

July 17, 2006

Hello, Steam Team:

From Alex Joyce of Nashville, TN, a long-time antique car collector and former president of the Horseless Carriage Club of America, comes the story for the "News " this week. Alex relayed this in a letter to me written nearly 20 years ago. As background to its content, some of you know that F. O. Stanley opened his New England style resort hotel at Estes Park, CO, in 1909, and the first Mountain Wagons were built to transport his guests from two railheads nearly 30 miles away.

"I spent some time yesterday with my grandmother who was quite perky and talked for an hour about her travels to Estes Park with her father in the period 1914-1918. She had learned to drive in 1914, first on a Franklin, then a Dorris, and then a Rauch & Lang electric. She also had a Model T roadster that she kept in Loveland, CO. She was caught drag racing with her brother on the streets of Nashville in 1914, and their father had to take the trolley to the city jail to bail them out. He bought them the Rauch & Lang, and told them to race with that! Grandmother definitely remembered a rear-entrance White steamer in Estes Park which had been there for several years (the last "rear-entrance" Model E's were built in 1905, I think).

"On Day One they would take the night train from Nashville to St. Louis. Day Two would always be spent at the St. Louis Zoo, followed by an evening outdoor symphony at the riverside park before boarding the night train for Kansas City. On Day Three they would change to the Denver train in Kansas City. The trip across the Great Plains could take up to two days if the winds came up and with no irrigation the dust restricted visibility. The porters would open the vestibules for air, and then hang sheets on every part of the compartment walls and floor to keep down the dust and soot, changing these sheets often during the day. Fresh lemonade and iced tea were in pitchers in each compartment. Nonetheless, by the time they reached Denver they were exhausted and checked into a hotel (sometimes the Brown Palace), and slept for 24 hours. Finally, they made the 50-mile train trip to Loveland on the Sixth Day.

"With no through train service from the East, she remembered those unrested, cranky souls fighting to endure the Mountain Wagon trip for the last 30 miles up the Big Thompson Canyon to Estes Park. Being young and rested herself, she rather enjoyed the ride. In her last years at Estes Park, she became acquainted with a Mr. Papa, an Indian Chief who scared the "eastern dudes" to death. One of the hotels had a movie projector in its billiard room, and young ladies were allowed to attend in this hallowed men's domain. Since the films were silent, the projectionist and those in the audience would often mimic the actors on

the screen”.

Thank you, Alex, for sharing this with us, telling of trans-Continental train travel in this country 90 years ago, and for your grandmother's remembrances of Estes Park.

Last Thursday, Bob Wilhelm conducted the first session of his Stanley course, which was attended by about 16 members. He told of the water and steam systems, how important it is to always know the water level in the boiler, and described various types of level indicators and automatics. Then he showed where these things are located on various Stanley models by actually pointing them out on the cars themselves. The second session, featuring the fuel systems and vaporizing burners as used on all models of Stanleys will take place this TUESDAY evening (July 18) at 7:00 in the Museum. While Bill Schwoebel is taping these sessions, it is much more meaningful to be there, so we encourage your attendance.

Rob Robison is working toward completion of the hydraulic brake installation on the Model 735, as is Jerry Lucas on the Model EX. We hope to have both these cars back on the road within a month. Steve Jensen and Jim Personti worked on grates and injectors on the Auburn Valley locomotives, and on Saturday, Bill Schwoebel, Butch Cannard, Bob Reilly, Anne Cleary, Steve Jensen and Steven Jensen pruned trees and vines, refined R.R. grading, and dug holes for the automatic R.R. signals. Moving ahead, we will continue on our auto projects, upgrade the “Little Toot” train for the August event, and hopefully install junction boxes and lay underground wire for our signals. Bob Reilly is zeroing in on promotion for our August 18-19 event, and he and Rob Robison are working on the next issue of the “Herald”. Our next Board of Directors meeting will be on Thursday, August 10.

Ruth and I were awakened just before 7:00 Sunday morning by a terrible-sounding crash with splitting lumber, and I thought all or part of our Scarlet Oak tree had fallen on the house. As we went to the window, however, Ruth said “I hear a truck running”. Immediately below us a horse-person had tried to drive her trailer with horse inside through the porte-co-chere. She didn't make it and ripped loose some of the vertical trim pieces. Her upscale tow vehicle was at a peculiar angle with her trailer, and she was attempting to back out, but the trailer was headed in the direction of the flag pole. She said she was trying to turn around by going through the porte-co-chere, as she didn't know how to back up a trailer. I got dressed and backed her configuration down the driveway with a very unhappy horse inside the trailer. As we approached the road she said she wanted to head toward Kennett Square and I obliged. I found she was from Bryn Mawr and I asked where she was headed. She said “Carousel Farms”, and I told her that was the other direction. I went back to bed. Tom Stapleford is going to repair the porte-co-chere. Best wishes to all. Tom

