

F.A.H.P. News, December 2, 2013

A Heavy Foot and Other Troubles: Those who ride with me today (and there are few) probably think I'm a very conservative driver. When I was young and gay, that was not always the case. I relate a 1963 experience herewith.

Our Holiday Inn at Talleyville was two years old, and while I did not have regular hours, I would typically arrive about 10 A.M. and leave some time around midnight. Using back roads, seldom did I meet more than two or three cars on the way home in the middle of the night. Often, I made the 10-mile run in record time in my '55 Chrysler Windsor 4-door sedan. The route was usually Mount Lebanon Road to Rockland, then to Montchanin and onto Kirk Road. Turning right at Kennett Pike (Route 52), I would follow this main road to Lower Brandywine Church, then Old Kennett Road to Snuff Mill Road. Snuff Mill Road dead-ends at Route 82, and in less than a mile I'd be at Auburn Heights.

One night as I sped across Kirk Road, a car decided to follow me. As I turned right onto Kennett Pike, his high-beam lights were most distracting in my mirror. I thought, "This wise guy doesn't know these back roads as well as I do, and I can out-run him." I gave him a good run for his money at probably 70 m.p.h. up Kennett Pike and onto Old Kennett Road. I came upon a slow-moving car and whizzed around him, crossing a double line to do so; after all, no one was coming the other way. As I turned onto Snuff Mill Road, my pursuer was still there, but I didn't give up; my intent was still to prevail. As I descended Snuff Mill Hill toward the stop sign at the bottom, a police siren alerted me that I had made a mistake.

The officer threw the book at me, as well he should have. He wrote me up as traveling well over 20 m.p.h. above the speed limit, crossing a double line to pass, etc., etc. He told me to appear at a Magistrate's Court somewhere around the Cedars or Cooper Farm the next morning.

The Magistrate explained the situation to me and fined me (I think it was about \$60). She assured me that since I had pleaded guilty and paid the fine, the matter was closed. About three days later, a letter arrived in the mail, advising that my driver's license had been revoked. It suggested that if I really needed to drive, I could come to Dover and apply for a temporary permit, which would allow me to drive at regular hours to and from work ONLY. At the end of three months, I could apply for a license again.

Hank Schreiber took me to Dover, and I applied for a temporary permit. I told them that my work hours varied greatly, that I didn't have a 9-to5 job. Their response was that unless they specified the exact hours, losing my license would be no punishment at all. I accepted the temporary permit, although I often had to drive during times specifically prohibited.

One day, I had to go to Philadelphia for a brief errand. The Schuylkill Expressway and the new Vine Street Expressway to the Ben Franklin Bridge had been completed, but not I-95. I accomplished my errand in center city and was coming west on the Vine Street Expressway. Confused by the signs, I turned north on the Schuylkill, instead of south. At the turn-off for the

Philadelphia Zoo, I saw my opportunity to turn around, so I turned into the zoo's parking lot and re-entered heading south. Soon, a police siren brought me to a stop. The officer asked to see my license. I handed him the temporary permit, expecting to end up in jail. He chided me for turning around illegally, asserting that it was not my intention to visit the zoo, but he made no comment about my "license." I proceeded toward home, fearing repercussions in the days ahead, but nothing more came of it.

When the three-month period was up, I got a new driver's license, but I had lost my permanent license (apparently) forever. That was 50 years ago. Ugh!

Work Report: On Monday, Mike Leister installed new lights in the AVRR tunnel, and Bill Schwoebel checked out the rail line in preparation for Saturday's operation.

On Tuesday, November 26, the following 10 volunteers attended the work session: Jerry Novak (in charge), Steve Bryce, Kelly Williams, Ted Kamen, Bob Jordan, Jay Williams, Mac Taylor, Ken Ricketts, Brent McDougall, and Tom Marshall. It was a cold and rainy night that undoubtedly kept participation down.

The Lionel electric train layouts were refined for the upcoming Steamin' Saturday. A reproduction Lionel locomotive continues to give trouble—not nearly as well made as the old Lionels. Both steam locomotives were made ready for use on November 30, and the repaired hinge on the 401's smoke box door was painted. Electric wiring for the Model 607's lamps proceeded.

Final painting of the new heavyweight stanchions was completed, and the original spare from the Model 735 was put back on the car, after replacing a leather strap that holds it in place. We have a "spare spare," the mounted 35 x 5 non-skid, that was put back on our tire rack.

Two burners were "dropped" and for different reasons. The vaporizer in the burner from the Model 740 had twisted off, and it needs repair. The "Dick French" burner from the Model K was put in storage, with the hope that the correct three-venturi burner, when completed in the next few weeks, will replace it. Also on the "K," the adjustment on the rear gears was loosened one flat, which seemed to relieve the grinding noise, although the car has not been run under steam.

There was no session on November 28 -- THANKSGIVING DAY!

Thanks to those who have brought in old towels and other terry-cloth to be used as shop rags. We can still use more if some of you would like to contribute them.