

## AUGUST 4, 2008 F.A.H.P. NEWS

**Commuting to the Seashore:** From the big Eastern cities with good-paying jobs, commuting to the Atlantic shore with its cool breezes became popular by the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The railroads capitalized on this opportunity, as, without them, the idea would have been impossible. From Boston, a trip of less than an hour would deliver you to many resorts on the North Shore and the South Shore such as Swampscott, Marblehead, Gloucester, Hingham, Nantasket, and Scituate. The family could stay in a “beach cottage” from mid-June until Labor Day, and the bread winner could spend the nights and weekends, while attending to his business in the city each working day.

From New York, resorts on the mainland along Long Island Sound in both New York and Connecticut were within an hour’s ride from Grand Central Station. George M. Cohan’s popular song “45 Minutes from Broadway” referred to his country place at New Rochelle. The beaches of Long Island were equally accessible, and commuter trains on the PRR also ran to the Ocean County (NJ) resort towns of Long Branch, Asbury Park, Point Pleasant, and Bay Head. Some high-end resorts along this stretch were Deal and Spring Lake, where fancy Victorian “cottages” and large resort hotels also flourished. President Garfield died in 1881 in an elaborate cottage near Deal.

The resorts along the South Jersey shore from Long Beach Island to Cape May were especially popular with Philadelphians, trying to escape the summer’s heat. Excellent rail service made it possible (and somewhat practical) to work in the city every day while spending the nights with the family at the shore. Although most train trips from Philadelphia or Camden took over an hour, upper middle class citizens who could afford a comfortable summer cottage close to the ocean would occupy it for over two months, even though the man of the house had to be in his office every day. If you had a cottage at Beach Haven, for example, you could leave the office about 5:00, and arrive to be with the family for a late dinner about 7:00. Arising early, you could say good-bye about 7:00, and be back in the office before 9:00. Instead of enduring often-stifling heat in Philadelphia while trying to sleep, the cool evening breezes off the ocean made it worth the long commute.

The less popular Delaware and Maryland ocean resorts did not have the luxury of fast train service from anywhere. Although Rehoboth had passenger trains running down the middle of its main street, and Ocean City, MD, had rail service to a pier west of the inlet, there was no direct service from big cities, and they were too far away. From Baltimore or Washington, the Annapolis ferry to the Eastern Shore connected with a slow train across the peninsula, but the elapsed time from these cities would have been at least four hours, and from Wilmington and Philadelphia it was not much better. Railroads played a very small part in the development of these resorts; it was not until highways improved, automobiles became the principal means of transportation, and the Chesapeake Bay Bridge was opened in 1951, that they began growing “by leaps and bounds”.

Last week's "News" gave the wrong date for the Events Committee meeting, for which I apologize. It will be held on Tuesday, August 5, at 7:00 P.M. in the FAHP office. If any "students" would like driving lessons this week, please contact Steve Bryce. Otherwise, lessons will not resume until after Bill Schwoebel's return on August 10.

Our Volunteer Picnic is on Sunday, August 17, and a "Day on the Farm" at Worcester, PA, 45 miles from here, is on Sunday, August 24. This is a nice drive and a very nice event to attend, with all proceeds going to the Montgomery County Community College, courtesy of Ross Myers, who hosts the event each year. Bill Schwoebel is at the shore this week, but if you have an interest in going, let him know right after August 10<sup>th</sup>. The Rough & Tumble Engineers Historical Society holds their annual Threshermen's Reunion at Kinzers, PA, August 13<sup>th</sup> through the 16<sup>th</sup>. Steve Bryce would like to take a car on Friday, the 15<sup>th</sup>, and it would be good if others could go that day as well.

The Quarterly Board Meeting of FAHP will be held here on Thursday, August 14, at 6:30 P.M. It is starting early because of a full agenda. Of prime importance is consideration and approval of our Strategic Plan, which has been worked on diligently by an Ad Hoc Committee since early last spring. President Mike May and Treasurer Bob Reilly both expect to attend this meeting. Larry Thurrell, chairman of the Development sub-committee for the Strategic Plan, has also been invited to attend. Board members, please put this on your calendar, and attend if you possibly can. A final draft of the Strategic Plan will be E-mailed to Board members by mid-week, so hopefully you can digest it prior to the meeting. Request for approval of an Ethics Policy will be delayed until the November Board meeting. Rob Robison has a draft for the August edition of the "Herald", and the final version should be ready for distribution by some time next week. On Tuesday, August 12, Mike May and I expect to meet with Sarah Stanley to expedite progress on a logo for FAHP.

The big fund-raising event for the Stanley Museum is being held at Farmington, ME, August 19-22, with Stanley seminars on the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>, and the auction on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. We understand there are 5 condensing Stanleys to be auctioned off in one day! Mike May and Bill Rule are both planning to conduct seminars, as is Allen Blazick and others prominent in the steam car hobby. There is a substantial charge to attend the seminars. It's probably not too late to plan to go. Just contact the Stanley Museum, Box 77, Kingfield, ME 04947, or go to their website.

Tom