

Lovely Photography sets off a Beautifully Designed, Printed and Bound Book on Studebaker's Golden Hawk

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his slim volume features truly lovely photography of a car carefully restored to “as it was originally”. Those photos are augmented with quality-reproduced vintage literature. And kudos too to the author and all involved for the entire volume is beautifully designed, printed and bound.

Studebaker's Hidden Treasure, The History and Design of the Studebaker Golden Hawk resulted from author Mark L James' curiosity and desire to learn in order to fulfill and check off an item on his personal “bucket list”, the detailed and authentically correct restoration of one of his own cars. The resulting book is a car restorer's dream if you are one of the fortunate few to have a low-production (with, of course, an even lower survival rate) Studebaker Hawk of any year, 1956-58.

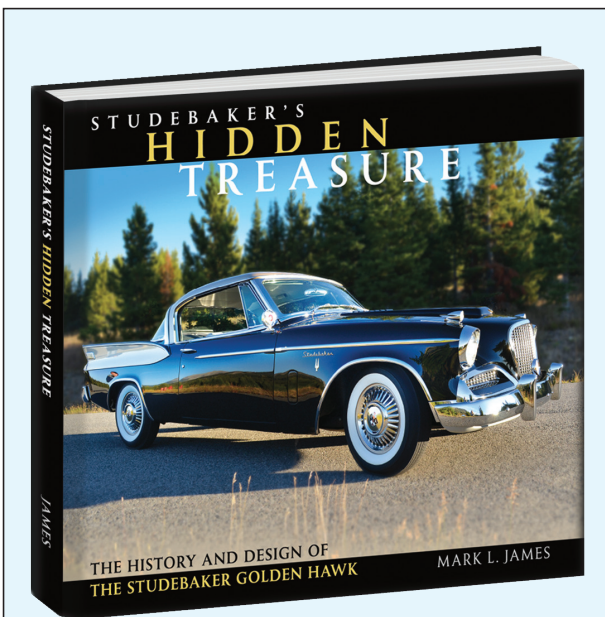
As James points out in one chapter, there are more 1957 Golden Hawk 400s existing today than were ever originally produced off the assembly line. How can this be?

Seasoned auto journalist Phil Skinner, who is also an auction reporter for *Old Cars Weekly*, just happens to have a relevant article in the issue of *OCW* (cover date 23 March 2017) that arrived as this commentary was being keyed. In his article titled “The Numbers Racket”, Skinner warns that a buyer must truly be aware and do his/her research—or consult with those who are expert—before purchasing.

Why do we need to be reminded by either this book's author Mark James or automotive journalist Phil Skinner? Quite simply because too many of us, over and over again, don't take the time to delve deeply enough into a marque's history, much less that of a specific car we're thinking of purchasing. As James writes, pointedly and clearly, “There are 1957 Golden Hawks in which restorers have installed interiors mimicking the original 400's...The only way to document authenticity is to compare 1957 Golden Hawk serial (VINs-ed) numbers with those of the 400s actually produced.”

James' words echo those of Skinner who notes that “Several suppliers have come up with reproduction data plates. Most run a tight ship...however, some are altering the information...making it nearly impossible to tell if...switches have been made (without) the original sales paperwork.” A sentence or two later, Skinner writes this; “We have started to see a trend where a (car's) details that are not included in the serial number are being changed” to make the vehicle into a more valuable or desirable model than it was originally.

Happily for this book, Mark James was a savvy buyer and, as a result of his research, a knowledgeable restorer. And it would take a couple of weighty references books, such as Kelly Flory's *American Cars 1946-1959*, *Every Model Year by Year* (McFarland Publishers) and the *Standard Catalog of American Cars 1946-1973* from Old Cars Publications to even begin to provide the details on the Studebaker Golden Hawk that are contained in this one book.



Title: *Studebaker's Hidden Treasure*

Subtitle: *The History and Design of the Studebaker Golden Hawk*

Author: Mark L James

Description: 86 pages, hardbound 12" x 11" landscape, 2 b/w, 45 color photos, appendices, end notes, bibliography, photo credit and index

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