

## March 3, 2014 Story for Weekly News

**Chautauqua Institute:** The “Institute” consists of probably 300 acres on the shore of Chautauqua Lake, about 65 miles southwest of Buffalo, New York. Established in 1874 by Lewis Miller (father-in-law of Thomas A. Edison) and Bishop John H. Vincent, its original intent was to teach the history and geography of Palestine, but soon, as more summer cottages and boarding houses were built on the property, it served as a religious retreat with all sorts of programs popular in the final years of the nineteenth century. Perhaps the most spectacular building in the Institute is the Athenaeum Hotel, built in 1881 and beautifully restored in the late 1970s to open again as a renowned hostelry.

Today, more than 145,000 people subscribe to a portion of the summer offerings each year. Besides those who stay at the big hotel, numerous small hotels, boarding houses, private homes, and condominiums are spaced around the grounds and offer accommodations in all price ranges. It’s possible to attend lectures and programs at all hours of the day, and evening programs in the 2,300-seat open-sided auditorium are varied. It’s not unusual for 75,000 people to be on the grounds in a single day.

My Aunt Mary Ferguson took the train to Chautauqua and stayed several days in the 1930s and ‘40s. Ruth and I first visited on our way home from Cleveland in 1985, a few weeks before we were married. The next year we invited our good friends George and Kitty Wright to accompany us, and we stayed three nights at the Athenaeum. One night we listened to Walter Reuther, head of the United Auto Workers, and another time the place was packed to hear Peter, Paul and Mary. Kitty Wright, especially, enjoyed hearing a woman who portrayed Katharina Luther, the wife of Martin Luther.

Chautauqua was one of the first (and certainly the fanciest) religious “Camp Meetings,” which grew up all over the country in the late nineteenth century. Seldom mentioned today, some, such as Brandywine Summit Camp Meeting west of Johnson’s Corner on Route 202 and Mount Gretna in Lebanon County, Pennsylvania, are still in operation.

Somewhat different was the “Chautauqua Circuit,” a traveling summer show with featured speakers, which grew out of the Chautauqua experience. William Jennings Bryan and Carrie Nation spoke at Whiteman’s Grove (near Milford Cross Roads) and in Kennett Square. Hockessin had its version of the “Chautauqua.” My grandmother Marshall liked to attend, and my father often took her in one of his Stanley cars. Very popular in the early years of the twentieth century, traveling Chautauquas had run their course by 1940.

**Work Report:** On Tuesday, February 25, five volunteers showed up for a very productive session. They were Steve Bryce (in charge), Brent McDougall, Jerry Lucas, Bob Jordan, and Dan Citron. The Models K and 607 exchanged places, with the K coming to the garage for piping changes and installation of a new burner. The 12-v. battery was hooked up on the 607, and the original light switch box was further examined.

The running gear and under parts of Locomotive 402 were cleaned. The Mountain Wagon rim, partly painted, was rotated for the finishing of this job. The Auburn Heights sign, which had fallen over in the snow, was partially dismantled, and the broken pipe removed. We have pipe on hand, and the repair should not be extensive.

The burner was installed on the Model 740, with a new nut being fabricated for one of the hanger bolts. One of the water hoses from the condenser to the tank still needs replacing, and a defective shock absorber (the “snubber” type) was noticed. The down pipe from the bonnet in front of the firewall still requires tightening.

On Thursday, February 27, 11 volunteers were on hand despite the continuing cold weather. They were Bill Schwoebel (in charge), Tom Marshall, Steve Bryce, Bob Jordan, Mark Russell, Bob Stransky, Paul Kratunis, Tim Ward, Jim Personti, Eugene Maute, and Gerhard Maute.

Work on turning the drive wheels from Locomotive 402 continued. Despite new carbide cutters, the tread on these wheels is very hard and slow to cut. Painting continued in the closet area at the north end of the garage. Fender and splash apron cleaning proceeded slowly on the Model 750. On the 740, a new hose was installed to complete the return line from the condenser to the tank. The 740's left front shock absorber was removed, and some new material is needed for its complete repair.

Work continued on the light switch from the Model 607. The spare tire from the 750 was tested, but it is no good and must be discarded. We still need two 23” used tires for the rear of this car. We plan to advertise for these in both the BRAACA and HCCP newsletters. Universal Tire in Hershey does not handle used tires. Two colors of dark red were tried on a small section of our “diesel” locomotive. When we get a color that seems right, we will paint the bodies of both units ourselves, and Jim Sank will stripe and letter them for us.

On Friday, Tim Nolan finished painting the Mountain Wagon rim, and the old 5/16” tubing to the burner has been removed from the Model K. With the dash-valve fittings modified to accept 1/4” tubing, no more can be done until the new vaporizer is finished by Walter Higgins and the burner is installed.

Doris Christofano is in the special care unit at Cokesbury Village, hoping for a back operation soon to relieve her pain. We send our very best wishes to Doris and Emil.