open all the way down track. I watch the tachometer for rpm just over peak, push the clutch, pull the shifter back, and let it go with my right foot on the mat all the way through Fourth gear. Keeping it straight and wide open all the way through the lights, I hear the engine doing just what it was meant to do. It can't get much better than that. I look over in the other lane and know that driver is feeling the same thing. Who would not love it?

It has come to my attention that your editor questions whether Studebaker Larks are muscle cars. They are! I will concentrate on '63 R1 and R2 Larks, the first muscle cars Studebaker made.

For the '63 model year, Studebaker offered a list of options to enhance the Lark's performance. The list was long, and a buyer could order each option separately. Starting on February 19, 1963, taking what it learned from the Avanti, Studebaker offered two packages for the Lark to create the Super Lark: the High Performance Option with Jet Thrust R1 engine, and the High Performance Option with Super-Charged Jet Thrust R2 engine. The R1 was a 10.25-compression-ratio engine that shared its bottom end and performance



Curt Alspaugh (right) congratulates Richard Poe at the '09 Pure Stock Muscle Car Drags. Poe's Lark R1 beat Alspaugh's Cougar Eliminator in the first round with a 14.496 e.t. against the Cougar's 14.913 and did it again in the second round with a 14.423 e.t. versus Alspaugh's 14.845. (Rose Poe photo)

Poe's R1 proves that a Studebaker doesn't have to be supercharged to be a muscle car. (Frank Remlinger photo)

cam with the R2. The R2 engines had a supercharger and a different set of heads and intake.

Included in the package—with or without the supercharger—were a four-barrel carburetor, a heavy-duty twin-track Dana 44 rear axle, finned rear brake drums, front disc brakes, a larger radiator, better oiling, a viscous drive fan, dual exhaust, available straight-through mufflers, a tachometer, a 140- or 160-mph speedometer, a floor shift, rear axle radius rods, a rear stabilizer bar, and many more heavy-duty performance features. This package, in either R1 or R2 form, made the Super Lark a purpose-built car for the high-performance market in 1963. In other words, a muscle car.

In his story, Tom Shaw mentioned my victory over Curt Alspaugh's beautiful '69 Cougar Eliminator at the 2009 event. Studebakers went on to win six (not five) races in the first two rounds with just one loss, and that loss was to



another Studebaker. Our '63 R1 Lark has had great success at the Pure Stock Drags, and we have received the justified respect of other muscle car drivers at the race every year. We likewise respect them; to do less would diminish the spirit of the event and those who so eagerly participate. Bob Boden and Dan Jensen have created a place to take our cars once a year and do just what the cars were made to do.

Yes, with all due respect, '63 R1 and R2 Studebaker Larks/Super Larks are muscle cars, as the drivers who have competed against them already know! *MCR*

HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY? Send a Your Turn essay to mcreview@sbcglobal.net. Your story should be around 800 words and include a high-resolution photo or two. Note that we reserve the right to edit your content for clarity, space, and family friendliness.

From The Office of The President



Hello Studebaker Family,

I am glad to report that **Dale McPhearson** and **Larry Hopkins** are both on the road to recovery. **Larry** is back home, but still has a ways to go before his foot is well again. **Dale** is doing much better than when I first saw him, however he is still in the hospital at Lafayette instead of Indy ICU. Dale is still on dialysis, but I think his spirits are high. Let's keep our thoughts and prayers with them.

The last thirty days have been mostly spent on my bike, with a trip to New York, about 1500 miles. Then we took a trip to southeast Ohio, of about 750 miles.

Now it's time for Studes. There will be a meeting on September 4th sponsored by **Joe and Nancy Bacon**, and then afterwards is the Miracle Mile Car Show, which is at the Southern Plaza shopping center just south of 465. It is a lot of fun, and this will be my third year.

Next is drag racing, Chief **Ted Harbit** and all followers are headed for Stanton, Michigan and the PSMCDR on 9/16/10, with practice on 9/17/10, and the shoot outs on 9/18/10. It's a great time, and we welcome all support.

Time to go do some work on "*White Lightnin*", so that's all for now folks.

Your Fellow Stude Guy,
Chuck

A Few Words From your Editors

Earlier this month our computer was hit by a computer virus. Not a good thing since it destroyed *all* our computer files including all the **Brickyard Bulletin** files. Back issues, other chapter's issues, pictures, any articles we had, the format we use... everything was gone. We have never had a virus attack our computer before, but when we took this job we decided to get an online backup service just in case. Good thing we did! It took a week or so to get the computer working and get all the files restored, but as far as we can tell we got all the **Bulletin** stuff back thanks to **Carbonite** on line backup.

When the virus hit I was typing an email and that unfinished email also came back with only a word or two missing, that is how quickly it backs up for you automatically, without you doing anything. We never used a back up service before but this one saved us for sure.

Thanks to **Carbonite** we're back in business. **Richard and Rose**

Secretary's report



The Indy Chapter August meet was hosted by **Steve McNutt & Julie Edwards**. It was a very warm afternoon, but it's August! There were about 30 members in attendance. Steve grilled hot dogs and burgers while everyone visited and caught up on the summer's activities. A great pitch in lunch was enjoyed by all.

President Chuck Kern called the meeting to order, giving thanks to our host. Future meetings were discussed. The September meet will be held on Sept. 4th, which is "**Drive Your Studebaker Day**". The club will meet at **Cono Caffe & Hot Rod Shop** at noon. After the meeting and lunch we all are invited to come to the **Miracle Mile Car Show at Southern Plaza**, also on Indys South side. This is a great opportunity for our club to show off our cars on a special day set aside to drive them!

We were given an update on club members who have spent the summer recuperating from health issues.

Dale McPhearson is at **Seton Specialty Hospital, 1501 Hartford St, Lafayette, In. 47904, Room # 2329**. He has spent most of the summer in the hospital but is doing better.

Larry Hopkins has also been in the hospital, but is home now. His address is **8210 Parsley Ln, Indianapolis, In. 46237**. Both of these members would enjoy getting a card or note from fellow members.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made and everyone headed for home and cooler temperatures!

Submitted By Nancy Bacon

Indy Classifieds

Submit your Classified ads before the 15th to your Bulletin Editors at Richard and Rose Poe, 5192 State Road 46 E, Nashville, In. 47448. Or email roserichpoe@att.net. Ads are free to all members.



1964 R1 Avanti, power steering, power brakes, air conditioning, automatic trans (700 R4), 3.54 rear end, Edelbrock carb, 3 core radiator, red outside, black inside. All in excellent shape always kept inside. \$19,500. Call **Bob Parker** 317-933-3838 Indiana

1967 Gravely Mower, Walk behind with new dual tractor type rear tires. It has a 30" deck with a clutch drive and was made by Studebaker. \$550. It's a rope start. I have more attachments that are also for sale. Call 812-988-2008. Richard Poe

A Tech Tip

OIL a slippery topic that never ends

From Peter Sant

Peter is a good Studebaker friend from Canada that we drag race with at the Pure Stock Drags.

Many people ask me what oil I use in my Avanti that has seen a few runs on the dragstrip. My simple answer is Mobil 1.

I thought about this for a while and thought that it may be of use to all Studebaker owners to write about my opinions on the subject of Oil. A lot of discussion has taken place about the industry change to eliminate the use of ZDDP from current oils. This change came about due to changes in catalytic converters and emissions reasons.

This poses a problem for anybody with an older car.

Most older cars have flat tappet camshafts and need the properties of ZDDP in order to prevent their camshafts from wearing lobes too quickly.

The simple solution is to buy a can of ZDDP additive from a Studebaker Vendor or use oil with the ZDDP content still in it. One of these is Shell Rotella. Others may be available from Farm Implement Dealers. My Choice is Mobil 1 15W-50 Grade.

This particular oil is what a Studebaker engine needs to maintain adequate oil pressure. I usually change my oil only once a year. This is done in the late Fall when I am about to put the Avanti into storage. I also change the filter at this time. I use exclusively a NAPA Gold oil filter Number 1049. These filters are made by WIX and are top quality. Obviously this recommendation applies only to full flow Studebaker V8 engines but I would still recommend the use of Mobil 1 in any Studebaker engine either 6 or 8.

One other item worth mentioning is the oil used for engine break-in after a rebuild. The best results to date have been obtained by using Joe Gibbs Racing Oil. Most engine building shops have this or can get it. Use it for the first 750 miles and then change to Shell Rotella for the next 750 then commence using the Mobil 1.

Thanks Peter.

Indy Chapter Upcoming Events

September Meeting 9/4/2010, Our Host will be Joe and Nancy Bacon. The September Indy Chapter meeting will be September 4th, this is the same day as **International Drive Your Studebaker Day**. We will meet at 12 noon in Indianapolis at **Hot Rods/Cono Caffe**. The Cafe has an Italian slant and lunch ranges from \$3.75 to \$6.00 plus beverage. There is inside dining, a patio and a park setting. As we all will be driving Studebakers (we hope) the cars will be parked on the grass in the park area, plenty of room! The restaurant has a 50's aura and also a limited shopping area to cars, motorcycle, bicycle clothing and trinkets.

We are working on a tour of private collection of cars and 50's memorabilia, but that is not confirmed at this time. That will be a short 4 mile drive.

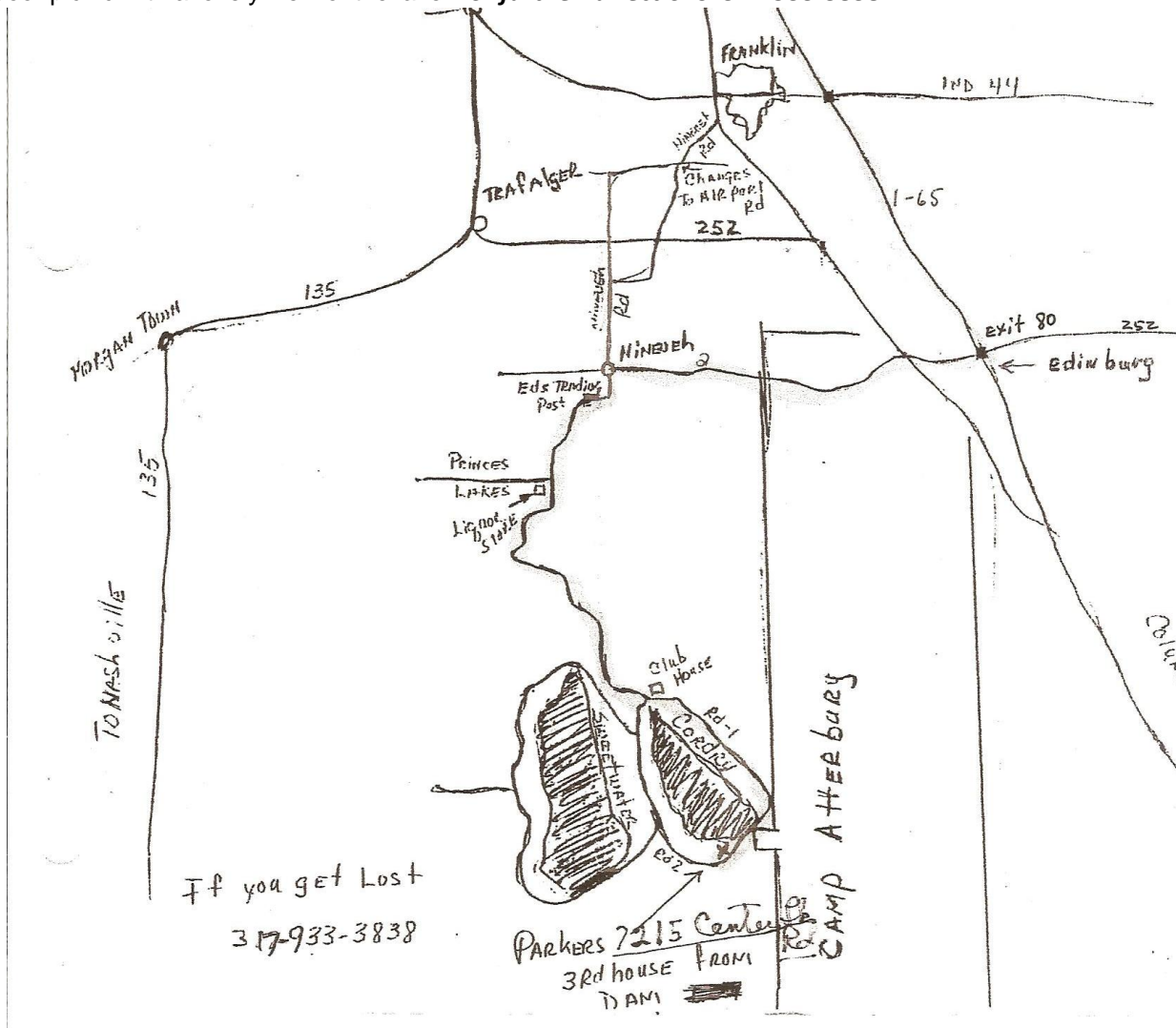
At 3:00 pm those who choose to can join us at the **Miracle Mile car show at Southern Plaza** on US 31 and I465. This is just five miles from the restaurant and will feature some of the best cars of all makes from around the Indianapolis area, hundreds of cars will be on display! **Studebakers** can park in the area for free or to participate in the awards pre entry is 15.00 entry forms online at http://www.miraclemileparade.com/carshow/show_entry.php or 20.00 day of show. Bring lawn chairs, we can set around the cars and talk **Studebaker**. Those who choose to drive brand X just bring your lawn chairs, parking is nearby and a very short walk.

Hope to see all of you soon on the **International Drive Your Studebaker lunch and Cruise In!**

Hot Rods/Cono Caffe is located at 3720 Raymond Street in Indianapolis 46203. This is on the southeast side of Indianapolis. From I465 take the Southeastern Ave. exit north to Raymond Street, turn left and it is just over 1 mile on your right one block west of Sherman drive. **Joe and Nancy Bacon** NancyJB1701@aol.com or call 317-440-2786.

October 2, Meeting, at 1:00 pm. This meeting is being held at **Bob and Chris Parker's** beautiful lake home, at **7215 Center Lake Rd., Nineveh, Indiana**. If you are coming down or up I-65, turn west at exit 80 (252) go through Edinburgh to U.S. 31, continue through Camp Atterbury (watch speed!) to Nineveh. Turn south go 6.3 miles and make no right turns, always bear left. If you come from west down 135 to Trafalgar go east on 252 to the stop light turn right south to Nineveh. Our lakes are not on the state maps.

Meat and drinks will be furnished, please bring your chairs, table settings, and a side dish to pass. This will be an outdoor picnic with a lovely view of the lake. **For further directions. 317-933-3838**



THE BRICKYARD BULLETIN

Published by the Indy Chapter of the Studebaker Drivers Club. Editors: Richard and Rose Poe

The **Brickyard Bulletin** is published monthly. The deadline for each monthly issue is the 15th of the previous month.

We hereby give permission to other S.D.C. chapters to use information from the newsletter when proper credit is given. "Reprinted or

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The **Studebaker Drivers Club** is an organization dedicated to the preservation of vehicles produced at any time in the history of the Studebaker Corporation. Anyone owning a Studebaker, Erskine, Rockne, Flanders or EMF, or anyone interested in such vehicles is invited to join S.D.C. and the INDY Chapter. Members enjoy sharing information, history, fellowship and driving. S.D.C. bylaws require all chapter members to be members of the National S.D.C.

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NATIONAL SDC MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Regular membership dues in the **National Studebaker Drivers Club** are **\$19.95 For New Members 1st year only**. Renewals are \$27.50 per year, which includes 12 monthly issues of **Turning Wheels**, the National SDC Magazine. (Other memberships are available.)

Mail application and check to:

Or Email mark@cornerstonereg.com for information.

The Studebaker Drivers Club

P.O. Box 1715

Maple Grove, MN 55311-7615

Or call 763-420-7829 and use Visa or MasterCard

Name _____ Spouse _____

List your Studebakers (add another sheet if needed)

Year _____ Model _____ Body Style _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ E-mail _____

Zip _____ PH (____) _____ Birth date _____

INDY CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

National SDC membership is a prerequisite. Renewal INDY Chapter dues are \$18.00. Renewals payable January each year (after March a \$5.00 late fee will be added.)

Mail application and check to:

Tom Flynn

4531 S CR 500 East

Plainfield, IN 46168

Name _____ Spouse _____

List your Studebakers (add another sheet if needed)

Year _____ Model _____ Body Style _____

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City _____ State _____ E-mail _____

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Brickyard Bulletin September 2010



Indy Chapter SDC
Richard & Rose Poe, Editors
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To