



56J ONLY



THE PERIODIC NEWSLETTER OF THE
1956 STUDEBAKER GOLDEN HAWK OWNERS REGISTER

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Ron Johnson's 56J Was Among the Studebakers at the Muscle Car and Corvette Nationals

By Frank Ambrogio

The *Muscle Car & Corvette Nationals* provides the ultimate gathering place for enthusiasts, young and old, who have a passion for horsepower. Ron Johnson's Ceramic Green & Snowcap White 1956 Golden Hawk was one of the many Studebakers at the show on

November 17-18, 2017 held at the Donald Stephens Convention Center in Rosemont, IL. Luke Krooswyk created posters for everyone, and did an excellent poster with a great deal of information on Ron's car, and the 56J in general.

Studebaker Style with Packard Power

Studebaker and Packard continued to form the Studebaker-Packard Corporation in 1954. Studebaker had the larger dealer network, while Packard had a strong sales and executive team. The merger ultimately resulted in a new company, and the 1956 Golden Hawk was the sole example that combined the best of what each company had to offer: Studebaker's Raymond Lilly design and Packard's advanced engineering.

Studebaker produced 4,071 Golden Hawks for the 1956 model year at the South Bend, Indiana and Fremont, California assembly plants. The Golden Hawk offered a long option sheet, intended to be a luxurious sports car with ultimate car power plant.

The Golden Hawk Facts

Engine: Packard 352 cu. in., overhead valve, 275 horsepower and 340 ft-lb torque. 4" bore, 3.75" stroke, 9.5:1 compression ratio. Carter WCFB 4 barrel carb.

Transmission: 3 speed manual Borg-Warner T85 with overdrive

Rear Axle: Salisbury 84-3, 3.92:1 ratio

Suspension: Front independent control arms with coil springs, rear solid axle with leaf springs

Brakes: Four wheel Wagner drums, self-energizing, 11" front, 10" rear

Wheels: 15" steel wheels, 7.10x15 tires

Options on this Golden Hawk: AM radio, tinted glass, seat belts, clock, turn signals, wire wheel covers

Corvette-Beating Performance

With 275 hp at 3300 rpm, the Golden Hawk had the second highest power-to-weight ratio of US production cars for the 1956 model year following the Chrysler 300-A, and earned a NASCAR-credited 137.343 mph on test runs.

Speed Age magazine tested four of America's sports cars - the Golden Hawk, Chrysler 300-A, Chevy Corvair, and Ford Thunderbolt. The report stated: "In each case, the Hawk was by far the fastest, tearing off with a track-scraping burst of speed that was impressive, to say the least. The Corvair followed, still fast but a bit slower than the Hawk."

Full-Desk Instrumentation

The Golden Hawk dashboard was not only stylish with a curved metal face, but featured a full array of Stewart Warner gauges, including speedometer, tachometer, vacuum gauge, oil pressure, ammeter, water temperature, and fuel level.

Magazines testing the Golden Hawk raved about its excellent instrumentation and convenient accessory operation, calling it the "finest ever seen on an American car."

The Jet Streak Engine

Studebaker-Packard considered offering an "over" motor conversion to the Golden Hawk, called the Jet Streak, which was essentially the 374 cubic inch engine that powered the 1950 Packard Caribbean. With a part number (1541803) was assigned to the option, it never materialized from the factory.

Since the upgrade parts were directly available from the Packard parts bin, it was common for dealers to install the dual four barrel carb. The full Jet Streak package consisted of an aluminum ram, dual carbs and throttle chrome valve covers, dual breaker distributors, and special option cut. These upgrades costed non-overseer to \$25 per dollar. Sold in July 1956.

I got involved when I received an Email from Bob Palma asking if I had any printed copies of the Authenticity Guide. He wanted me to send one to Luke, and would pay me for it. I told him I had revised the Guide, but didn't have any printed copies. Instead I sent a copy of the updated Guide as an Email attachment. Things escalated from there and soon I was in conversations with Bob, Luke, Ron, and several others. The result was the poster

that Luke put together, which is shown above.

Here is Ron's account: Big show and a good group of South Bend Road Oilers--a couple Stude Avantis and 4-5 later ones. The real line up started with a Speedster, the 56J, 57 G Hawk, 3 GT Hawks, and a Packard Hawk. Most of these machines are trailer queens, but the 56J motored in from Rockford on the tollway and back home

with numerous times flexing the muscles of the real FIRST Muscle car to over100 MPH, which is no real effort for the mighty SKYPOWER 352. If you find one of my machines on a trailer??--it's either broke or stolen.



If ever a car show should have a 56J, it would be the Musclicar show where it should be show-cased first in line with the GTO somewhere later. It would take an awful special GTO to outrun my SKYPOWER 352 in OD.



And here is Luke's side of the story:

I owe my start in Studebakers to Ed George and his son Eddie; I went to high school with Eddie, and we've been friends ever since. Eddie and I are both gearheads; we like a wide variety of cars, though I have owned an Olds since high school and am currently restoring a '68 Hurst/Olds. I started riding along with them on South Bend excursions for meets or parts purchases; at that time, many of the Studebaker buildings were still standing, and I had the opportunity to tour them, learning the history of the company and cars.

I'm into performance cars and drag racing, and the supercharged Studebakers screamed cool (sorry '56 GH folks, it took a while until I learned about the Packard power!). The uniqueness of Studebakers compared to the Big 3 offerings and their "underdog" status at the Pure Stock Drags piqued my interest, and I developed an appreciation for Studebaker vehicles. Eddie, myself, and our wives occasionally cruise around town in an unrestored '63 R2 Avanti, which has been in the George family since the early 1970's.

Fast forward to 2013, when Eric DeRosa ('63 Lark R2) and Ed George ('63 Avanti with R3 B109) were invited to display the first Studebakers at MCACN. We discussed the need to educate the show attendees, particularly why these Studes rightfully belonged at a muscle car show, surrounded by pristine examples of the rarest and coolest muscle cars ever built - including real Baldwin Motion cars, "swiss cheese" Pontiac Catalina Super Duties, Shelys, Hemis, etc.

To help Eric and Ed, I volunteered to create posters with content on the cars, the R-series engines, Avanti development, and Bonneville speed trials. We created the posters to provide a brief "attention grabbing" summary of each car, and then listed details that could be photographed for later reference (particularly for magazine coverage, as virtually every car magazine has representatives at the show).

At MCACN, the two cars were a hit - Eric's Lark is Rose Mist, and the sight of a pink-hued car with the orange Paxton under the hood drew a stream of admirers, while Ed's white Avanti with orange interior, bright red R3 engine, and Halibrand wheels always stands out. As they say, "the rest is history," and Studebaker has been invited to participate in the show every year since.

Ed has organized MCACN displays with legendary Studebakers, including the '64 R3-powered Daytona that served as a Hot Rod magazine test car at Bonneville, along with the #8 and #9 Avantis being reunited for the first time since Bonneville. Over 500 cars attend MCACN each year, and Studes have been selected for various awards; the 2016 Studebaker display was labeled as best of the show by Car Craft magazine!

With the Bonneville cars at the show in 2016, we were wearing Avanti button up shirts replicating those shown in the Studebaker Bonneville videos. As we walked around, strangers were coming up to us, and it seemed that most conversations started with "we had a Hawk back in the day..." or "those Hawks were really something special..." Ed decided for 2017 that it was time to bring the Hawks to MCACN!

I've generated posters for the show each year as time allows, and it has been a fun experience. The best part of making the posters is learning about the cars from the experts; this was especially true for 2017. Ron, Frank, Bob, and Mark provided a ton of great information, and helped me develop a true appreciation for the '56 Golden Hawk.

You '56 GH owners already know how special your cars are, but it was great to share them with the MCACN audience. My favorite aspects of the '56 GH are the eye-catching bodylines with an incredible offering of colors, the instrument panel, and most of all, the big Packard engine under the hood. It's a shame that Jet Streak option never made it to production!

The Hawks definitely made an impact at MCACN. A constant stream of people was checking them out, and we overheard many positive comments.

A huge thanks goes to Ron for bringing his car out to the show, and many thanks to everyone who helped convert me into a '56 Golden Hawk fan!

1956 Studebaker Golden Hawk collects 'Premium Choice Award' at prestigious Rally of the Giants in the UK, *From Richard Atkinson*



After a very busy summer of events as well as work taking up huge amounts of time too (Maryna and I were attending the Frankfurt Motor Show last week), I have finally sat down to the keyboard to tap out a few lines about this year's Rally of the Giants, or RoG, as it is often referred in the UK.

Please find attached Word Doc of the event and if you feel of interest to the Register Membership, please feel to run in the next Newsletter.

Rally of the Giants, or RoG as it is affectionately known, is the premier classic car event for American cars, be they 1920's or 1970's. These days, it is held at Blenheim Palace, the former ancestral home and birthplace of Sir Winston Churchill.

The Studebaker brand is not particularly well represented in the UK, compared to say the Big Three. Nevertheless, the Studebaker Owners Club UK managed to field 13 cars at this year's major event. From a membership of about 75 cars, this represented almost 18% of cars attending the event. Good weather in late June probably helped ensure the turnout on the weekend. It certainly had an influence on my attendance.



I've enjoyed attending many car events with my 1956 Studebaker Golden Hawk since 2012, having completed a 5½ body-off restoration. I like to attend local, other national or niche events, all based on showing and talking about the Studebaker brand, cars and history. However, I lack the encyclopedic knowledge of Richard Quinn, but hope my enthusiasm does enough to carry the day!

Attending this year's RoG turned out to be very different, not least because my car was selected for the 'Premium Choice' Award, which was a tremendous surprise and personal delight!

The RoG is attended by some 400 – 500 cars, usually depending on the British summer weather. For any that

have had the good fortune of attending Wimbledon Fortnight, will understand what a British summer can be like.



The event and awards are broken in to a number of specific classes; Overall Concourse, President's Choice, Premium Choice Award, US Automotive Award, Classic American Magazine Car of the Year Heat Winner, Golden Chariots Award, Antique & Prohibition Class – vehicles up to 1934, Roosevelt Class (1935 - 41), Truman Class (1942 - 49), Early Fifties (1950 - 54), Late Fifties (1955 - 59), Best Sixties, Best Seventies to Modern, Best Chrysler, Best Ford, Best General Motors, Best Independent and Best Commercial.

Whilst I've not conducted a statistical analysis of which decade provides greatest representation, certainly the 1950's garners a lot of vehicles, be they cars or trucks. In a previous year, Maggs and Darrell Webb's exquisite 1931 Studebaker President was recognized at RoG with an award, so carrying on with winning ways has been an honor and privilege.

So, what's next on the horizon?

The Studebaker Owners Club UK has succeeded in being included in this year's Lancaster NEC Classic Car Show. This is the UK's premier indoor classic car event held at the NEC, Birmingham. Our Club will join a select number of new clubs and will be amongst the 250 organizations showcasing their cars and bikes at Europe's biggest club event.

We can't wait to start engaging visitors and discussing all merits of the Studebaker band. We'll be able to show three vehicles and hope to have cars from across the decades on show.

From The Production Orders

There were many discrepancies on the production orders for the 1956 Golden Hawk. Some listed Flight O Matic transmission, while two listed the sedan radio AC2745 & AC2746, instead of the C-K radio AC2747 & AC2748. There were a total of 88 production orders which did not show a body number. I was able to piece some information together based on some of the numbers.

The production orders for the following Serial Numbers did not show a Body Number.

6030003 - 6030026 Destination - Brussels, Belgium (24 cars)
6030063 - 6030086 Destination - Mexico City, Mexico (24 cars)
6030130 - 6030153 Destination - Mexico City, Mexico (24 cars)
6030193 Destination - not shown
6800369 Destination - Highland Park Motors in Los Angeles
6800370* Destination - Springfield, Oregon (Body # verified as 1416 by the registered owner)
6800371 Destination - C&H Motors-Las Vegas, Nevada
6800372 Destination - Auburn, Calif.
6800373 Destination - Standard Motor-Richmond, Calif
6800374 Destination - Van Nuys-Calif
6800375* Destination - Schloss-San Francisco (Body # verified as 1421 by the registered owner)
6800376 Destination - Oroville, Calif.
6800377 Destination - Wondries, Alhambra
6800378 Destination - Medford, Oregon
6800379* Destination - Mc Peak, Compton (Body # verified as 1425 by the registered owner)
6800380 Destination - West Seattle Auto Center, Seat
6800381 Destination - Morris-Bakersfield, Calif.
6800383 Destination - Bon Sera-San Jose
6800384 Destination - Hodge-Fresno, Calif.
Total = 88 (73 cars for SB, 15 cars for LA)

Notes:

*The following owners of the cars with the indicated Serial #s, sent the Body #s as shown on the Body plate of the car.

Serial # 6800370 Body # 1416
Serial # 6800375 Body # 1421
Serial # 6800379 Body # 1425

Looking at the information shown above, it is likely that the Body #s were assigned in order from 1415 through 1429 for Serial #s 6800369 through 6800384. However we don't know if they were assigned in order. Those cars were all produced at the LA plant. Those Body #'s were not assigned to any other vehicle.

Duplicate Body

106 - Serial #s 6030058 & 6030059 both listed Body # 107. One is probably Body # 106.

Missing Body #s, not shown on any production order.

300
949-958 (10 cars)
1415-1429 (15 cars -includes 3 Serial #s for Body #s 1416, 1421, and 1425 identified above).
3522-3566 (45 cars)
3643
3586
3588
3804
3882
4024
4031
4064-4073 (10 cars)
Total - 88

Mail Bonding



Letters From Our Readers. (Edited as required.)

Gary Willoughby September 28, 2017

Your (Curtis') story about your Hawk's ancestry was very close to the heart. Knowing the full history of my car is taken for granted, but to find the details of yours, even at this late date, must be very rewarding. I know, they are just cars, but the history can just grab at you, sometimes, don't you think?

Mike Nolte September 30, 2017

I wrote to you a number of months ago about my 56J I purchased in 1963 when I was a junior in high school for \$75.00. I had put it up on blocks in a barn of my family's farm in Ohio, in August of 1964 where it sat for 51 years before bringing it down to South Carolina. It is now in North Carolina undergoing a frame of restoration by Ray Fichthorn at Ra-Lin Restorations.

As I mentioned, have all the parts to build the original engine into a dual quad Jet Streak and Jack Vines out in Spokane is rebuilding the engine. I also have a complete factory air conditioning system from a 56 President to put factory air in the car. Ray has gone through the air conditioning parts and tells me that it is totally complete. Would you send me again the information you have on the one documented 56J that you sent me several months ago.

I will keep you posted as to the progress. The air conditioning system seems to be fitting in well, but the questions remain on the air cleaners to the dual quad set up.

Sent the pictures of the dual carb setup you sent me, up to Ray Fichthorn. I also was interested in the pictures of the dual quad set up that you had in the news letter awhile ago showing two Studebaker oil bath air filter side by side. In my conversations with Jack Vines, out in Washington who is rebuilding the engine into a 374 Jet Streak, he tells me that in some of Studebaker's internal memos that he has seen, they were proposing that same set up.

Ken Falkenberg November 6, 2017

I first talked with you 25 + years ago when I finally purchased my Golden Hawk that had been sitting in the weeded backyard of a widow lady's home for many years. It took me quite a while (7 years) to finally convince her to sell it to me.

A year later when I was ready to start the restoration, I had major surgery. So, another eager Hawk person talked me into selling it to him. He did a great job on the restoration.

I then had the brief opportunity to meet you (you had an orchid 56 that evening) in Florida. We were doing the Great Race across America. I have remained a Hawk fan and maintained my subscription for *Turning Wheels* all these years.

I am (and have been) a devoted lover of 1957 Thunderbirds for 55 years I congratulate you and your team for putting together the 40 plus years of *Turning Wheels*. It is indeed a great magazine.

Glad you are still involved and in love with the 56 Hawks. I believe I have a special plate that you might like. Email me your mailing address. I will dig into my storage trailer and find it, then mail it to you.

Martin Rumpfelt December 12, 2017

Frank, Thanks for sending (the 56J flash drive) so expeditiously. It's neat that it is so tiny and could fit easily on a key ring.



Am enclosing a couple of shots of my 56J at our club's Annual toys for tots Christmas drive. The 56J always draws a lot of people around commenting about how it looks like the engine is ready to leap out of the engine compartment.

I belong to the Alamo City Rods and have the only Studebaker. We drew 104 cars of which 67 were from our club.

Walter Hultsch January 01,2018

Hi Frank, thanks for your interest, but my car isn't on the road yet. The engine is done, new cylinder, new valves, but the engine is not build in. My garage ran out of man power.

So I hope it will be done this springtime. I will let you know the whole story and about my other cars/projects. Calmness must be the way. For you, the best this year

John Bernt January 20, 2018

I did the Mille Miglia with the car in 2017. I have added the pictures from that rally. It would have been accepted for the 2018 Mille Miglia if entered.



We had no problem what so ever with the car during the rally. I am quite familiar with long distance rallies and we had prepared the car in detail.



No issues with the brakes (drums) and no issues with the gearbox. However it might be that the car will perform even better with a manual gearbox.



I bought this car from the Kann Family in 2016 in Marina Del Rey, California. It was restored by Allen Barth out of Washington State. The car was in very good condition and ready to roll. New paint exterior, new leather interior and all chrome done.

Here We Grow Again

If you move, please remember me when you send your change of address information.

662 Charles McBurney SN 6030497*
Waverly AL Prev Owner Unknown

663 Bill Pohl SN 6032497*
Lindstrom MN Prev Owner Mike Brazil

664 John Bernt SN 6031113
Hemiksem Belgium Prev Owner Ed Kann

* = New SN (Not previously registered or reported)

NOTICE: *In lieu of dues, and to help keep my records correct, registration forms are mailed to owners who haven't been heard from for four years. If you receive one, complete and mail it at once or you will be dropped from the mailing list.*

The "J" Account

1956 Golden Hawks Registered/Reported/Scrapped

228	Registered Owners
296	Cars Registered (include parts cars)
331	*Cars Reported But Not Registered by Owner
627	Total Cars Registered plus Reported
46	Additional Cars Reported as Scrapped
* Includes cars previously registered but dropped afterwards, due to 4 year non-response by the owner.	

Administrative "Assistance"

Special notes and recurring items.

✓ **EMAIL CLUTTER:** I easily get 100s of messages a day, most of which are useless and interfere with the more important items. Please do not send forwarded mail to me. I just can't read it all. This includes anything not 56J related, especially jokes, E-cards, political and religious messages. Believe me, if you send it, I'll get it from 10 others also. Far too much aggravation for me!!!

✓ **Studebaker Drivers Club (SDC):** Although we are not officially connected with SDC, they have always been in our corner. I am a life member and would urge every 56J owner to join. It is a great organization and at least two of its Presidents have owned a 56J.

✓ **56JONLY Message Forum** Started by owner Scott Reid in July, 2002 for owners and fans to exchange information. Click on *56JONLY Message Forum* on our home page.

NOTICE: *If you want to contact me to include something in the newsletter, you must send it to me directly. You can do so through the 56SGHOR web site.*

NEVER write me at the Yahoo address. Scan the QR Code with your mobile device.



✓ **56J ONLY, Electronic Version** of the newsletter is in color, and undamaged in transit. If you would like to receive it electronically, *and save me a buck*, let me know and send me your Email address. I will send you a notice when the latest version is posted on the web site. You can read it, download it, and/or print it at your leisure. If you are not able to view it on the web site, let me know and I'll send it as an attachment. Anyone with an Email address on file with me, will automatically receive the newsletter electronically. Let me know if you prefer to receive it by mail. The mangling, ripping, and stains are free.

Want Ads

Due to the dramatic increase in printing costs, Want ads are no longer printed in the newsletter. Want Ads are posted on our web site at:

www.1956GoldenHawk.com (Click on Want Ads)

Also check out our sister site at:

www.StudebakerVendors.com With links to over 150 vendors doing business on-line. If you don't know how to access the Internet *ask one of your grand kids for help!*

New Ads Since the last issue:



For sale: 56J 2-page print ad from April 21, 1956 Saturday Evening Post. Professionally framed. Overall size is about 24" x 17". \$40 plus shipping. Contact Marty at 818-402-8224, or Email at marty48@sbcglobal.net (12-2017)

56J Club Items

All Proceeds Help Maintain the Register
Some Items are free to view or download on our web site or can also be ordered on-line

Complete Package Flash Drive.

1956 GH Restorers Guide Video plus 1956 GH Parts Catalog, 1956 GH Authenticity Guide (New version), 1956 Owners Manual, 1956 Accessories Catalog, Borg Warner Overdrive Manual, 1955-58 Chassis Parts Manual, 1953-58 Body Parts Manual, 1956-57 Shop Manual, 1958 Shop Manual Supplement, *56J Only* Newsletter back issues, 1956 GH Production Orders. \$25.00



\$20.00

1956 Studebaker Passenger Car Manuals on Disc.

1956 GH Parts Catalog, 1956 GH Authenticity Guide (New version), 1956 Owners Manual, 1956 Accessories Catalog, Overdrive Manual, 1955-58 Chassis Parts Manual, 1953-58 Body Parts Manual, 1956-57 Shop Manual, 1958 Shop Manual Supplement, *56J Only* Newsletter back issues, 1956 GH Production Orders. (Same as the Flash Drive but without the Restorers Guide Video.)



\$20.00

1956 Golden Hawk Restorers Guide on DVD

Contains a video version of the Authenticity Guide with many new items discussed. (Video is Included on the Flash Drive)

\$20.00



\$20.00

1956 Studebaker Golden Hawk Parts Catalog.

Printed version, 320 pages. Includes specifications, part numbers, illustrations, indexes, utility items, and accessory codes, and a list of service bulletins. Formatted just like the regular Studebaker Parts Catalogs (add \$25.00 foreign S/H).



\$60.00

1956 Studebaker Golden Hawk Authenticity Guide.

(Original 1996 version) Documents most of the quirks with 30 color photos and all decals shown. Divided into sections covering the engine, exterior, interior, trunk, paint and accessories (add \$16.00 foreign S/H)



\$30.00

Decals-Tags-

Oil Filler Cap , blue/buff	\$ 3.00	
Oil Bath , yellow/black		\$ 4.00
Seat Belt , red/black/white (need 2) ea.		\$ 3.00
Generator Field Terminal Tag , red		\$ 1.50
Tachometer Sending Unit Tag , red		\$ 3.00

Make Checks Payable to
Frank Ambrogio.

Owners Roster send Email or SASE (Registered owners only)



Scan the QR Code with your mobile device to go to our web site.

In this Issue

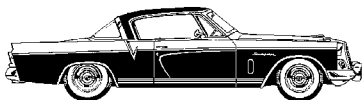
- **Ron Johnson** has his 1956 Golden Hawk featured at the Muscle Car And Corvette Nationals.
 - **Richard Atkinson** files a report on a show he attended called the Rally of the Giants.
 - **Body Numbers** were missing on 88 production orders.
 - **Ken Falkenberry** reminisces about the 1956 Golden Hawk he once owned and about our meeting in 2003.
 - **Gary Willoughby** comments on the Curtis French article about finding the original owner of his 56J.
 - **Mike Nolte** *Got Moving* on his 1956 Golden Hawk's restoration after letting it sit for 51 years.
 - **Martin Rumpfelt** is happy with his 56J flash drive and sends a photo from a toys for tots show he attended.
 - **Walter Hultsch** is still working on getting his 1956 Golden Hawk on the road.
 - **John Bernt** supplies some photos of his participation in the 2017 Mille Miglia.
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- **Renewal time** If we haven't corresponded in the last four years, you will receive a renewal notice either by mail with this issue, or by email if I have an address for you. You must respond or you will be dropped from the mailing list.
 - **Do not forward email** (jokes, politics, environment, religion, etc.), to me that is unrelated to our purpose. I just can't keep up!!! All you accomplish is to provide my email address to others, including spammers who send more junk!



**FRANK AMBROGIO
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STAMP
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For the Type "J" Personality