

November 21, 2005

Hello, Steam Team:

"Semi-Technical Stuff": A 1912 Model 88 12-passenger Mountain Wagon was perhaps the roughest car we ever restored here. We first knew of this car when it was owned by Lindley Bothwell of Canoga Park, CA, near Los Angeles, during World War II. Bothwell was one of the founders of the Horseless Carriage Club of America. I had hoped to stop and see this "Wagon" on my way home from the Pacific in 1946, but I came through San Francisco, not Los Angeles, and was anxious to get home. About 1960, Bothwell finally sold this car to John Herbst of Texas, who sent it to our old friend Stanley Allred of Huntington, IN, for restoration. When Allred told Herbst what it might cost to get it running, etc., the owner asked Stanley if he could sell it for him. My father bought it sight unseen, and Allred delivered it here on a truck. What a sad sight it was!

The top was in shreds, the fenders rusted through, the seats badly damaged, the hood rusted out, and all the working parts showed lots of wear. Today, however, collectors would think this a rare find, as it WAS a wood-frame Mountain Wagon. My dad put the project on the back burner, but he did have new fenders made by the Wendling Brothers, and installed a new 25" boiler (the original size was 26"), and built up a new 26" burner. Soon he became ill, and asked me to arrange for Chuck Walls to make and install a new top. With a minimum of mechanical work on my part, I drove the car to Walls' shop near Price's Corner, about 8 miles away, and the work was done in short order. On a cold day, I drove it home again, but barely made it as the burner was backfiring so badly. I discovered the branch fork nut on the hot end of the vaporizer had never been tightened! Again, the car sat here with no paint (the fenders were primed), and my father passed away. I drove it to West Grove, PA, where Jack Wren, a sign painter, had agreed to paint and stripe it. He painted it green, with red wheels and black fenders, as I already had a red Mountain Wagon (the 15-passenger still here). I prepared to drive it to a Brass and Gas tour at Woodstock, VT, in June, 1970, and invited Tom Ackerman of Waretown, NJ, to go with me (more on this trip in a later edition). In 1980, this Mountain Wagon was bought by Charles DelMarco, in 1983 by Bob Reilly, and in 1984 by Allen Blazick, who still owns it.

Our "Auburn Heights by Lantern Light" event is over, we had a nice cool, clear night, and everything went off like clockwork. 43 volunteers were here to help, the historic walking tours of the grounds were fun, and the trains and the popcorn machine and their operators performed perfectly. Our guests enjoyed themselves and said the hot chocolate was "just right". But we had only 62 adults and 20 children, plus about 10 complimentary. 90 bags of popcorn were consumed and the gift shop grossed \$87. I would like to echo Anne Cleary's thanks to all for a job superbly done. We've already had some very positive

feedback from those who've viewed our website with Butch's electronic photos of the event.

The Board held its quarterly meeting on Thursday night, 11/17, and the Collections Committee met the following afternoon. Bob Reilly was hired as Executive Director for a trial period of six months beginning shortly after February 1. He will be an "independent contractor", using his consulting service under contract with F.A.H.P. The date for the annual membership meeting and election of Board members was set for Thursday, February 16, 2006, and the next quarterly Board meeting, at which time the Board elects its officers, was set for Thursday, February 23. A nominating committee was selected by the Board consisting of Jerry Novak, chairman, Jerry Lucas, Cam Yorkston, John McNamara, and Stan Wilcox. Toward our \$25,000 goal, the annual appeal stands at \$3,800 in hand with an additional \$5,000 pledged.

Tomorrow night, 11/22, there will be no shortage of projects. Some will be cleaning up after last Saturday, some will be undertaking mechanical things put off until after our special event. The plating work on the Model 735, done by a contact of Rob Robison's, has come back, it looks beautiful, and can be re-installed on the car. Mike May confirmed that the problem in mounting the clincher tire on the Model H-5 is the inner tube caught between the clinch part of the tire and the rim. He gave us suggestions on how to try again. The Model K and the Model 71 will be moved to the shop area for preparative work, as these two cars are scheduled to go to Ormond Beach in late January. The K should need very little, but the 71 needs engine work or a change of engines. The water tank on the Model CX can be removed and a decision made to either patch it or have a new tank fabricated. The locomotive boilers need to be washed and filled for the winter. It's a wet job and not recommended for cold nights. Thursday night there will be no work session. HAPPY THANKSGIVING! Tom