

FAHP News, October 12, 2015

Trapshooting Trophies of the Past: Weekly News stories have frequently mentioned trapshooting, and in my opinion there was a lot of information therein with very limited interest. However, our Director of Education has asked for a story on the trophies that were awarded at major tournaments years ago.

Originally a gentleman's sport, often too costly for the average wage earner, friendly competitions grew into championship events where recognition of shooting skills resulted in the awarding of special trophies to those who bested their competition. Often prestige membership organizations like the New York Athletic Club and the Atlantic Indians (established in 1918) prided themselves in acquiring and awarding the finest sterling silver and comparable desirables to those shooters who excelled in the trapshooting events of their tournaments.

In the first 30 years of the 20th century when my father first engaged in serious trapshooting, resort hotels sponsored "shoots" of several days' duration, and the trophies awarded equaled those of the membership clubs. Famous in these parts were the annual mid-winter classic at Pinehurst, North Carolina, and the Maplewood Club in New Hampshire's White Mountains, which opened its summer season with a four-day tournament. In the years before 1920, Pinehurst hired Annie Oakley and her husband, Frank Butler, to teach guests of its hotels how to break clay targets. While similar to club events, these tournaments were open to anyone who could afford the cost.

In addition to silver trophies, the Atlantic Indians, still going strong today, gave "Indian Blankets" prior to World War II. These brightly colored heavy wool blankets made by the Pendleton Woolen Mills in Oregon made wonderful lap robes for early automobiles. I took one with me to Mercersburg Academy in 1941, my first winter away from Auburn Heights. There were also porcelain plates (with the Atlantic Indian emblem embossed thereon) with a sterling silver ring around the circumference. The Amateur Trapshooting Association, based for more than 80 years at Vandalia, Ohio, regulated all registered trapshooting, and gave four trophies each to about 30 states to be awarded to the winners of the four major events at that state's championship tournament (the balance of the 48 states either did not have a state championship, or were registered with the Pacific International Trapshooting Association on the West Coast).

My father's first Yorklyn Trapshooting Tournament in 1921 featured trophies to match those of the best shoots in the country. Through the 1920s, these were mostly sterling silver vases, bowls, and plates. What was evolving, however, was a trend of excellence in certain shooters that caused trophies in their possession to fast become excessive and surplus. While "class shooting" and handicaps made it possible for the average shooter to win, cash prizes where winners could offset the cost of shooting became increasingly popular. By the 1930s, some clubs like the South End Gun Club outside Reading gave only cash.

During this time, both trophies and cash were featured at Yorklyn, and it proved to be a good mix. In the 500-target "Marathon" shot on Wednesday, all prizes were cash. Most events on the five-day program had "optionals," whereby a shooter could bet on himself on various portions of a day's program. Despite this trend, Yorklyn continued to be known for its fine trophies. Typically in the "Brandywine" on Thursday the trophies would be sterling silver; in Friday's "Auburn Special" they would be fine leather suitcases, and in Saturday's Handicap they would be gold pocket watches, of which 16 would usually be awarded. The winner of Saturday's event would get a high-quality trap gun. After World War II, wrist watches replaced pocket watches. At the economical Night Shoots (50-target events Wednesday and Friday nights), about 15 useful prizes that cost less than \$10 each were awarded on a lottery plan called "Lewis Class."

Some of my most coveted trophies were the A.T.A.'s state championship trophies, (of which I had a total of nine), the Dunspaugh Memorial Trophy from Maplewood in 1940, the "Signal of Peace" bronze horse from the Atlantic Indians in 1942, and a sterling silver tea set from Tiffany's which was the runner-up prize in the Amateur Championship of America at the New York Athletic Club in 1948.

It's my impression that most prizes at championship events today are cash, but there are probably still State Championship trophies provided by the A.T.A., and membership organizations like the Atlantic Indians that feature trophies.

Work Report: On Tuesday, October 6, 19 volunteers were on hand for Greg Landrey's informative session on preservation of our Model 750 and the work session that followed. They were: Jerry Lucas (in charge), Mark Bodenstab, Greg Landrey, Tom Marshall, Steve Bryce, Ann Bryce, Brent McDougall, John Bacino, Mike Ciosek, Jerry Novak, Lou Mandich, Bob Stransky, Ted Kamen, Richard Bernard, Pete Parlett, Ed Paschall, Paul Kratunis, Mark Russell, and Dennis Dragon.

More track was prepared and laid in the rear grade crossing on the A.V.R.R. Locomotive #401 was cleaned from its runs on October 4. Attempts to fire up the Model 740 were unsuccessful, as a serious leak around the branch fork of the burner had not been corrected. Believing the fork itself may be the problem, a new branch fork was located and prepared for installation, if needed.

Adjustments were made to the frame of the popping compartment of the Cretors popper, with clearances being improved to allow doors to open properly. The red panels were removed for attachment of more decals. An attempt was made to drop the burner on the Model CX, but this was not completed as clearance above the engine was insufficient to let it down. A new vaporizer is required for this small gasoline burner. (The dropping of the burner was completed on Oct. 8.)

On Thursday, October 8, five volunteers were on hand, as follows: Ted Kamen (in charge), Tim Ward, Steve Bryce, Jim Personti, and Tom Marshall.

In examining the removed burner fork from the Model 740, cracks in one of the welds were discovered, so the new fork was installed and adjusted, after first annealing (again) the copper washers. It was necessary to do the same on a tiny fitting supplying the pilot. After "plastering" around the hot end of the vaporizer, the car was partially fired up, and all was tight. Good progress was made on the Cretors project, with a new oversize nipple made to fit an enlarged hole in the boiler, and gas lines were formed and attached. The burner box was leveled, and the Stanley-type boiler placed in position. The water tank and boiler on the Mountain Wagon were filled.

On Friday, Mike Ciosek and Brent McDougall worked more on the crossing of the rear driveway in the A.V.R.R. back curve. All but one short section is in place and has been temporarily ballasted and tamped. More progress was made on the Cretors project by Steve Bryce and Jerry Novak, and the Model 740 was fired up, run several times around the driveway, blown down, and located in its permanent spot in the museum.

The most recent edition of *the Stanley Museum Quarterly* brought news of several deaths in the greater steam car community:

- Walter E. Winship of Maine, who attended our Delaware Steam Car Tour in 2007 and last visited Auburn Heights two years ago, died on July 4, 2015 at the age of 93.
- Robert J. "Buck" Boudeman of Richland, Michigan, owner of several high-powered Stanleys including two Vanderbilt Cup re-creations, and a brother-in-law of Sarah Stanley, died on September 24, 2014 at the age of 72.
- C. Byron Hall of Estes Park, Colorado, a longtime steam car expert who warned us of a nearby tornado when we attended the 100th anniversary celebration of the Stanley Hotel in 2009, died on December 7, 2014, at the age of 73.
- Dr. Robert E. Mead of Ridgefield, Connecticut, a longtime owner of a 1912 Stanley Model 73 who seldom missed an Eastern Steam Car Tour, died on March 14, 2015, at the age of 83.
- Paul J. Tusek, formerly postmaster of West Point, Ohio, and an early owner of a 1907 Model H-5 who participated in the 1954 Anglo-American Rally around the British Isles with his Stanley, died on July 13, 2013 at the age of 90. Bill Schwoebel is now the owner of this car.