

## F.A.H.P. News, August 12, 2013

**Seventy-Six:** The United States has always liked the Spirit of '76 and for good reason. It was a very risky experiment that has lasted for nearly 240 years. I was happy to have a part in helping Hockessin celebrate the Bicentennial Year in 1976 and drove our 1905 Model CX in the July 4<sup>th</sup> Parade carrying New Castle County Councilman Francis J. Swift (for whom Swift Park is named).

My father liked "76." About the time he joined Frank Diver in establishing the Packard Motor Company of Wilmington (1922), he acquired Delaware license number 76, and it remained in the family until I donated it to F.A.H.P. about 2010, when it was registered on our 1913 Stanley Model 76. By a strange coincidence, it was the Model 76 that started the steam car collection.

License #76 was always on our "big car" when I grew up, the car in which we took our motor trips. It was first on a First Series Packard Straight Eight of 1924, 7-passenger touring car. When I was about three years old, I remember sleeping out the night in Rehoboth with my parents and my maternal grandmother in this car, with top up and side curtains on, as a tropical hurricane raged outside (undoubtedly, I was the only one who slept). Next it was on a 1928 Model 443, 7-passenger sedan, in which we toured Florida when the car was new. Following that, when I was spending three months with my parents at Southern Pines, North Carolina, #76 was transferred to a 1932 Big Eight 7-passenger sedan, after Joe Stoeckle, who worked for the Packard agency, drove it down and returned with the Model 443 to be sold as a used car. In September 1934, on our way home from the Century of Progress Exposition in Chicago, we stopped at the Packard factory in Detroit and took delivery of a '34 "leftover" Packard Twelve, 7-passenger limousine. The idea was that with the divider glass in the limousine, my father could smoke his cigars behind the wheel and my mother would not have to inhale the cigar smoke in the rear (the trouble was, they soon realized they could not converse, so the divider glass was always rolled down). The last Packard on which #76 was registered was our '37 Twelve, still in the collection, and it stayed on this car for about 30 years, soon after which it was registered as an antique.

In 1976, our Bicentennial Year, #76 was registered on a '70 Buick Skylark that we called my mother's car, although she was not driving by that time. I received a letter from a man in Florida who had his State's #76, and he was trying to get a photo of as many state #76 plates as possible. I photographed it on the back of the Buick but also temporarily attached it to our Model 607, thinking he would be amused. I never heard further from him. For the most part, I kept Delaware #76 on my largest car, until I transferred it from my '04 Lincoln to the Stanley Model 76.

When my parents built our summer place at #1 Queen Street in Rehoboth in 1927, their phone number became Rehoboth 76. And in 1941, when my cousin Meta Shallcross joined the three Marshalls for a 12,000-mile trip all over the West in our '37 Packard, we named it the "Spirit of 76," and Meta said "The spirit moves us." On this trip, my father went to the Union Oil of California distributor in San Francisco and obtained a large 76 decal, used on all Union Oil gas

pumps at that time. It was hanging on the front of the Packard when it was photographed under the famous Wawona Tunnel Tree in Yosemite National Park.

“76 Trombones Lead the Big Parade!”

**Work Report:** The past week was a busy one for our active volunteers. On Tuesday, about 45 of us honored Art Wallace with a cook-out prior to the Work Session. On August 19, Art is leaving this area permanently to relocate near his daughter in West Palm Beach, Florida. He has been a dedicated volunteer for about 10 years, often undertaking tasks nobody else wanted to do, and he was a tireless promoter of F.A.H.P., both on- and off-site. It is indeed an understatement to say we will miss him.

After the party, at least 15 volunteers continued during the work session. Those observed were Jay Williams, Mac Taylor, Ken Ricketts, Gary Green, Anne Cleary, Bill Schwoebel, Dan Citron, Tim Ward, Richard Bernard, Mark Russell, Emil Christofano, Brent McDougall, Jerry Lucas, Dennis Dragon, and Tom Marshall. More sound-deadening was done on the Lionel layout, and the leaking water tank was removed from the Model EX. The long-missing side and tail lamps for the Model 607 were finally located. The final attachment of running boards and fenders, along with linoleum and moldings, are nearly completed. The locomotives were cleaned from their August 3<sup>rd</sup> and August 4<sup>th</sup> runs.

On Thursday, August 8, track work began on the rear Auburn Valley Railroad curve, with the intent of replacing about 70 feet of the railroad (rail only – the ties are good). Attendance at the work session was diminished, as seven active volunteers attended the quarterly Board of Directors Meeting. Robert Hopkins, Paul Kratunis, Ted Kamen, Jim Personti, and probably several more were on hand as the windshield was fit and installed on the Model 607, and the Model EX's water tank was soldered and tested.

Three volunteers, Steve Bryce, Bill Schwoebel, and Jerry Novak, left early Friday morning for Chicago where they intend to take delivery of a “Diesel” locomotive to be used on the Auburn Valley Railroad, with a side trip to Marcellus, Michigan, to pick up a 30-H.P. three-venturi grate pattern that was used to cast six slotted grates of the type used in Model Z Mountain Wagons, Model K Semi-Racers, and Model M Touring Cars. As of Sunday morning, they had loaded their western cargo, and were starting toward home.

On Sunday, Gary Green, Dave Leon, Anne Cleary and Linda Herman helped Tom on the renovation of the A.V.R.R. curve. Less than half completed at this writing, the curve is forecast to be back in service during the week beginning August 19.