

May 15, 2006

Hello, Steam Team:

I've written a lot about the Auburn Heights Marshalls, probably more than you want to know. Here's a stab at telling you a little of my mother's family: My mother, Esther Shallcross Marshall (1885-1979) was the fourth of six children born to James Thomas Shallcross (1847-1911) and Mary Ellen Vandegrift Shallcross (1852-1944). The average longevity of the six was 92 years, the youngest to die making it to 79 and the oldest to 103. As you can see, my mother was 94.

My great grandfather, Sereck Fox Shallcross (1816-1906), a Quaker who emigrated from Byberry in northeast Philadelphia to the Middletown-Odessa area of Delaware about 1842 was a successful farmer who bought several farms around what was later called Shallcross Lake which backed up behind a dam on Drawyers Creek. He built a large brick home with 3 floors and a mansard roof on a farm called Oakland, south of the lake. The farm to the north of the lake was called Belleview, and here my grandparents lived. My mother and all her siblings were born at Belleview. Still another family farm which bordered the Boyd's Corner-Mount Pleasant Road was named Whitehall.

James T. Shallcross, my grandfather, dabbled in Democratic politics, somewhat to the dismay of my grandmother. In addition to farming, he took the train daily from Mount Pleasant to Wilmington where, during the 1890's he was Recorder of Deeds for New Castle County. My other grandfather, Israel Marshall, and his brother Elwood (the original "Marshall Brothers") obtained water rights from Levis Lamborn to the stream that passes in front of Emil and Doris Christofano's home, and the deed was recorded in 1892 with both my grandfathers' names appearing on the same piece of paper! I'm sure they didn't know each other, and probably never did, as they both died in 1911, 10 years before my parents were married.

Esther Shallcross married my father, Clarence Marshall, at Old Drawyers Presbyterian Church near Odessa on June 4, 1921, and she became the new hostess of Auburn Heights. More will be told of her 58-year tenure and her accomplishments in future editions.

Speaking of editions, Rob Robison has mailed Volume 1, Number 2, the spring issue of the Auburn Heights Herald. You should receive it this week and we hope you find it of interest. Our sincere thanks to Rob and to Bob Reilly for all the work that goes into this publication.

If you go to the Wilmington & Western this Saturday for Red Clay Valley Days, be sure to check out the Yorklyn Station, the story of which was our featured historic article.

Our Pre-Schoolers' and Kindergarteners' Auburn Valley train ride, scheduled for this morning, was postponed because of rain and wet grounds. The rain date is Wednesday, May 17, starting at 10 A.M. We have only 3 groups signed up, and each will do 3 things: ride the train, play on "Little Toot", and view the electric trains in operation. Rob Robison fit most of the beautifully-cleaned piping back on the Model 735, and Jerry Lucas has the master cylinder for the new brakes mounted. Butch Cannard and the Simpkins' have completed six new sign standards, and 8 more bases are ready for pipes to make all ready for painting. Ted is working on the new brakes for the 735. Chevonne Robison was here twice helping Ruth with horticulture around the grounds, and great improvements have been made. Today, Bob Reilly spent several hours with Ray Bivens and Dorothy Payton of the Division of Parks, and they have offered to do many things for the Friends, including the publicizing of our events and the making of several interpretive, historic, and directional signs to be placed around our grounds. And speaking of publicizing, Bob is trying to get members of the promotional team together on Saturday, 5/20, to map out final strategy for promoting June 3 and 4. We won't all be at Red Clay Valley Days. On Sunday, May 21, several will be going to Linvilla Orchards near Media, PA, for the spring meet of the Historical Car Club of Penna. We urge those qualified to take a car, and for others it can be a great learning experience, so we encourage your participation. Just let us know if you can make it- we'll leave Yorklyn about 10:30 Sunday morning.

The spring Board meeting of FAHP will be held in the reception room of the museum at 7:30 P.M. on Thursday, May 18. The big museum door will be open so those needing to work there or prepare cars for the weekend can do so, as the reception room doors will be closed and work will not interfere with the meeting. Also, on Wednesday afternoon at 4:30, Greg Landrey and Mike May are having a Collections Committee meeting here.

Finally, thought has been given to opening our facilities on Thanksgiving weekend, 2006, either for two days (Friday & Saturday) or for three days (Fri., Sat., and Sun.). Many think it a good idea, but we need input on how many of you can work that weekend and for how many days you can commit. We will have a sheet available to get an idea from you, or you can E-mail Bob Reilly (admin@auburnheights.org) and give him your thoughts. Best wishes to all. Tom

