

COVER CAR - 1964 PERSUIT MARSHAL DEMONSTRATOR

Sometime in early 1963, Sherwood Egbert had a conversation with a Washington State Highway Patrol official, asking what he really wanted to see in a patrol car. At the July 1, 1963 Board Meeting, he brought up the subject: "8. Police Cars. A chat Mr. Egbert had with a policeman in the State of Washington triggered an idea to offer roll bars and disc brakes on all state bids. Since the legislatures of most states advocate safety, it is an opportunity to sell them these distinctively Studebaker safety features on state vehicles. Mr. Egbert asked Mr. Hardig to see how much trouble it would be to put a roll bar in our '64 car and what the premium would be. He also asked Mr. Dredge to draft a letter to all governors pointing up that Studebaker has been pushing safety with padded dash, full headroom, etc., and that now we can offer a roll bar and disc brakes as additional protection to the officer who risks his life every time he chases someone. If we get any kind of reasonable response from the governors, we should get on with the specifications and begin offering them on all state bids before our competition can react. Mr. Dredge commented that at the driving demonstration PR held at the proving grounds for the State Police, the officers found it hard to believe how well our short-wheelbase cars handle with the traction bars and sway bars on them." Perhaps it was this conversation, and raising of the subject at the weekly Studebaker board meeting which prompted Studebaker to 'go all out' on a dedicated production run of twenty "Model 64V-Y3 Special Police Car Demonstrators; Factory order numbers 40548 through 40567" for testing & evaluation by various police constabularies in the nation who previously ordered Studebaker patrol cars with high hopes that they would place orders for more. All were equipped with an R1 engine, roll bars, roof reinforcement, and 'bucket type bolster' front seat cushion & back. They almost qualify as a 'Super' Lark, but not quite. SuperLarks had bucket seats with a console, and floor carpeting as standard, where all 20 of these demonstrator marshals had heavy duty rubber mats and special bolsters built into the front bench seat for the driver. Some features a Marshal did receive that was not available on any Super Lark were a roll bar, roof reinforcement, and a 'police certified' 160 mph speedometer, amongst other non-regular production options that appeared on certain units such as Leece-Neville alternators and locking hand throttles.

In 1983, your Editor attended the International Meet held in South Bend in July of that year, and saw an amazing variety of Studebakers of nearly all years and models; a good many for the first time ever. One of these was an example of the twenty special demonstrator Marshals when it was owned by Michael Jenkins. Fast-forward almost 34 years later, is this same car, shown on the cover, now owned by Mike Cenit; order #40549 State of Wisconsin car that was originally painted Wisconsin Silvertone Gray and Midnight Black with a blue cloth & vinyl interior. This particular Marshal is serial number 64V 8234 and engine #JTJ 320, was returned to the Madison, Wisconsin, Studebaker dealer, and then sent to a Milwaukee dealer and got repainted all black before it went up for public sale. Other special items this Marshal received were a 55 amp Motorola alternator, locking hand throttle, and AC-3198 luggage compartment light. One item that was exclusive to this car were front shoulder belts, an item which became mandatory for the 1968 model year by the National Highway Traffic Safety Act. It was supplied by H.G. Alofs of Grand Rapids, Michigan. Is this the only Studebaker that was factory equipped with front shoulder belts? When I saw this car in 1983, it had full wheel covers, and an AM-FM radio installed. My interest was renewed in this car, when in 2012, on the SDC Forum, Mike Cenit replied to my 1983 photos I posted, and what I remembered about this car, including the paint color and the installation of the AM-FM radio. He replied, "Still has same radio, a Mr. Terrance W. Stewart, a former WI Purchasing Agent, wrote a interesting story about WI patrol cars. He tells the story that they had a 63 R2 to test, and in 10/63 it was replaced with the 64 R1. They outfitted it with all the trooper gear and were getting ready to test it when the move to Canada was announced, because the state would not buy "foreign cars" Mr. Stewart tried to return it to the Chicago zone, but they were just about gone. Finally the car was dropped off at Smart Motors in Madison, in time it ended up at Greenfield Motors in Milwaukee who painted black, added the AM/FM and big hub caps, and sold it to a

lady in 1966. She sold it in 1969 to a Studebaker enthusiast from Malone, near Fond du Lac who stored it until 1979 when he sold it to Michael Jenkins, who sold it to me in 1988. When Michael Jenkins bought it there were 23,000 miles on it. Today it has 29,000 miles, and still has the original Firestone Highway Patrol spare tire in the trunk. The car is in good shape, has new front fenders, and all the old stuff replaced (brakes, shocks, exhaust etc). It's a nice car, and Mr. Stewart reports trial runs were made with full police gear at 123 mph, I assume that's going straight, you wouldn't want to turn the wheel at that speed it might tip over."

It is great to see that this example survive, and it deserves recognition; being one of these twenty special

Photo of 64V 8234 taken in 1983 at the SDC International Meet when it was owned by Michael Jenkins. One can see the original Wisconsin 'Silvertone Gray' color under the hood.

