

## APRIL 20, 2009 F.A.H.P. NEWS

**Steamship Services of Old:** Before World War II, there were several old-time coastal and river services in the East, in addition to the many trans-Atlantic steamships and ocean cruises. Many of these services were left over from a more profitable period when river and lake travel seemed affordable for almost everyone. The Merchant & Miners ships plied East Coast waters from Florida to Maine, as did those of the Eastern Steamship Company. My mother, who seldom went outside the country during her lifetime, took a Merchants & Miners ship from Philadelphia to Boston in the 1930's, and sent a card home saying, as they started up the Atlantic shore from Cape May, "Last night we could see the lights of Avalon". I had to find out where Avalon was.

Mother also took a Great Lakes Cruise from Erie or Buffalo to Duluth about 1929, accompanied by her niece, Betty Roberts (1903-1999). The Detroit & Cleveland Navigation Co. and the Georgian Bay Line both operated nice cruise ships on the Lakes. In 1946, the first Glidden Tour Revival used the D & C from Buffalo to Detroit; in 1958 I saw one of the Georgian Bay ships, either the *North American* or the *South American*, that had dropped anchor off Mackinac Island. One ship was in service to Chicago, the other to Duluth, both leaving from Lackawanna Terminal in Buffalo. On the Chesapeake Bay, there was overnight service from both Baltimore and Washington to Norfolk (and return) on the Old Bay Line. These ships like the *City of Baltimore* were probably built before World War I, and certainly had no private baths.

Until World War II, the Fall River Line and possibly one other, operated an overnight service from New York to Boston, but their popularity was on the decline after the 1920's. I saw one of these ships sailing under the Mount Hope Bridge near Bristol, RI, in 1938, probably enroute from New York to Fall River. A fast boat train took overnight passengers from Fall River or Providence to Boston, saving several hours of sailing through the Cape Cod Canal and Massachusetts Bay. My father went to the Stanley factory that way with his cousin Paul Way over Memorial Day weekend in 1910. They picked up a new Model 61 and drove it home, 400 miles, and Way enjoyed this car for many trips in the ensuing years.

Summer steamboat excursions were popular on the St. Lawrence River during the summer months, usually run by the Canada Steamship Company. All these ships were "old tubs" by the 1950's, but they were reasonably priced, and promoted widely by the railroads that took passengers from these parts to Montreal. The *S.S. Richelieu* was the flagship of the Line. Ports-of-call included Quebec City, Murray Bay, and Tadoussac, and a scenic cruise up the Saguenay River that flowed into the St. Lawrence some 150 miles downstream from Quebec. The steamship company owned big resort hotels at Tadoussac and Murray Bay, though many passengers could not afford overnight stop-overs to enjoy this luxury.

As April progresses, we draw ever-closer to our busy times, both on and off-site. Two private groups visit the big house and museum on April 23 and 28 respectively. On Saturday, May 2, it looks like our Stanley Models 735 and 740 will go to Dover to give rides around the Green in

connection with old Dover Days. The next day, Sunday, May 3, we hope to have 9 Stanleys at Winterthur for the annual Point-to-Point races and festivities, and this year we have been asked to “parade in”, as do the Rolls Royces, and the outstanding carriages. On Sunday, May 10, the annual Willowdale Steeplechase takes place north of Kennett Square, and our own Lou Mandich is in charge of the antique auto display there, so we hope some will want to support it and take at least two or three cars. On Saturday, May 16, we hope to have two cars, at least one of which will give rides, at the second annual Spring Festival at Bellevue State Park, and on Sunday, the 17<sup>th</sup>, HCCP’s annual Linvilla Orchards Show takes place in Delaware County, to which several of our cars will be driven and displayed. Our participation in the Memorial Day parade in Kennett Square will round out our May activities. On June 7, we have our first “Steamin’ Sunday” of 2009 at Auburn Heights.

In preparing for all the above, the Models 735, 740, and the Mountain Wagon have been quite well checked out, and the eight Kunkle safety valves have been cleaned and tested for our two Auburn Valley steam locomotives. Jonathan Rickerman worked alone for 6 hours last Saturday on Auburn Valley track, Steve Jensen is working on tie replacement, the “cross-buck” R.R. sign was repainted for the crossing near the front gate, and a new coat of shiny black paint on both locomotives was applied by Anne Cleary. Our new workbench in the garage (donated by “Butch” Cannard) is finished with shelving above, a good, heavy vise, and fluorescent lights. Thanks to Jerry Novak, Mark Russell, and Art Wallace for completion of this work.

The State purchased for us a beautiful new portable air compressor that delivers up to 150# pressure, and we are looking forward to electrical hook-up for our permanent 2-stage compressor, relocated to the tool shed just outside the garage. We are also optimistic about the turntable upgrading being completed before we test locomotives prior to their June 7 runs.

Walter Higgins and Steve Bryce are working steadily on the hands-on Stanley exhibit for the Museum, and re-arrangement of cars, begun by Rose Ann Hoover, Chuck Erikson, and Art Wallace, is supposed to take place tomorrow afternoon with the help of Bill Schwoebel, Jerry Novak, Steve Bryce, and “Bucky”.

It now appears that 7 of our group plan to go to Estes Park, CO, in the middle of June, taking two large cars, one of which will be the Mountain Wagon. The occasion is the celebration of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the opening of the Stanley Hotel, for which F. O. Stanley had the very first Mountain Wagons delivered to carry his guests from Loveland to Estes Park (Floyd Clymer said it was 34 miles- today’s mileage seems to be 30). We know of at least 3 original Mountain Wagons, none located near Colorado, that are expected to be there. If any of you can make the trip with us, you will be welcome, but it is expected to be 14 days away from home.

We are happy to report that Emil Christofano is doing well following his hip surgery, and expects to show up at Auburn Heights again soon. Also, we are very happy for Art Wallace who plans to leave for New Zealand on April 30 to spend 4 months there with his son and daughter-in-law. We will miss you, Art, but are glad your dream is coming true. Tom