

August 22, 2005

Hello, Steam Team:

My apologies to members Baldwin, Powlison, E. Robinson, Jordan, Sanger, and Simpkins, as last week's "News" came back 3 days later as "not deliverable" to the six of you. I really don't know why, but am checking all E-mail addresses, and I hope this week will not be a repeat.

Following our format, this week is supposed to deal with industry in Yorklyn. What made Yorklyn a mill town? It almost started out that way when the original settler, John Garrett, joined with some of his farmer-neighbors to build a grist mill harnessing the waters of Red Clay Creek about 1730. We believe this mill was along what is now Benge Road behind Auburn Heights, where the paper mill buildings of the Marshall Brothers Division of NVF Company have recently operated. Old Public Road from the productive farm areas around present-day Hockessin, as well as the Creek Road toward Kennett Square were the links to the outside world. John Garrett, Jr., who inherited the property from his father, built the first section of the "farmhouse" next to the mill in 1760; this house was greatly enlarged in the nineteenth century, and it is now a part of the Auburn Heights Preserve. John, Jr. also experimented with the manufacture of snuff, perhaps in the grist mill or another structure very close by as early as 1782. With his newfound success in making snuff and having at least 3 sons interested in the business, he acquired more land 1/2 mile downstream, and built a new and larger snuff mill just before 1800, while still maintaining the original one. Well up in years, John, Jr. also built a home on the hill overlooking this new mill where he lived a few years before his death. This house was greatly enlarged by his grandson, William E. Garrett, in 1850, and has been referred to since as the Garrett Mansion. Although one of John's sons, Horatio, continued to live in the area (then called Auburn) for several years and built himself a nice home half way up the Benge Road hill about 1806, his brother, John, III, pulled out for Ohio, and another brother, Levi, moved to Philadelphia and operated the growing snuff empire from there. The Garrett Snuff business was a major player in the economy of the village throughout the 19th century, but no Garretts made their year-'round home here after about 1810. The summer mansion built by Levi's son William in 1850 was used only to escape Philadelphia's heat during the warm-weather months. In 1845, the mills were expanded again with the construction of the "Lower Snuff Mill", 1/2 mile downstream from the main plant. When William's sons, Walter and William E., Jr. died in the late 1890's, the snuff business passed out of the Garrett family. However, snuff was not finished in Yorklyn. The huge American Tobacco Company, through its subsidiary the American Snuff Company, had bought up most snuff mills in the country creating a monopoly, but implementation of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act broke up this monopoly about 1910. Before this, however, the snuff mills reached their maximum size and importance with the large #5 Mill being the newest

addition (1902). After 1910, the Yorklyn mills were sharply down-sized and came under the ownership of the George W. Helme Company of Helmetta, NJ. Snuff was manufactured here with 40 employees until the mills were closed down by Helme in 1954. (More on Industry later).

Last week, we entertained Governor Minner, her secretary, bodyguard, and John Hughes, Secretary of DNREC, on Wednesday evening. Thanks to about a dozen FAHP volunteers, Board member Cam Yorkston, Advisor Fred Sears, Jim Jordan (who played a major role in arranging the sale of NVF property to the State), and Chazz Salkin, Director of the Division of Parks & Recreation, the event went well, and we believe the Governor and her people were impressed with Auburn Heights and our "Friends" volunteers. An elaborate supper was served to all on the open porch, thanks to the Parks Division. Ruth, with the help of Jan Rivera and Bill Rule, had the house looking very nice, and Rose Ann did the same for the Museum. As always the rides were a hit also. Alan Berry and Rob Robison got some good pictures of the Governor's visit. Three of our cars went to the Threshermen's Reunion at Kinzers the next day: Jerry Novak and Andy Zych in the '37 Packard, Bill Schwoebel in the Model 78, and Butch Cannard and Dan Nichols in the Model 607. Dale and Teddy Simpkins cleaned up Locomotive 402 after Wednesday evening's run.

This week, we'll be preparing for another "Steamin' Sunday" on August 28. In addition to getting the R.R., popcorn, operating cars, and the Museum ready for our visitors, please remember our best publicity is word of mouth and handing out flyers to any and all prospective visitors. If you are here Tuesday or Thursday, please pick up flyers if you can use them, and ask for complimentary tickets if you have outlets where they will do us good. In July, we had 418 paying visitors; let's see if we can top that this time. Jerry Novak and Emil are signing up volunteers for Sunday, so we hope you can help if asked.

We've been asked by the local British Car Club if they can visit Auburn Heights and we have suggested to them the date of Sept. 25, our next "Steamin' Sunday". If it works out, details will be forthcoming. I've also been asked if we can get a Stanley running, owned by a man named Norman Hahn. I know the car a little bit; Weldin Stumpf and I got it running for him 20 plus years ago, and nothing has happened since. It's a condenser but the owner didn't know that. We can discuss whether we want to undertake projects like this if requested. Also, we've been asked to host the Grand National AACA Tour for a visit during the tour headquartered in Dover and run by BRAACA at the end of July, 2006 (I think). They'd like to come by bus for our events and a catered or box lunch on either Thursday or Friday. Rose Ann is chair person of this event and will keep us informed.

If we have a good turnout of volunteers this week, all will not be needed for Sunday's preparations. We can move ahead with several mechanical projects. On the car side, I have made a list of the things

that need to be done to complete the cosmetic restoration of the '18 Stanley Model 735. As mentioned earlier, I'd like to get a small team of volunteers committed to this project, so it can move along toward completion in the next few weeks. There are a number of other mechanical projects that deserve attention- please ask! Chuck Erikson and his wife are on a Disney Cruise, and Mark Hopkins and his family are in the Canadian Rockies. Good luck to all, and thanks to all FAHP volunteers. Tom