

F.A.H.P. News, May 13, 2013

Fun with Our Mountain Wagon (Part One: T. Clarence Marshall): Our Stanley Mountain Wagon is 98 years old, and those at Auburn Heights have owned it for 67 of those years. As my father was collecting many models of Stanley steam cars in the final years of World War II, he really wanted a Mountain Wagon, arguably one of Stanleys' most successful offerings, one of which he had owned and operated in 1913 on the Battlefield at Gettysburg. Original "Wagons" known to exist were scarce, even in 1946. However, George Monreau of suburban Boston (grandfather of Brent Campbell), who worked for Fred Marriott, knew of my father's interest and pursued the acquisition of a steel-framed 1915 "Wagon" with five seats from a man in southern New Hampshire who had used it in the 1930s as a log-hauling truck. Monreau, with a minimum of work, drove the car some 60 miles to his home, where he prepared it for delivery to my father, its new owner.

With my father following in his 1937 Packard, I drove it home, nearly 400 miles, in late October 1946, as has been mentioned in previous "News" stories. Once the car was at Auburn Heights, my father made many mechanical repairs, and with the seats off, he hauled clay targets up the hill from a box car on the railroad to the Yorklyn Gun Club in the spring of 1947. Finally, with a new top and red paint, it was ready for Kennett Square's Halloween Parade that fall, during which 19 passengers riding in or hanging on enjoyed the frivolity.

We have given pleasure to well over 100,000 passengers who have ridden on the vehicle since that time. No one had more fun over the years, however, than did my father and I. He enjoyed using it for tours, parades and shows. With several passengers aboard, he drove it on the 1948 and 1949 Glidden Tours; on the former, he shared the "Most Interesting Car" award with Cadwallader W. Kelsey in his three-wheeled 1901 Kelsey Motorette. At the annual "Old Timers' Picnic" in Wilmington's Josephine Gardens, rides in the Mountain Wagon became a perennial feature along with the Three Little Bakers. On another occasion, my parents invited several couples, all required to wear dusters, to ride the Mountain Wagon to the Dutch Cupboard near Thorndale, Pennsylvania, and back, where they were treated to Sunday dinner. In 1952, when the Pottstown Region hosted the first of three AACA Spring Meets at the Hill School, my father took the Mountain Wagon a day early (at the request of the committee) to help promote the event. The last time my dad drove his wagon was on May 1, 1963, when he was accompanied by my mother and other properly costumed friends for a Photo Day sponsored by Historic Red Clay Valley, Inc. and the Delaware Camera Club. He last rode with me on the "Wagon" in September 1966, on a BRAACA-sponsored tour around Sussex County, Delaware, where we covered nearly 200 miles on a perfect Sunday. My father prepared well for his trips, and he never had trouble or soiled his white shirt.

In his final years, other things like the building of the Auburn Valley Railroad and its locomotives, and tinkering with his highly sophisticated Doble steam cars may have taken priority, but the Mountain Wagon stands near the top of Clarence Marshall's "fun" toys. Next week, a continuation of how his son has enjoyed our Mountain Wagon will conclude the story.

Work Report: On Tuesday, May 7, 12 volunteers were on hand, as follows: Steve Bryce (in charge), Lou Mandich, Jerry Novak, Jeff Pollock, Emil Christofano, Mark Russell, Art Wallace, Bob Jordan, Dave Leon, Bill Schwoebel, Gary Green, and Tom Marshall.

On the Model 735, the top tank was removed from the condenser core, and the surfaces cleaned where the cork gasket had failed. A step forward occurred on the '37 Packard, as the new brake job is essentially finished and ready for brake fluid and bleeding of the system. Progress continued on the Model 607, with additional hardware attached to the seats and body, and the water glass for the tank was installed to work around the new hydraulic brake cylinder. A small fuel leak was corrected at the top of the low-water shut-off. Locomotives and automobiles were cleaned from their use on May 5.

On Thursday, May 9, with the Board of Directors Meeting taking place in the Conference Room, nine volunteers participated in the work session, as follows: Tim Ward (in charge), Bob Jordan, Jerry Koss, Art Wallace, Tim Nolan, Eugene Maute, Gerhard Maute, Dave Leon, and Robert Hopkins. Regular work session volunteers attending the meeting were Steve Bryce, Richard Bernard, Anne Cleary, Bill Schwoebel, Jerry Novak, and Tom Marshall.

The screws and back-up flanges on the 735 condenser were cleaned in preparation for installation of a new gasket. On the 607, the water line was hooked up from the tank to the gauge glass, and this was fastened in place with tiny clips, the cushion retainer for the front seat was installed, which showed a clearance problem for the handle on the main fuel shut-off valve, and additional hardware was affixed. The electrical switch box was cleaned and is ready for installation. The newly plated bezel for the speedometer is cracked (this crack is not new) and will have to be fastened to the head with a paper shim or with glue.

Also on the 607, sorting of small screws continues, and the seal at the bottom of the water tank gauge glass had to be redone. The latter task was completed on Sunday (not yet tested), and proper clearance was achieved for the handle of the fuel pressure retaining valve, where it had touched the front of the seat behind the driver's feet.

Our Models 76 and 87 are expected to take part in the Brass in Berks County Tour for cars older than 1916 from May 19-23. Steve Bryce plans to pilot the 76 and Bill Schwoebel the 87. Some work in preparation will be required this week. We are also committed to take one or more cars to a Day in Old New Castle on Saturday, May 18.