

September 24, 2007

Hello, Steam Team:

**Early Regions of the Antique Automobile Club** (as I remember them): AACA was founded in Philadelphia in 1935, the first of the National clubs. The Veteran Car Club of America was founded in Boston in 1938, and the Horseless Carriage Club in California about the same time. For many years thereafter Philadelphia was the headquarters of AACA, as was Boston for VMCCA. Although people from more distant places became members, these eastern clubs were run from Philadelphia and Boston. Many collectors belonged to both and there was full cooperation for many years. Starting in 1946, the Glidden Tour Revivals were run one year by AACA and the alternate year by VMCCA.

Having perhaps 100 members at the end of World War II, AACA grew rapidly, attracting members from places far distant from Philadelphia. Each year a Spring Meet would be held not more than 40 miles from Philadelphia, and the Fall Meet settled on the Chester County Horse Show grounds at Devon. The first two "regions", some distance from Philadelphia, were the Connecticut Valley Region (which may have been a joint venture between AACA and VMCCA), and the Ohio Region. Regional activities proved to be highly successful and these regions grew rapidly in membership. Based on these successes, Philadelphia area members were wanting local activities where the entire National membership need not be solicited. Some of the founders, led by Sam Baily, felt this was not necessary since the Club was based in Philadelphia, and they opposed it for some time. Other officers of AACA were in the group desiring local activities, however, and since there was a road block with the National club, the Historical Car Club of Pennsylvania was founded in the early spring of 1949. The first tour HCCP sponsored was to Valley Forge Park in April of that year. My Stanley Model 607 was apart in Bill Allaband's paint shop in Kennett Square, and I was rushing to get it back together and on the road to make the trek to Valley Forge. My father and Homer Kratz went in the newly-restored 1916 Model 725. I was behind everyone else but about to leave Kennett Square with my passenger, Charles Bernard, grandfather of our Richard. One of the small kerosene pressure tanks sprung a leak in the bottom, I removed it and had it soldered nearby, but it was afternoon by the time we got on the road. We met all the other cars that had been at Valley Forge as they left the Park just before we entered. This independent club has been highly successful and today boasts nearly 700 members!

Bill Swigart of Huntingdon convinced the AACA officers that mid-Pennsylvania was far enough from Philadelphia to warrant a Region, and the Allegheny Mountain Region was chartered with Swigart as its first Regional Director (now the title is "president"). My father and I joined, and we enjoyed going to several of their meets during the 1951-'54 period. This region covered a wide area at first, from Altoona and State College to Harrisburg to Gettysburg to Cumberland, MD. About the same time the National Capital Region was established in and around Washington, DC. When Bill Pollock and Ernie Hunter appealed to run the AACA Spring Meet at Pottstown in 1952, the founding of the Pottstown Region soon followed. The Marshalls joined that one too, and my father and I enjoyed the monthly dinners held at a

country club on a hill just north of Pottstown. In 1954 and again in 1957, the Pottstown Region sponsored the AACA Spring Meet, held in those years at the Hill School. Regions soon sprang up in many places: New Jersey, Lehigh Valley, Delaware Valley, and Gettysburg to name a few. In 1956, G. Leslie Shaffer and his wife Grace of Arden, DE, assembled nearby antique car people at their home and the Brandywine Region of Delaware was chartered early in 1957. Some of you have heard of BRAACA, still going strong after 50 years.

Last week included two productive work sessions, including installing the repaired water tank on the Model H-5, removal of the bent rail from the back R.R. curve, and progress toward repairing the fuel and oil pump fractures on the Model 76. Mike Reed's concrete company completed the bank reinforcement work Wednesday night, and Sunday the two Steve Jensens began laying out track sections in this area. Bucky and I had to dig up the section of iron drain pipe that had not been replaced, and John Anstreicher and Bob Krewatch helped me run PVC all the way, as should have been done in the first place. We should get this ditch back-filled and tamped today, and then we'll be ready to go with track construction.

On Thursday evening, Sept. 27, Anne Cleary has called an Events Committee meeting with a full agenda. On Friday, John McNamara and Bob Reilly are supposed to take our 4-8-4 "Lackawanna" locomotive together with an air compressor to a church on Wilson Road for an educational experience for cub scouts, telling them how a steam engine works. On Saturday, Sept. 29, the town of Marshallton, DE, is having a celebration and has asked for 2 Stanleys to be displayed behind Marshallton Methodist Church at Old Capitol Trail and Kiamensi Road. And on Saturday and Sunday, October 6 and 7, those running the Fall Harvest Festival of the Delaware Nature Society at Coverdale Farm have asked for our popcorn machine one or both days. Personally, I can't ask any of our volunteers to do this, as it is hard work and seemingly small reward. However, it is important for us to cooperate fully with organizations in the Valley like DNS (their Director, Mike Riska, has been very helpful to us), and it is good publicity for FAHP. I will need to let them know within a very few days, so let me know if any of you feel you can do it. I would suggest one day only.

Our president, Mike May, intends to be with us for a day or two right after Hershey week (about October 13-14), and this will be a chance to talk with him, have committee meetings, etc. He will be back again for our next Board meeting on November 15. Preliminary postings have been circulated by the Search Committee, and 3 interested persons have responded so far for the job of full-time Executive Director. Following Board approval for a budget to support this position, more definitive advertising will be done, and the job opportunity more widely circulated. Looking ahead to our public weekend and the house tour on October 27-28, Ruth Marshall is asking that all who would like to help in the house get in touch with her soon, so she may plan and schedule. Last Monday, Bob Reilly, Ruth and I delivered a few "goodies" to Irene and Barbara duPont in appreciation of their exemplary hospitality when the Steam Car Tour visited Granogue on June 20. Barbara was due for a serious operation on Sept. 21, and we have no report at present. Finally, and with sadness, I must tell you that Emil and Doris Christofano's daughter Linda, age 49, passed away suddenly over the weekend. There will be a Memorial Service at Chandler's in Hockessin later this week. Tom

