

## F.A.H.P. News, October 7, 2013

**Our Town:** During World War II, Hollywood made a black-and-white movie called “Our Town,” supposedly showing what small-town life was like during the war. Ann Revere was a widow with three children, Van Johnson, Donna Reed, and Mickey Rooney. Johnson was engaged to a hometown girl, June Lockhart, who was also his sister’s best friend. He was a pilot in the Army Air Force and was soon flying overseas. Frank Morgan was the local telegraph operator who took nitroglycerin pills for a serious heart condition, and Rooney, depicting a 14-year-old, was his delivery boy, often having to deliver telegrams from the War Department advising of a loved one’s death.

Donna Reed had a civilian boyfriend, James Craig, who had a convertible and seemed to avoid the draft. Donna and June Lockhart would often go to the local movies together and would have to fend off the attentions of local boys in whom they were not interested. Older men would pitch horse shoes on the town green. Rooney performed his usual escapades, in and out of trouble, but a good boy at heart. The movie concluded when Mickey went to the telegraph office to pick up one to be delivered, and he found Morgan slumped over his desk dead. Next to his hand was the wire he had just received. Van Johnson had been killed in action. Since movies of those days always ended happily, the blow was softened at the very end when an Air Force friend of Johnson’s came to town to meet his family and to tell them how much his deceased friend had talked about his wonderful home town.

Although we did not live in the borough, Kennett Square was “our town.” My parents knew almost everyone. My father was on the Board of the only bank in town (he had been president during the Depression). My mother chaired the Corporation Board of the Kennett New Century Club and belonged to a garden club and a card club there. We went to two of five doctors (Dr. D. Duer Reynolds or Dr. Herbert S. McKinstry) and a dentist (Dr. Carl W. Lofland) in Kennett Square and did all our food shopping there. Corson’s (later Freter’s) Drug Store was frequented, as well as John Detorri’s Barber Shop. Alex D. Cozanitis’ Kennett Kandy Kitchen restaurant and the Auditorium Theatre next to the old fire house were popular recreation spots. Jake Noznesky, a native of near Kiev in the Ukraine, owned the scrap yard, the Royal Garage, and many other buildings in the center of Kennett Square. At least six denominations had active churches in the community.

I have many fond memories of times in Kennett when I was growing up in the 1930s. Along with Oxford, each with a population of about 3,000, it was the fourth or fifth largest borough in Chester County, behind West Chester, Phoenixville, Coatesville, and possibly Downingtown. Although it had some light industry and was a major mushroom and flower-growing center, it was not a heavy industrial town. With my parents, I enjoyed many meals in Kennett’s private homes. Taking less than 10 minutes “over the road” and about 13 minutes by Short Line Bus, it was readily accessible from Auburn Heights.

During World War II, Chalmers Tilley worked for the Kennett Square Post Office, and when a letter would come from the War Department advising that a local boy had been killed in action, it was his job to notify the family. What an unhappy job! While home on leave in early March 1945, I was in the lobby of the bank with my father, who had some business there, when Mr. Tilley sought him out. He had just gotten word that Alan Mancill had been killed along the Rhine about six weeks before. Alan’s mother, my father’s only sister, lived on Locust Lane north of Kennett at the time. She knew both Alan and his twin brother Bob were missing in action but nothing more. My father called Dr. Reynolds, a longtime family friend, found him home, and the good doctor and my father accompanied Mr. Tilley to relay the sad news in person. In his later years, Chalmers Tilley was a popular teller at the National Bank & Trust Company. He deserved the best.

**Work Report:** On Tuesday, October 1, the following 13 volunteers were on hand: Steve Bryce (in charge), Dennis Dragon, Ted Kamen, Bill Schwoebel, Jerry Lucas, Bob Jordan, Dave Leon, Brent McDougall, Emil Christofano, Mac Taylor, Jay Williams, Ken Ricketts, and Tom Marshall.

Clean-up from our successful Invitational event continued, and signs and other material were put away upstairs in the museum. The Lionel train layout was attended to, as the locomotives were lubricated and the rail was cleaned and lightly oiled. A spare tire, already mounted, was checked for the Model 735 to replace the defective spare recently on the car. New regulators, valves, and piping was installed on the Cretors popcorn machine, which will allow for separate regulation of the fire under the boiler and under the popper pan.

Stanleys Model 607 and 71 were brought to the upper garage. The toe-in was checked on the 607, and the wheels were found to be towed out. With removal of the tie rod, it is the intention to lengthen this slightly to give the front wheels about 1/8-inch toe-in. This project was begun, and the speedometer cable was finalized and is ready for installation. The Model 71 has two small problems to be corrected, and a third may have developed. It was fired up to about 200# pressure to test the steam pipe for a leak near where the cylinder oil is injected. This was positively identified as being where the oil nipple screws into the main pipe near the loop. A tiny hole in the pilot nozzle fitting was positively identified. A slight "hiss" at the boiler, first thought to be the stack blower valve, needs further investigation.

On Thursday, October 3, the following 13 were on hand: Dave Leon (in charge), Ted Kamen, Bob Jordan, Eugene Maute, Gerhard Maute, Tim Nolan, Steve Bryce, Tim Ward, Jim Personti, Geoff Fallows, Bill Rule, Richard Bernard, and Tom Marshall.

In preparation for groups on October 4 and our Steamin' Day on October 6, some light bulbs were replaced in the museum, and the door hinges lubricated. The popcorn machine was fired up and tested, and all works very well with the new regulators and piping. Tires were switched around on the Mountain Wagon, with the new spare being placed on the right front. The new spare for the 735, having passed the test for holding pressure, was installed on the car. Work continued in the FAHP library.

With a new 1/8" nipple carrying oil to the steam pipe on the Model 71, the steam pipe was installed in the car and all hooked up again. Jim Personti took the defective pilot fitting, along with a better one that needs modification, from this car for repair. On the 607, the toe-in project is ongoing, as a defective fitting at one end of the steering tie rod needs repair before the rod can be lengthened for correct toe-in. Also on the 607, it was noticed that the truss rod under the rear axle had become bent, so this is being removed for straightening and repainting. Further cleaning and straightening took place for our Steamin' Sunday, October 6.

Our contingent going to Hershey this week will be somewhat smaller than usual, as Steve Bryce's son is getting married, Butch has a bad foot, Jerry Novak is in the Outer Banks, and Art Wallace has moved to Florida. We expect to be represented by Bill Schwoebel, Dave Leon, Kelly Williams, and two or more from the Hopkins family (and there will be more). Let's attend the Stanley Museum's Annual Reception Friday afternoon starting at 4:30.

We are in need of shop rags. Old Turkish towels or terry-cloth make the best rags for our purposes. If you have old towels or wash cloths, please bring them in. We can cut them up to a useful size. Thanks!