

Christmas Greetings

We are very grateful for being able to celebrate another holiday season with our many friends, either in person or with the miracle of modern communication. We think of you often and we hope this finds each of you healthy and preparing to enjoy the holidays with your loved ones. All of us have many blessings of which we should be ever thankful.

We have been in our new home at Cokesbury Village for nearly 13 months and we have the best of all worlds: the advantage of living in a wonderful retirement community, while being close enough to our old home to return often. We are still refining our thoughts on small items at Auburn Heights we may want at Cokesbury, and the State's Division of Parks and Recreation has been very generous in allowing us this window of time. Tom is at his old shop and museum almost daily, and Ruth remains the senior docent when tours of the big house are given about eight days each year. Both of us are active in the "Friends of Auburn Heights Preserve".

Our three major trips in 2009 were outstanding in different ways. In June, nine of us, with trailers carrying our Stanley Mountain Wagon and our 1913 Stanley Touring Car, traveled 3,700 miles (round-trip) to Estes Park, Colorado, to help the Stanley Hotel there celebrate its 100th anniversary. Three Mountain Wagons and about twelve other Stanleys toured for five days through the mountains of the Rockies' Front Range. With snow on most of these mountains, it was spectacular! In July, fifteen of us took five Stanleys to Saratoga Springs to participate in the Eastern Invitational Steam Car Tour. Finally in December, hoping to see snow and holiday decorations, four of us toured western New England, staying at some of our favorite historic inns. The snow was there with bright cold days, and beautiful decorations abounded.

Ruth went to her favorite retreats in Lewes (DE) for a few days, enjoyed a one-day bus trip to New York, and attended some of the excellent programs at Cokesbury. Tom remains active with his steam cars and continues to be one of the drivers when they are taken to nearby events. He is proud of the statistic that he has driven a Stanley Steamer in each of 65 seasons (every year starting in 1943 except '44 and '45).

Both of us wish all of you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy 2010.

Ruth and Tom Marshall

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Those of you who missed the Work Session on December 17 lost out on Rose Ann Hoover's annual Holiday Train Layout, all eatable, and indeed the chocolates and other sweets were eaten by the end of the evening. Complete in detail with rail, cross ties, stone ballast, coal, a tunnel through a mountain, and a train itself after a derailment, it surpassed what she had done in the past. Hot chocolate and sparkling cider provided by Carol Bernard completed the holiday delicacies, and almost completed the evening, as less than normal work was accomplished. This is how it should be just before Christmas. Many thanks, Rose Ann, Carol, and Richard for surprising us all.

As we begin our holiday recess, another nice surprise arrived last week in the form of a very generous contribution from Crystal Trust to move us ahead toward completion of the restoration of our Stanley Model 607. Thanks are due Dee Durham, chair of our Development Committee, and Carol Bernard, who filled in the details, in completing the grant application.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO ALL!

Tom