

## Denny Manner Honored

by: William C. "Bill" Anderson, P.E., ROA 2238

Photography by: John E. Kozol

Dennis M. Manner, who retired in 1996 as Assistant Chief Engineer GM Powertrain, was awarded the BHA Award (Buick Heritage Alliance Award) for "his significant contributions to the performance heritage of Buick automobiles and its preservation." Mr. Manner is the third person to be honored by having his name included on the BHA's 100-year trophy.



**Above:** Joel L. Gauthier and William C. Anderson present Dennis M. Manner with the Buick Heritage Alliance Award at the Buick Club of America's 2014 National Meet, held in Portland, Oregon. From left to right, Joel L. Gauthier, Dennis M. Manner, William C. Anderson.

**Right:** The Buick Heritage Alliance Award 100-Year Trophy.



The BHA Award was created in 2005 for the purposes of encouraging and promoting the acquisition, restoration, preservation, and display to the public of Buick automobiles and related items. The BHA's purposes also include the promotion of historical research, and the educational dissemination of information concerning the origin and development of the Buick automobile and the individuals who contributed to its history.

Denny Manner's many contributions to Buick performance included the development of:

- the camshafts used in the 401 and 425 nailhead engines;
- the 2-4 bbl carburetor option for the 425 engine;
- the Stage 1 option for 400 and 455 engines and Stage 2 performance components for the 400/430 and 455 engines; and
- the 1975 Indianapolis 500 Pace Car.

A racer at heart who loved to prove his engineering on the track, Dennis was Buick's official representative to the NHRA and several private race teams from 1965 to 1972. He was promoted to a senior manager with GM Powertrain in the 1970s. In that capacity, he oversaw the development of the Turbo V-6 base engines powering the Grand National series that was the fastest production car in 1987.



**Above: From Left to right, Joel L. Gauthier, Dennis M. Manner, Lola Manner, William C. Anderson.**

In the 1980s, Dennis' personal interests turned to car restoration. He acquired and restored a 1966 Riviera Gran Sport. This car has the distinction of being one of the first '66 Rivieras equipped with the "factory" installed Super Wildcat, dual 4-bbl. carb option. Only 179 Rivieras were built with this option in 1966, although the dual 4 bbl. option could be purchased through dealers during this production year. Dennis has been a BCA member since 1982. He has continually shared his knowledge of Buick performance since then with BCA members as well as members of the ROA, GSCA, and Buick Performance Group.



The BHA Award was presented during the BHA's third Gala held in conjunction with the BCA National Meet in Portland this past July. About 250 guests witnessed the award presentation and enjoyed a silent auction, entertainment provided by the Country Classics, and dinner. The auction featured a wide selection of collectible literature, automobilia and the use of a BCA member's resort home; over \$2500 was raised. The Country Classics band treated the guests to a musical trip back in time evoking memories of the 50s and 60s – cruising the loop, drive-ins, and sock hops. The BHA kept the refreshments flowing to encourage the party, but some left early. They missed a real treat later in the evening when Linda Hall, co-coordinator of the ROA Region in Australia, joined the band for a rousing rendition of Jerry Lee Lewis' *Great Balls of Fire*.

**Left: William C. Anderson addresses BCA National Meet attendees in Portland, Oregon for the presentation of the BHA Award.**

Plans are already underway for the 2015 BHA Gala in Springfield, Missouri. It will be another evening when the BHA can thank its many supporters and provide National Meet participants with entertainment and raise some money with a silent auction. Guests at the BHA's 2015 Gala will learn who will be presented with the BHA Award in 2015. The BHA looks forward to seeing you there.