

## FAHP News, September 21, 2015

**Wills Passmore, One and Two:** The name is “Wills,” not William or Willis. The elder Wills was a talented bachelor who was born in the early 1850s and died about 1909. The younger Wills, a great nephew of the former, was born in 1927 or 1928 and is still farming near Taylor’s Bridge in southeastern New Castle County.

Sarah (“Sadie”) Mitchell (1858-1944), my grandmother’s younger sister, married Henry C. (Harry) Passmore, and they had two sons and two daughters. Their farm was just off Old Kennett Road near Snuff Mill Road. Harry’s bachelor brother Wills lived with them. The Passmores’ younger son Pusey (1898-ca.1979) adored his Uncle Wills, and when he and his wife, Dora, had a son of their own, he was named Wills. About 1920, the Passmore family moved to Concord Pike just north of Talleyville and bought a farm that is the present site of the Concord Mall and Widener University. Pusey Passmore also leased a farm west of the Pike owned by Woodlawn Trustees, and here Pusey established a thriving ice cream business in the 1930s under the name Lynthwaite Farm. His first cousin twice removed is James I. Mitchell, who runs the Creamery at Woodside Farm, famous for its rich ice cream made from the milk of the farm’s Jersey cattle.

The first Wills Passmore was a teacher and an inventor. He invented and manufactured a school-sized globe of the world, which showed clearly the rotation and the revolving of the earth and was a great teaching tool to explain day and night, the seasons at various latitudes, and as an aid in the study of climatology. These units were nicely made, and a few are still in existence. Wills also owned an early Stanley steamer, a Model EX of about 1906. He understood it and made out well, but apparently the gasoline-burning Stanleys of that period had a tendency to backfire. One day he took it to Stanley agent D. Walter Harper in Philadelphia to have some boiler work done. When Harper’s mechanics dropped the burner, they were confused. In all the valleys of the grate was plastered insulation, most likely felt or asbestos. Harper inquired what that was for. Wills told him it prevented his burner from backfiring. From that time on, all Stanleys left the factory with insulation on the grate, and we continue that practice today, using a fiberglass product.

The younger Wills loved farming, as did his father, but farms on Concord Pike were becoming completely impractical. About 1963, he moved south with his wife, Joanne, and their three daughters. They bought a farm near Taylor’s Bridge, a few miles southeast of Odessa and became very active in the farming community of downstate Delaware. Joanne held many responsible positions in the Grange and was an active volunteer and Board member of the Delaware Agricultural Museum. She followed my late cousin Betty Roberts in keeping the tiny Appoquinimink Friends Meeting in Odessa open as an active place of worship.

Unfortunately, Joanne Passmore died a few years ago. Sometime later, Wills married Grace Caulk, a widow who was also widely known in the Delaware farming community. Wills is still farming, and both he and Grace remain active in farming organizations. Wills is still an untiring

volunteer at the Delaware Agricultural Museum in Dover. Although I seldom see him, I am very proud of my second cousin.

**Work Report:** On Tuesday, September 15, 15 volunteers were on hand, viz: Jerry Novak (in charge), Dave Leon, Ted Kamen, Tom Marshall, Steve Bryce, Bob Stransky, Bill Schwoebel, Mac Taylor, John Schubel, Lou Mandich, Anne Cleary, Brent McDougall, John Bacino, Bob Jordan, and Edwin Paschall.

The popcorn burner was successfully mounted on the Cretors popper. The Models 87 and 78 were prepped for the Hagley show, and the 78 was fired up and tested on the jack. The Model K, also going to Hagley, was fired up and run on the jack, with all systems tested and a slight shift required in the location of the engine case. The Lionel train layout was worked on.

Two truck loads of cedar shingles were delivered by Lou Mandich for firewood and were stacked on pallets behind the back building. The running board trim and the old rubber were removed from the driver's side of the '37 Packard. Two drums of kerosene were syphoned into our storage tank and the drums stored behind the back building.

On Thursday, September 17, the following 11 volunteers were at work, as follows: Tim Ward (in charge), Mark Bodenshtab, Bill Schwoebel, Dave Leon, Brent McDougall, Steve Bryce, Jared Schoenly, Bob Jordan, Ted Kamen, Kelly Williams, and Tom Marshall.

Locomotive 401 was thoroughly cleaned from its runs on Sept. 6. The moldings and rubber on the passenger's side running board was removed on the '37 Packard. Cars were further prepped for their use on Sept. 20 (the Hagley Show) and the Dover weekend Sept. 25-27. The leak in the compressed air line in the carriage house was repaired.

On Saturday, progress was made by Steve Bryce toward completing the Cretors popper. On Sunday, five of our Stanleys joined two more owned by Donald Eckel and Steve Jensen, respectively, to complete the steam car contingent at the Hagley Museum's 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Car Show. Steve Bryce in the Model 78, Bill Schwoebel in the Model 87, Dan Citron in the Model EX, Jared Schoenly in the Model 725, and Tom Marshall in the Model K were joined by Dan Muir, Bill Rule, and Ted Kamen as passengers. Dave Leon drove with us in his beautiful 1910 Reo. The Model K and the Reo were featured in one of the parades, and all cars ran well. Lou Mandich was in charge of the parades, and Rose Ann Hoover was there with her '40 Packard, and she fed us all.