

August 14, 2006

Hello, Steam Team:

As we prepare for our Ice Cream Social on the lawn at Auburn Heights (Aug. 18-19), I am reminded of two lawn parties in my parents' time attended by about 30 invitees each time.

The first was at the beginning of September, 1939, right when Hitler invaded Poland to start World War II. My mother had advertised her lawn party as a "Hay Seed Party", and suggested that her guests should come dressed as old-time farm people. Most complied with her request and there were some outstanding costumes among those who attended. I was the official photographer, and a few prints exist from that occasion. The tables for the sit-down dinner were set on the lawn beside and behind the sun porch (part of the area is now the flat-stone patio). Following dinner there were some games dreamed up by my mother, one of which was a horse race for six players on a wooden board or race track, with wooden horses cut out by my father and painted in bright circus colors. I think the players rolled dice to move their horses. I'm not sure the game was as popular as my mother had hoped. One of the amazing thing about such gatherings was how everyone parked in the yard. A stone wall opposite the large door to the shop ended the driveway, so no one could park below the present garage (the museum building and its parking lot in front was built in 1947). Cars parked around the house and in the driveway, and most people were blocked in. We knew nothing else in those days.

The second party was on August 5, 1955, on my father's 70th birthday (my mother had turned 70 on August 4). We were in an extremely hot spell, and the temperature had reached 100 degrees about 3 days that week. Again the tables were set in the same general location and the dinner was served by a Wilmington caterer named James Wright (or possibly James White). I paid him for the full course meal served by his waiters and the total came to just over \$200. My mother's siblings and their spouses, as well as my father's, were invited, and most were then living and in attendance. As after-dinner entertainment my father gave an illustrated lecture on Bayard Taylor's "Story of Kennett", his favorite novel. He was supposed to be followed by his cousin, Pusey Passmore, who had been asked to give one of his humorous travelogues. My dad's part went on for too long, however, and Cousin Pusey was cancelled out. Pusey Passmore was known to many Wilmingtonians as the proprietor of Lynthwaite Farm, a popular place near Talleyville for home-made ice cream on hot summer evenings.

The F A H P quarterly Board Meeting was held last Thursday, August 10, with 14 of the 17 directors in attendance. We are always glad to have our long-distance Board member, Mike May and his wife

Kathryn in attendance. Although they live over 800 miles from Yorklyn, Mike has missed only one Board meeting out of seven since he was elected to our Board. The usual committee reports and a lengthy report by our Executive Director were given. We are in sound financial condition with over \$110,000 on deposit, and three of our four public weekend events coming up between now and the end of November. An annual appeal campaign will be conducted this fall (similar to last year) starting on October 1st. Our membership year has been changed to April 1-March 31, replacing a calendar year. Current members will get 15 months on their "year". In the future, new members joining in the last 3 months of a membership year will be paid up for the following membership year.

A lot of effort has gone into promotion for our upcoming Ice Cream Social on Friday and Saturday evenings (Aug. 18-19) from 5:30 to 9:00. Several members of our Promotion Team have distributed flyers and posters in many nearby areas. Bob Reilly arranged to have a Stanley at Woodside Farm Creamery for the Fire Company benefit yesterday, and he was there to answer questions and distribute our literature for 4 hours. Monday through Thursday evenings this week he will be there again with the '13 roadster promoting our upcoming event. In addition, he arranged for an ad on Channel 12 just before and after the News Hour with Jim Lehrer each of the five weekday evenings this week. The cost of this was underwritten by 4 of our members- thank you very much!

Our volunteers are putting forth special effort to make the upcoming weekend a success. Ron Turochy has had a cadre of volunteers helping with "Little Toot", and they will have it usable by Friday. It looks nice and will be a lot of fun for our young visitors. Thanks to the Division of Parks for making three of the four pieces in this little train available to us. New fencing installed today should make our premises safer. Track maintenance has been performed by Steve Jensen, Bill Schwoebel, Brent McDougall, and the Maute brothers. Bob Wilhelm, Butch Cannard, and Bob Reilly have finalized the signal design and Ed Hoffmeister has finished the signals themselves. It is doubtful that we can have them operable by August 18, however. Rob and Chevonne Robison are helping Ruth in sprucing up the grounds and preparing lighting for our after-dark operation each evening before 9 P.M. As usual, we are indebted to Bill Rule, Bill Schwoebel, Richard Bernard and Herman Feissner for preparing our parking area for both day and after-dark use. And we expect some live musical entertainment!

This week our major thrust on work nights will be final preparations for the public weekend. On the Stanley cars, Jerry Lucas is nearing the end on the brake installation for the 1908 Model EX, and Dale and Ted Simpkins cleaned the underside of the 735 in preparation for running the brake lines on that car. Last Tuesday, four Stanleys went to Mitchells' for ice cream, on Saturday several of us attended BRAACA's summer picnic at Hagley, and on Sunday morning I took a local

bride and her bridesmaids in the Model 76 from Yorklyn to her wedding spot near Kennett Square. Upon returning home, I noticed a fitting leaking in the bottom of the boiler, and had to drop the burner to repair it. Since some burner work will be required in addition to making the fitting repair, this car will be returned to the museum until more time is available. Next Tuesday, August 22, the Events Committee will meet at Auburn Heights. MANY THANKS TO ALL. Tom