

F.A.H.P. News, May 21, 2012

Local Hockessin-Area Historians: In the 19th century, there was limited interest in local history from the 17th and 18th centuries. In fact it was not before the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1876 that antique furniture generated much interest, when reproduction “antiques” from the Colonial period were shown and admired. It was known that the Hockessin area was settled by Quakers, who still comprised a large part of the local population until the end of the 19th century, but no one really knew wherefrom the name *Hockessin* came.

In Thomas Scharf's *History of Delaware* published in 1888, a first attempt was made to address local history. Lenni-Lenape Indian lore was mentioned, as well as the encampment of British troops on the grounds of Hockessin Friends Meeting House prior to the Battle of the Brandywine in September 1777. In 1933, Elsie (Mrs. Herman) McVaugh, who lived in one of two mid-19th-century houses with mansard roofs on Meeting House Road, wrote an informal history of Hockessin for the Waverly Club, of which she was a member.

Dr. John A. Munroe, longtime head of the History Department at the University of Delaware, taught a required undergraduate course in Delaware history, in which he covered all sections of the state. The famed survey of Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon in the 1760s was commissioned to settle the longtime border dispute between William Penn and his heirs and several generations of the Calvert family, all called Lord Baltimore, separating Maryland from Pennsylvania. The three lower counties of Pennsylvania along the Delaware River, which were agitating to become a separate colony, asked Mason and Dixon to survey the 12-mile-radius circle from the Old Court House in New Castle, which has, since 1776, separated Pennsylvania and Delaware. This “circle,” resurveyed about 1892, forms the northwestern boundary of the Auburn Heights Preserve.

C. A. Weslager, who built a new home on Old Public Road between Hockessin and Yorklyn in the 1950s, did massive research of local deeds and the like, and subsequently published several small books and monographs on the history of the area. Some of his works pertaining to the Hockessin area were *Delaware's Forgotten Folk*, *The Hollingsworth Plantation in Mill Creek Hundred, 140 Years Along Old Public Road*, and *The Garrett Snuff Fortune*.

In the 1950s, Joseph R. Lake Jr., still in his teens, and Carol (Mrs. Kenneth) Swayne interviewed many people and compiled historical notes from which they gave illustrated lectures in the community. With the Bicentennial Year (1976) approaching, Joe Lake decided to undertake a much larger project from which came *Hockessin: A Pictorial History*, of which I was one of the editors. All 1,500 books published by the Hockessin-Yorklyn-Corner Ketch Bicentennial Committee

were sold by 1978. In 1997, Joe Lake authored a second improved edition, copies of which may still be available at the Hockessin Public Library.

Work Report: On Tuesday, 17 volunteers were present. On the 1916 Stanley Model 725, the vertical section of the flue was attached, the horn re-mounted, and the hood put back on the car. (The car was road-tested on May 18, and the automatic water level regulator was cleaned and adjusted.) All fuel and oil levels were checked on the Mountain Wagon, and the car was completely lubricated. On the 30-H.P. Model 87, the toe-in on the front wheels was checked, and the running board molding was repaired. On the 607 restoration project, many bolt threads have been cleared of paint, and some of the copper tubing to be reused has been located and polished. A steering adjustment was made on the Rauch & Lang electric, and a donated battery charger has been checked out (it may be for the wrong voltage). The track was completed on the circular "O"-gauge Lionel railway, and trains were tested on this unique layout. A good supply of firewood was delivered and split for use in our steam locomotives.

On Thursday, 11 volunteers put a final coat of paint on the Auburn Valley Railroad water tower and repaired a broken fitting on the Model 725's hand fuel pump. On the 607 project, the painted and trimmed hood has been returned to us (almost ready for the striper), and the cylinder oil tank was coated to preserve its appearance. The 1918 Model 735 and the 1922 Model 740 were prepped for their possible runs to the Historical Car Club's Spring Show at Linvilla Orchards (only the 735 was used).

On Saturday, Steve Bryce and Robert Hopkins displayed our Mountain Wagon in Hockessin at Wild Birds Unlimited as part of a special Hockessin Business Association promotion, and they found much interest in FAHP and our coming events. Tim Ward and Ted Kamen, together with Ted's son Brian, accompanied me in the 735 on Sunday for the 36-mile round-trip run to Linvilla Orchards. Tim drove outbound, and Ted drove inbound. We stopped for water on our return at our good friend Herb Kephart's on Smith's Bridge Road at Elam. The car ran very well, and the pilot went out only once as we approached Linvilla. Our good friend and volunteer Dave Leon won a first prize for his beautiful 1910 Reo touring. Also on Sunday, Dan Citron displayed our Rauch & Lang in the parking area of Auburn Heights for the benefit of bicycle riders on a 76-mile marathon ride.

Volunteers on Tuesday: Steve Bryce (in charge), Bob Jordan, Emil Christofano, Jerry Novak, Jeff Pollock, Jerry Lucas, Ted Kamen, Dennis Dragon, Dave Leon, Mark Hopkins, Alan Deike, Tim Ward, Rose Ann Hoover, Richard Bernard, Brent McDougall, Mark Russell, and Tom Marshall; on Thursday: Dave Leon, Bob Stransky, Butch Cannard, Eugene Maute, Gerhard Maute, Kelly Williams, Jim Personti, Geoff Fallows, Bob Jordan, Ted Kamen, and Tom Marshall (in charge).