

## **FEBRUARY 18, 2008 F.A.H.P. NEWS**

**Steam Car Tour to Kingfield, Maine, 1981:** F. E. Stanley drove one of his cars to the place of his birth at Kingfield many times, but his visits were before his death in 1918. The *Stanley Museum* Newsletter told of George Monreau's visit there with his Model 65 Stanley about 1940. Those of us who collected Stanleys often talked about having a tour that would culminate in a visit to Kingfield, and in 1981 we finally decided to do it.

I was an inactive member of the Committee that planned that tour. New Englanders Frank Gardner and Jim Hancock made an exploratory trip in the spring of 1981, with the thought of inviting a few steam car owners to spend a week in late July: three days driving TO, two days THERE, and three days driving FROM. They found limited accommodations at the destination but a lot of enthusiasm for such a visit, especially from a young Kingfield resident named Sue Davis. She and her husband, Dan, ran a gourmet restaurant at #1 Stanley Avenue, and their facility was hosting a long-overdue Stanley family reunion in June. It all came together to make for a small but memorable tour.

The Hancocks lived in Fitzwilliam in southwestern New Hampshire, and the tour began there. My Model 607 had been stored at Frank Cooke's, about 25 miles south of Fitzwilliam, since the Sturbridge tour a month earlier. I also lent my Model 78 roadster to Mike and Kathryn May, so they could make the trip. Borrowing Weldin Stumpf's open trailer, I towed the 78 toward Fitzwilliam, picking up Bob Reilly at the railroad station in Beacon, NY, as he completed his work week in New York. Together we proceeded to North Brookfield, MA, (home of Frank Cooke), fired up the 607, and drove it, while trailering the 78, to the starting point at Fitzwilliam. The Mays joined us there.

There were about 8 steamers that made the 8-day tour, and I can recall 7 of them. They were Carl Amsley and Bob Garlock from south central Pennsylvania with 1914 Model 712 and 1909 Model R Stanleys, Ernie Davignon of Holyoke, MA, with a 1913 Model 76 Stanley, Jim Weidenhammer of Poughkeepsie, NY, with a 1908 Model L White, Jim Hancock with a 1906 Model F Stanley, and our two cars. Frank Gardner followed the tour with his motor home and trailer behind to provide back-up service should it be needed. Two more Maine cars and their owners joined us at Kingfield: David Ault of Wayne and Maynard Leighton of Winthrop, who was accompanied by Bob Barnes.

The first day we journeyed to Moultonborough, NH, and had a lobster dinner for \$9.95. The next day took us to Bethel, ME, where we stayed in a motel outside town on a rainy night. We met Sue and Dan Davis for the first time, and Sue gave us a rundown on the days to come. The next morning, bright and clear, Ray Stanley (son of F.E., and grandfather of Sarah), his daughter Joan and her daughter joined us at Dixfield, ME, home of the Stowell family, cousins of the Maine Stanleys. The twins' grandfather is buried in the cemetery adjoining the Stowells'

home. After this visit, we were told to line up two miles short of Kingfield, so the whole group could parade into town in grand style. The 3 Stanley family members rode with me in the 607, and whistles blew as we traveled up Kingfield's main street past the Hotel Herbert, then closed. Bob Reilly and I and about 2/3 of the group stayed at Winter's Inn; the remainder stayed at #1 and #3 Stanley Avenue, both owned by the Davis'. Ray Stanley slept in a closet at Winter's Inn, that they considered a single bedroom. While we were in Kingfield, Sue had arranged for us to visit the Wire Bridge, the Winter factory which manufactured wooden rolling pins, and the cemetery where Stanley family members, including F. O. and Flora, are buried. Then we looked at the Stanley School, recently vacant and about to be torn down to make way for a parking lot. With the vitality only Sue Davis could provide, the school was saved and the Stanley Museum was founded.

Before we left town, we were asked to give interested people rides in our steamers. For one reason or another, Bob Garlock and I were the only two there at the appointed time. Bob's car could only carry two passengers at a time, but his speed made it possible for him to make two trips while I was making one. We ate well, especially at #1 Stanley Avenue, and after getting a new vaporizer made for Ernie Davignon with help from local people, we headed back toward our starting point where most trailers were located.

The first night we stopped at a wonderful place, Philbrook Farm Inn at Shelburne, NH, east of Gorham, where 3 sisters ran the place as their family had done since 1870. Their cousin, Doug Philbrook, owned the Mount Washington Motor Road. Most participants spent the final night on the New Hampshire side of the Connecticut River, but we had more hurried and complicated plans. Making good time, the Mays, Bob R. and I passed Carl Amsley and Bob Garlock working on their cars at Littleton, NH, then had a final lunch together at the Norwich Inn in Norwich, VT. That afternoon the Mays made the run to Fitzwilliam in the Model 78, and left the car there for later pick up. Bob and I went to Frank Gardner's car barn in Woodstock, VT, where he allowed me to store the 607. My friends Peggy and Pownall Jones, who live 5 miles from Yorklyn, drove to White River Junction, I joined up, and that night we put Bob Reilly on the "Washingtonian" (the "Montrealer" in reverse direction) for Baltimore, and took off the next morning for Nova Scotia in the Jones' car. On our way home, they dropped me off at Fitzwilliam, and I towed the 78 back home. About 2 months later, Pownall and I made a trip to Woodstock to retrieve the 607 on Stumpf's trailer. Many have said that small tours are the most fun, and the Kingfield tour of 1981 was one of the very best.

The first meeting of the Steering Committee to establish a Strategic Plan was held in the office last Wednesday. Five Sub-Committee chair people were there in addition to Cam Yorkston, Chazz Salkin, Catherine Coin and myself. **DON'T FORGET THE ANNUAL MEETING,** Tuesday, February 26, at 7:30 P.M. in the Carriage House at Auburn Heights. Tom

