

JUNE 16, 2008 F.A.H.P. NEWS

Summer at Auburn Heights, 1914: The large framed photograph (16 x 28) hanging in the front hall of Auburn Heights and also in the Museum's Reception Room, shows Auburn Heights and its grounds during the summer of 1914. A tramp photographer took the picture from the hill opposite, just above the present parking lot for our on-site events. T. Clarence Marshall's 1913 Stanley Model 78 roadster is on the driveway in front of the big house. At that time his mother, having been widowed in 1911, was still running the house, with her daughter and son-in-law, Anna and Norman Mancill, and bachelor Clarence living at home with her. Several trellises for roses or Virginia creepers were attached around the front porch. Clarence worked in the mills every day, along with his brother Warren, his uncle Elwood, and his cousins, Albert and Henry. Clarence may have been the only one of the five to get his hands dirty, however, as he loved the steam machinery and all it entailed.

Perhaps to a lesser extent than in her husband Israel's time, "Lizzie" Marshall (1854-1930) had to be prepared to feed an unknown number of family and visitors for the main meal at noon. She did have help in the kitchen, however. One such loyal helper was Martha Peterson, who lived with her husband and her four small children in a tiny house owned by the Marshall Brothers Paper Company on Auburn Mill Road (a few hundred feet toward the creek from the present home of Emil and Doris Christofano, two of our most active FAHP members). Martha's husband Dorsey drove a one-horse mill cart, and later became a truck driver for the paper and fiber company. At least two of their children, Eliza and Dorsey, Jr. (often called Edward or "Pete") would come to Auburn Heights with their mother, as she had nowhere else to leave them. When the clock neared 12:00, little "Pete" would go to the front gate, hoping that Clarence, coming up from the mills in his Stanley steamer, would stop and give him a ride up the driveway. That summer it must have been in the Model 78 shown in the 1914 picture, and the youngster was never disappointed.

My father Clarence was also a Stanley dealer, and sometime that summer he had a mechanic working on a car in the carriage house, then of frame construction inside the stone walls. A torch set some hay on fire and the interior of the building was destroyed by the flames. Gone forever was the frame partition between the stable and the carriage room, the latter used for a Stanley garage and repair shop. Insurance on the building was carried with a 35-year-old Wilmington agent named William J. Highfield, who came to assess the damage. He said that nowhere in the fire policy did it mention automobiles. My father was concerned as whether the claim would be paid, when Highfield said: "We'll pay the claim, because if we don't, you would never insure with us again, and besides, if you went to court, you would collect anyway". So the building was rebuilt with heavy steel beams and a concrete deck, and became about as fireproof as a 1914 building could be. It was never clear to me whether this fire was before or after the photograph, but the pristine appearance of the property in the picture suggests the fire must have been later.

During that summer of long ago, Lizzie was looking forward to the birth of her second grandchild, as her daughter Anna was expecting in the fall. As has been mentioned earlier, Norman Clarence Mancill was born on November 28, 1914, in the northeast bedroom, the only birth to occur at Auburn Heights during its 111-year history. 1914 in the United States was similar to 1939, in that a World War was brewing in Europe but most Americans believed our country would not become involved.

Our seven members who are participating in the 2008 Eastern Steam Car Tour left Auburn Heights with three towing rigs, each with a Stanley car, about 6:15 Sunday morning, hoping to be in Bennington, VT, headquarters for the tour, in time for the evening "Firing Up" banquet. Not having word at this writing, it is assumed that all went well so far, and that they are enjoying the first day of touring in the Stanleys (Models 87, 76, and 607). Thanks to Bob Wilhelm for the loan of his trailer. On Saturday, June 14, Rose Ann Hoover, Emil Christofano, Jerry Novak, Art Sybell, Ted Simpkins, Catherine Coin, and Dan Citron represented FAHP at Separation Day in Old New Castle. Rose Ann drove the '32 Packard and Art the Rauch & Lang electric in the parade, and all promoted our organization to those in attendance. Thanks for representing F.A.H.P.!

Tuesday and Thursday this week can be devoted to getting the Auburn Valley Railroad ready for our public "Steamin' Sunday" June 29. Some day soon, the two Steve Jensens want to fire up Locomotive #401 and check it out, as it has not been run this year. Jim Personti rebuilt some of the valve gear linkage on the left side of Locomotive #402, which threatened to give trouble during our May 31 "charter". These will also be good nights to fire up a couple of Stanleys for training purposes for those who want to participate. Walter Higgins is coming early Tuesday to fire up and check out our Model 740. I will be glad to fire up a car for training purposes- perhaps Jerry Lucas or Mark Hopkins can help with this effort.

Richard Bernard is still seeking volunteers to man the many jobs necessary for a successful operation on Sunday, June 29. Catherine Coin has sent out about 100 News Releases on the event, but your help in distributing flyers is still very important. Members of the Board have been reminded that their comments on the draft of our Strategic Plan were due on June 15. Please contact Catherine in the office with your suggestions.

We are sad to report that our member George Barczewski, who has been so helpful to FAHP with the loan of his trailer and for driving a trouble truck last year during the Delaware Steam Car Tour, is undergoing radiation and chemo-therapy. We send best wishes for a speedy recovery. We were also saddened by the death of his sister, Joanne Lewis, on May 3. Tom

