

Another Car Rescue

When you get a call from someone asking if you want a Free Studebaker, you might assume it's a rusty hulk, but it always gets your curiosity flowing when you enjoy old cars.

We were contacted 3 times for different cars within 3 months asking that same question. We also get calls assuming you love them so much, you will buy their car and pay much more than they are worth.

This time it was a realtor who is a friend of a friend and was selling an old house and property. We were told an old Studebaker was in a small barn and we could have it for free, but had to be removed within 4 days, or it would be scrapped with bulldozing and demolition of house and barn. They weren't sure what model, or year, but thought it was from 1940's, or 50's and was complete without any broken glass, etc. We said don't crush it and we'd find a way to remove it, then went for a drive to find out what it was!

The property was overgrown by trees and plants with an empty house that looked like someone grew too old to maintain. Near it was the small barn (more like a shed) that had no door and the nose of the car sticking out. There were remains of a blue tarp that once served as a door covering the front of the car and the wooden shed had sunk down to where the car couldn't go under the opening!



Going under the wobbly looking shed with blackberry stickers, we could see the car was covered in dust, but actually straight without any bad visible signs of rust! Appearing to be a 1948 Champion it had a unique outer sun visor and was a Starlight Coupe! Upon further inspection it also had a nice dash and interior looked like it might clean up decent! It was almost as if the previous owner backed the car in and perhaps got too old to drive it.



Then I noticed a sign on front windshield under the dust. Since the front end of the car could have been visible from the street, I thought maybe the owner had a For Sale Sign on it when he no longer could drive it. Wiping the dust away, the sign showed what he/she wanted to do. The owner likely got tired of people wanting to buy it and couldn't part with it!



With no place for us to keep it and removal requiring chain saws and 4 days to save it, I immediately thought about a friend in the Studebaker Club named Tony!

Tony once was a tow truck operator and despite his age is a very hard-working go-getter. He was already working on a crusty 1948 Champion Coupe. It was in sad condition that many people would scrap, but Tony got it together and running good again. If there was anyone who could make it happen and rescue another car quickly it was Tony! When I told him he could have it free if able to remove it quick, he said he had access to a trailer and could winch it out of the barn after being able to use a chain saw to cut an opening in the building and remove a tree!

He and his son rescued the car from certain fate and did so much work on it so it could be on the road again ASAP! After getting the other 48 coupe driving, the owner of a local auto parts store recognized it, since it was originally owned by his family and all his children learned to drive in it, so he wants it (making a happy ending for both cars and owners!).

Tony said he would like to not only clean this one up, but **repair the frozen engine, brakes, etc. and drive it to our upcoming SDC Club Chapter Meeting!** The day of our next meeting we had record rainfall and flooding, but guess who drove a 1948 Champion to the meeting? Thanks to Tony, another Studebaker was saved and back on the road in record time!

