

Roly and Sue Lusted 1964 Studebaker Avanti R1

Roly and I were married in 1972. I knew from first meeting Roly that he was a car nut. At that time, he had a 1969 Dodge Dart Swinger 340 with very low mileage. Yes, it was red. He liked to drag race it. He also had a Honda 4 cylinder bike. It readily became apparent that this guy who came from a family that never owned a car was in love with anything with wheels.

After the Dodge Dart and the motorcycle we became involved with Corvettes. We owned a number of them beginning with a 1969 Corvette convertible which was red, no surprise here. We showed Corvettes and also road raced them. Quite successfully I might add. Roly also became involved in racing in the Hobby class at Flamboro Speedway and was named "Rookie of the Year".

After the Corvettes, we bought and restored a 1968 Camaro Convertible (now owned by Barb and Larry Gibson) and no surprise it is red. From there we got interested in Buicks first purchasing a 1940 Business man's coupe which was pretty original. Then, we purchased a 1948 Buick Roadmaster convertible to restore. In addition, we purchased a 1965 Buick Skylark (which at one time was my summer driver) and after that a 1962 Buick Wildcat (now owned by our daughter Susan and her husband Marc) also red.

I thought that Roly's first venture into the Studebaker world was a 1953 Studebaker Commander in two tone green. Not so, it turned out his first car was a 1947 Studebaker four door which he purchased from Clark Brother Motors located in Hamilton at Ottawa St. and Main St. We sold the 1953 to purchase an Avanti. When we couldn't find one, we purchased a 1964 Studebaker Dayton Hardtop (a Superlark clone) which was built here in Hamilton and sold to Fort Bragg in California. We travelled to Round Top Texas to pick this car up. In the fall of 2001, we found an Avanti for sale in Thousand Oaks California. Roly flew to California shortly after 911 to finalize the deal on the Avanti and arrange to have it shipped home. Flying at that time, was quite an experience.

Now to our Avanti. It turns out that we are the third owners of this car. It was purchased new in Oakland California for a lady whose name was Myrtle Ericcson by her husband who was a doctor, for her fiftieth birthday. She owned and drove the car until she was 70 years old. Both she and her husband were members of the Avanti club in California as we found out when a box of information was shipped to us two years ago by the previous owners. The Avanti was purchased by Clayton Bailey an avid Studebaker car collector in 1984 and remained in his family until we purchased it from his daughter Robin in 2001.

The Avanti came home in late October of 2001 and Roly who had retired in June of 2001 proceeded to take it apart. The car was in original condition and had not been tampered with. He removed all of the chrome, the windows, seats, carpets etc. The body was stripped to bare Fiberglas and then painted the original colour Avanti red. He had all of the chrome either replaced or rechromed. All of the carpet was replaced, installing it the way it came from the factory. The headliner was replaced. However, the seats and the door panels are original to the car which incidentally has low mileage. Everything in the engine compartment was refurbished and/or rechromed. In June of 2002, I trailered the Avanti to South Bend for the International Meet and Roly drove the 1964 Daytona to the same meet. We came home with a first with the Avanti. The Avanti is a fun car to drive and has proven quite reliable.

Since purchasing the Avanti, we have purchased and/or restored a 1962 Buick Wildcat, a 1962 Studebaker Pickup, a 1962 Studebaker Daytona, a 1964 Daytona convertible (it couldn't stay it wasn't red or white). Roly is currently restoring a 1961 Hawk which is Flamingo in colour.

Obviously if it has wheels Roly is fascinated with it. Vintage airplanes are another interest for him. He has a vast collection of 1/43 scale model cars on display in a large display case. As one of our friends puts it, Roly is a veritable encyclopedia of car knowledge and trivia. As an aside, both my late father and his younger brother began work at the Studebaker plant in Hamilton in 1948. My father worked there until shortly before it closed. I learned to drive on a 1959 Lark, no power and a standard shift. As a teenager, I would have given anything to drive anything but a Studebaker. Go figure. I often wonder what he would have thought as we purchased our first Studebaker after he passed away.

 <p data-bbox="272 1157 529 1184">1969 Dodge Dart Swinger</p>	 <p data-bbox="667 1157 987 1184">1947 Studebaker Roly's first car.</p>	 <p data-bbox="1084 1146 1386 1173">Roly filling a Corvette with gas</p>
 <p data-bbox="285 1545 518 1572">My First Ride a '59 Lark</p>	 <p data-bbox="732 1539 922 1566">Roly Slalom Racing</p>	 <p data-bbox="1044 1507 1430 1562">Our Black '40 Buick and Larry and Barb Gibson's '40 Buick</p>



**Roly Racing in the Hobby Class at
Flamboro Speedway**



1964 Daytona Superlark Clone



The Avanti in the Fall 2001 in California



1962 Daytona Hardtop



1962 Studebaker Pickup



The Avanti at the Plunkett Show 2010



The Interior



The Engine Compartment



Roly Being Cool