

July 25, 2005

Hello, Steam Team:

In trying to bring some order to the "stories" some of you say you enjoy, I've picked the following general topics, and will alternate between them (except when a story requires more than one week): 1) Auburn Heights, history of buildings, grounds, and furnishings, 2) Auburn Heights people during the past 108 years, 3) Stories from Steam Car trips of the past, 4) Semi-technical "stuff" applying mostly to Stanley cars, 5) Industry in Yorklyn, 6) Trapshooting championships at Yorklyn, and 7) Steam railroad trips 1901-1959. I will be delighted to eliminate any of these categories if requested.

The original house called "Auburn Heights" was begun in the summer of 1896, and was copied from a house then standing at Pennsylvania Avenue and Clayton Street in Wilmington. Plans were obtained from a New York source, but the only remnants of these plans are the four exterior elevations. Upon completion in 1897, the family of five Marshalls, and probably at least one servant, moved in. Israel Marshall could walk out the kitchen door, across the yard and through an apple orchard to his office at the paper mill, only about 100 yards away. There was very little in the way of trees or shrubbery in the lawn, but final grading and planting was done before 1897 was over. Except for the surrounding trees and a different exterior window trim (there were no storm windows), the front of the house looked very much as it does today. The only changes over time that show from the front elevation are a double second-floor window instead of the original single (altered in 1937), and the spiral staircase in the porte co-chere (built in 1988). The house was wired for electricity from the beginning, just as it had central steam heat. Direct current, generated at the paper mill, was wired across the yard to the big house.

There was no barn or carriage house on the property until 1902. The barn along the mill race next to the paper mill, some 200 yards distant, had to suffice. Marshall Brothers Paper Company owned about 12 dwelling units in 7 houses close to the mill and to Auburn Heights. The Garrett Snuff empire, 1/2 mile downstream, was about to be acquired by a subsidiary of the American Tobacco Company, and was nearing the climax of its local snuff production, but Dennison's country store and in Republican administrations the post office, were still located in a house next to Marshall Brothers. This is how it was before 1900.

The Annual Eastern Steam Car Tour, this time held at Lakeville, CT, is over. 3 of our Stanleys, the 1912 30-H.P. Model 87, the 1913 20-H.P. Model 76, and the 1916 20-H.P. Model 725, all touring cars, were there and ran the five days of touring with no major problems. Each of the Stanleys made about 350 miles. Eleven of us, including family members, were there, although Cathy Schwoebel had to come home

Monday afternoon due to her mother's sudden illness and fall. We understand her condition is stable, but it's a tough time for her, and we wish her, Cathy, and the family the very best. John Hopkins, Butch Cannard, Bill Schwoebel, Anne Cleary and I did the driving, with Bill Rule offering advice and help, not only to us but to many others on the tour. It was hot but we had an enjoyable and successful week, and all returned home safely Saturday afternoon.

In our absence, I noticed the work sessions were well attended and good work was accomplished. The shop looks 100% better! Tools and parts from the "Steam Meet Stanleys" have been put away, and the cars are partially cleaned up. We'll get them back in the Museum on Tuesday, and can then prepare the Museum for our "Steamin' Sunday" July 31. Richard and his helpers have lined the parking lot, this time with weed killer, and they hope to finish up this Thursday. We'll get it mowed again before the weekend.

This is "preparation week" again. Rob Robison is in charge of Sunday's event, but because of the pressure of his business, he needs help, and we are glad to accommodate. Anne Cleary is going to sign up people for all the necessary volunteer jobs. Several are helping with the 100th Birthday celebration for our 1905 Model CX. Steve Jensen and helpers are finishing up some track repair. The weather forecast is favorable, so we are hoping for good attendance.

Anne Cleary has called a Special Events committee meeting for tomorrow night, July 26, at her home, 825 Bengt Road, at 7:30 P.M.
Keep cool!
Tom