

## SEPTEMBER 15, 2008 F.A.H.P. NEWS

**Clarence Marshall's Picture Shows:** In 1897 when Clarence was 12 years old, he wanted to become a photographer. With tutoring from a distant cousin, Horace Dilworth, he had a Sears Roebuck reflex camera with wooden case and holders for dry-plate negatives. Some of his first pictures were taken of local scenes and people on Stanley Dry Plates- many of these are displayed in the Museum at Auburn Heights. Over the years, his cameras improved and he kept up with the latest in amateur photography. He was the "official" family photographer, taking group pictures at reunions and anniversaries.

When "home movies" became possible in the mid-1920's, Clarence bought the best Bell & Howell equipment: 16 mm. movie cameras and projectors. Unfortunately one of his subjects was his son from the time I was one year old. Photographing family Easter Egg hunts, children at Rehoboth, and action shots while on motor trips, became an important hobby.

It seemed when I was growing up nearly every evening party at Auburn Heights included a picture show in the long living room. A screen would be put on top of the radiator at one end of the room, and the projector stand, built by Clarence, would be at the proper distance away, sometimes (depending on the projector lens) at the back of the room, near the dining room. Chairs would be arranged facing the screen. The "shows" were supposed to entertain adults as well as children. In addition to the home movies, some professional silent films would be shown, as they were available for a few dollars. Among these were biographies of Washington and Lincoln, the Hindenburg Disaster, The Century of Progress Exposition (Chicago, 1933-34), Burton Holmes' Travelogues, and the Fair of the Iron Horse (Baltimore, 1927). In the mid '30's, Clarence bought a Bell & Howell Filmosound Projector and was able to show sound movies; the most popular one was about Stephen Foster.

At our summer cottage on Queen Street in Rehoboth, a weekly "Movie Show" would be put on for the kids who lived on St. Lawrence, Queen, and Prospect Streets. As soon as darkness fell on the appointed nights, about 15 youngsters from 5 to 15 years of age would sit on the floor in the living room watching Clarence's movies. Repetition of subject material was no problem. Those in the audience would often see themselves doing all sorts of things at the shore, and cartoons like "Felix the Cat" and "Mickey Mouse", and the comedy "The Iron Mule", could be watched time after time. I guess my mother would serve cookies, but of this I am not sure. The Blue Hen Theatre was on Rehoboth Avenue and there were two Merry-Go-Rounds, but these cost money- Clarence's picture shows were free.

Like my father, I enjoyed amateur photography when I was young, and I took a few movies with his old camera starting about 1938. It was much more fun to develop and print pictures in his 3<sup>rd</sup> floor darkroom than it was to do homework. Having run a projector for our Squadron on Guam just after V-J Day in 1945, I operated the Club House Theater in Yorklyn for two winters after World War II. I last took 16 mm. movies with my father's old camera in 1980.

The *Friends* have completed a busy and successful week. On Tuesday evening, Sept. 9, the Events Committee held its monthly meeting. The emphasis at the work sessions was to clean up and get ready for the visit of the Lions Eye Bank on Saturday, 9/13, and prepare six cars for traveling to the annual Hagley Car show on Sunday, 9/14. Jim Personti and Geoff Fallows removed the side rods from the right side of Locomotive #402, to install new bushings. Brent McDougall, with his cadre of helpers, did an excellent job in handling the Lions group on Saturday: one train on the Auburn Valley ran continuously and flawlessly, the Mountain Wagon and the Rauch & Lang performed very well as usual, and Luke McNamara did a fine job in running the electric trains. The Lions were disappointed in the attendance, but we knew of this in advance, so all came off just as planned. About 150 people took part during the day.

The Hagley Show was a big one with over 600 cars and an estimated 4,000 people in attendance. Our six cars that went and came without trouble were Stanley Models CX, 71, 76, 607, and 725, and the Rauch & Lang electric. It was one of the hottest days of the summer, but all had a good time, and our Rauch & Lang, with Dan Citron at the controls, was featured on the front page of the local section of this morning's *News Journal*.

This promises to be another busy week. Today two representatives of the firm from which we buy our Steam Cylinder Oil were here and convinced Steve Bryce and me that the new drum just purchased is about the same color as our old, so it should work well in the Stanley car and locomotive "winkers". Tomorrow is our annual boiler inspection for the Auburn Valley locomotives. Tomorrow night (9/16) at 7:30, Bill Schwoebel and I will conduct a "class" on the Auburn Valley R.R., in the Museum's Reception Room, and we hope all who have an interest will try to attend. On Wednesday, Catherine Coin and I will meet with Stephen Doberstein, Director of Crystal Trust, hopefully to lay the groundwork for funding future capital projects. Also on Wednesday at 5:30 P.M., Stan Wilcox has called a meeting of the Nominating Committee, which will be in the F.A.H.P. office. Enjoy the last week of summer! Tom