

February 12, 2007

Hello, Steam Team: How it was in Kennett Square, 1930's: For residents of Yorklyn, the epitome of shopping and entertainment would have been center-city Philadelphia, but most did not visit more than once annually. Downtown Wilmington also had some fine stores and movie theatres and was accessible via car or Short Line bus. But Kennett Square, just four miles away, was "our town", 10 minutes by car and 15 minutes by bus. The stores there could fill almost anyone's need, and the AUDITORIUM Theatre, in one side of the Fire House on State Street, was a much-loved children's destination. It usually cost 35 cents for a first-run (but 3-week-old) movie in the evening, with tickets as low as 15 cents for children at a Saturday matinee.

The "Kennett News and Advertiser" and the "Kennett Advance", both weeklies, had gossip columns on Yorklyn as well as Hockessin. Until 1936 when the Hockessin Fire Company was founded, our nearest protection was the Kennett Fire Company. There were always two and sometimes three drug stores, each with a soda fountain. Connors' was the most permanent and its location at the northwest corner of State and Union Streets was in the very center of activity. The best and most permanent restaurant was the Kennett Kandy Kitchen on West State Street, whose proprietor, Alex D. Cozanitis, worked about 20 hours a day to run a respectable, reasonable place to buy food, ice cream, and home-made candy. The most expensive thing on the menu was a full-course prime rib dinner for about \$1.25. He and his wife and five children lived over the restaurant, and all the kids had to earn their keep by working in the Kandy Kitchen while attending Kennett School. Alex never made much money from his candy business, as he gave most of it away at holiday times to a multitude of charities.

There were usually 3 barber shops, the two staying in business the longest being those run by the Burton family and by John Dettori. Ralph Schuibbeo was a men's tailor and had a sports shop, and Jim Tingle ran a fine men's clothing store. There were several hardware stores, John H. Voorhees', Kennett Hardware owned by Joe Kanofsky, and Gawthrop's Lumber Yard. There was an American Store (forerunner of Acme Markets), and an A & P, both in the center of town. Frank Pierce and his sons, Duer and Max, had a fine meat market with their own slaughter house south of the borough. Cyrus L. Thomas was a jeweler, and William S. Worrall was everyone's undertaker. His sister, Mary T. "Miss Minnie" Worrall operated a dry goods, ladies' apparel, and furniture store. J. R. Hosch opened a large variety store, which later became Sheldon's. There were several building contractors, notably William H. Worrall and Paul Hannum. The two banks had combined into the National Bank and Trust Company of Kennett Square, and there were two Building & Loan Associations.

Auto dealers and repair garages flourished. Bill McCord sold Pontiacs and Buicks, Dave Mason had Chevrolets, Tom Worrall had the Ford agency, and Monroe L. Nute had Chrysler and Plymouth. Bob Ferguson sold Dodges and Plymouths. The Tunis Brothers had a farm implement and tractor business on Cypress Street. Jacob Noznesky, Kennett's well-known "junk man", operated the Royal Garage, and the Mohican Garage also had storage and repair services. Bill McSparran had his auto repair business in an old livery stable on North Broad Street. Bill Allaband was an excellent auto-body specialist on West Linden Street.

Known as the "Mushroom Capital of the World", Kennett had several support businesses for the many area growers. It was also a wholesale rose and carnation growing center with such firms as J. Howard Thompson and Sons, P. J. Yeatman and Sons, Frank T. Way, Meadowcroft and Arden, the Murphy brothers (Elmer and Dick), and Charles Walter succeeded by Frank Palmer, to name a few. Well-respected retail flower shops were the House of Flowers operated by James Edge and Scott McMurtrie, and William Swayne, Florist, later owned by Roland Barber. Manufacturing firms included the Good Roads Machinery Corp., J. B. Swayne and Brother, the Fibre Specialty Mfg. Company, and the Phenolite Division, the latter two subsidiaries of National Vulcanized Fibre Company of Yorklyn. The Marshalls shopped in Kennett Square frequently.

This past week was highly successful with mechanical progress and outreach for FAHP. On Tuesday and Thursday nights, the water tank, superheater, flue, and bonnet were installed in the 1905 Model CX, the brake job and electrical work were nearly completed on the 1922 Model 740, the body and hood were lined up and new electrical wiring installed on the 1918 Model 735, the hood was removed for inside insulation on the Mountain Wagon, a temporary exhibit was disassembled in the Museum, the air leak was repaired in our garage/shop area, the windshield was finished on the Rauch & Lang electric, and new injector valves were installed on Locomotive #402. The new water tank is in place on the 1910 Model 71, and work continues on piping up the new boiler in the 1913 Model 76. Our 1908 Model K Stanley was transported by Jerry Novak and Emil Christofano to and from the Sheraton Hotel in Philadelphia where it was on display for 2 days in the AACA's Trade Show in connection with the Annual Meeting of this national club. Our booth at the show was manned by Bob Reilly, Butch Cannard, Gene Maute, Gerhard Maute, and (I think) Chuck Carisch, and being next to our Model K, it attracted a lot of attention and gave us the opportunity to tell about FAHP. Bob also presented a power-point talk on early steam and electric cars at the AACA Museum's seminar which was very well-received, and our thanks go, too, to Mike Jones, one of our Advisors, for making this promotional opportunity available to us. Last Friday, Art Wallace and Dan Nichols took a special exhibit and literature to the Newark Senior Center where over 200 people were made

aware of FAHP and what we offer here, and much literature was handed out. Thanks to everyone for these many accomplishments.

The Finance and Development Committees met this past Tuesday and finalized the 2007 budget to be presented for approval at the Board meeting on February 22. On Wednesday, the first meeting of a steering group was held to initiate procedures for the development of our Strategic or 5-year Plan. All of you will be asked to participate in this process, which will be explained further at our Annual Meeting on February 15.

THE MEETING PLACE FOR OUR ANNUAL MEETING ON THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 15, AT 7:30 P.M. HAS BEEN CHANGED FROM THE MUSEUM TO THE UPPER GARAGE, for the comfort of our members attending. We hope you plan to attend and that our winter weather will allow you to do so with safety. We think you will find reports at the business meeting of interest, and we promise you a short but enjoyable program at its conclusion. The garage is being cleared out, except for the Model 76, and today the Models K and CX were returned to the Museum where a small group from the State Division of Parks is expected tomorrow morning.

A regular work session will be held on Tuesday, February 13, weather permitting, but there will be no work session on Thursday because of the Annual Meeting. Happy Valentine's Day! Tom