

## **FAHP News, August 9, 2010**

**Our Model 87 and Cornell University:** In June 1956, the AACA Spring Meet was held on the campus at Cornell atop a high hill overlooking Ithaca and Cayuga Lake. My dad said I could take the 87, and Norbert Behrendt, age 39, of Washington, D.C., agreed to accompany me. The “Meet” was on Saturday afternoon, and the dinner that evening was in a dining hall at Cornell. Most participants stayed in hotels down the hill in Ithaca. We left Yorklyn under our own steam Friday morning and planned to be back late Monday.

The first part of our journey was uneventful, and the big 87 was steaming well. At a water stop on the Susquehanna Trail across the river from Milton, Pennsylvania, a loud hiss was detected as we backed to the water hose. By this time it was late afternoon on Friday. It turned out a hole had developed in a union-L, a fitting connecting the superheater with the steam pipe just behind the burner. A union-L is a very unusual fitting today, but it was a handy way to make a sharp bend in a pipe where clearances are tight. In 1956, I had much to learn about making repairs on the road. In a tiny garage on private property, which doubled as our water stop, we “dropped” the burner (removed it from underneath the boiler), which was unnecessary. Since plumbing supply houses were closing for the weekend, there was no chance to secure a replacement for the failed union-L. The owner of the property, anxious to help, taught in a trade school in Williamsport, about 12 miles away, and since classes were taking place there on Friday evening, he said the students could weld up the hole in the defective fitting. He took us there.

About 11 P.M. the repair had been made, and our host returned us to the Model 87. He also took us across the river, and we found accommodations in an old hotel in Milton to spend a short night. It was noon on Saturday before we were put back together, with the burner in place. Traveling the 100-plus miles to Ithaca, we arrived there about 4 P.M., as the Meet was concluding. We did attend the dinner and had satisfactory accommodations in our downtown Ithaca hotel. Several went in a coffee shop near the hotel for a nightcap before retiring. Norbert and I enjoyed a pleasant conversation over coffee with M. J. “Jerry” Duryea, son of the inventor of the first American automobile, and a pillar in the early antique automobile movement. Before the summer was over, Jerry Duryea was dead.

Some festivities carried over into Sunday morning. We drove north to a beautiful spot along Cayuga Lake for a catered breakfast and then climbed the hill to the Cornell campus again. As we headed for home that afternoon, Norbert thought it would be fun to stop at the Montrose Inn in a small Pennsylvania town of the same name, some 80 miles from Ithaca. Also at the Inn were Henry E. “Gene” Becker, his wife, and another couple, traveling from the AACA meet in their 1916 Pierce 66, bought new by Gene Becker’s grandfather. Gene owned the Centerville & Southwestern R.R., 9½-inch gauge, on the property of Becker’s Dairy Farms at Roseland, New Jersey. For this 2-mile railroad, Gene’s father had the Lackawanna Railroad shops build him a scale-model 4-8-4 “Pocono” steam locomotive, 1/6 actual size, in 1940. The railroad operated successfully until 1972. The Pierce “66” carried Gene and his wife on many Glidden Tours and even on a tour to the West Coast and back before they were no longer able to enjoy such things.

The last day from Montrose to Yorklyn, Norbert and I made no unplanned stops, but one of the water pumps failed to function. With mostly open running, we maintained the water level in the boiler with the one good pump, and we arrived at Auburn Heights on time Monday afternoon.

Last week there was a little housekeeping after Steamin' Sunday, as Anne Cleary and Steve Jensen cleaned the steam locomotives. Jim Personti and Jeff Fallows removed the steps and damaged boxes from passenger observation car #870. Tom will check with Mountain Car Supply Co. about buying new ones where needed.

Work on the Model 607 continued with Art Wallace, Bob Jordan, and Chuck Erikson completing an inventory of parts remaining in the museum attic; a progress report and reevaluation of the work timeline was issued by Tom, along with a reassignment of tasks. Mark Russell and Ted Kamen finished up work on the 607's front cross member, allowing for its removal to the garage behind the snack bar in preparation for the sealing process to begin; this group effort also allowed for a bit of cleaning in the shop and the regaining of some much-needed floor space. Art Wallace and Lou Mandich started cleaning the mounting brackets for the 607's fenders and running boards. Emil Christofano and Jeff Pollock mounted an external throttle control on the 1/16-scale 4-8-4 Northern in the museum.

The Board of Directors met last week and successfully completed our Form 990 for the IRS (a major annual hurdle). Thanks to one and all--and especially to Bob Reilly--for the hard work and time spent on this important paperwork. Thanks also to the Development and Finance committees, who met jointly prior to the Board meeting to help us solidify our financial policies and guidelines.

Our next Steamin' Day is right around the corner... on Labor Day Sunday, Sept. 5. This is traditionally our busiest day of the season, so if you can help out, please let Richard Bernard (rnbernardjr@hotmail.com) know so we can make it spectacular! Also, a reminder that the Events Committee will be meeting on Tuesday at 7 pm, and the Education Committee is scheduled to meet on Thursday, 7 pm.

As noted in a previous Weekly News, we are moving forward on an oral history/documentary project that will bring a film crew to Auburn Heights. They will be recording activity at the Thursday, Aug 12, work night--it could be your chance for a cameo appearance! Second in the State!

Auburn Heights Preserve had the second highest number of volunteer hours for the entire State Park system in 2009, with 9,321 hours. Cape Henlopen State Park came in first with 28,820 hours, and Fort Delaware State Park was third with 8,054. The FAHP figure represents nearly 5 full-time employees, and Auburn Heights would not be what it is without our volunteers. Additionally, the volunteer with the most hours of all of the state parks is our very own Tom Marshall. Please be sure to record your volunteer hours so that we can keep up this trend. When applying for grants, it also helps both the state and FAHP to show such a strong volunteer base. Thank you for all of your hard work and dedication!