

Hello, Steam Team:

Radio just prior to World War II: In 1939, my father bought a Farnsworth radio with record player and automatic record changer for \$80. It was housed in a very nice free-standing wooden cabinet. Six or eight 78-r.p.m. records, either 10" or 12" in diameter, could be stacked above the turntable and would automatically drop onto said turntable when the playing of the previous record was completed. It took about 15 seconds for this mechanism to operate between records. The unit was located in the living room facing the window to the sun porch. My mother's desk was next to it. Although my parents listened to the radio a few minutes each day, I was the only one to use the phonograph. There was a mysterious button on this unit labeled "TV". Someone said that some day we would be able to see a picture on a screen in addition to hearing the sound. This seemed unbelievable, but the manufacturers of the Farnsworth must have envisioned selling some sort of screen at a later date that could be attached above the radio unit. However, on our unit, the TV button did nothing.

Radio shows were varied, but usually fell into certain categories. The only sports events I recall listening to were occasional major league baseball games which were always in the afternoon in those days, certainly not during "prime-time". The World Series attracted the most attention. I think some college football games were broadcast on Saturday afternoons in the fall. News broadcasts with several popular newsmen like Lowell Thomas, Elmer Davis, H. V. Kaltenborne, Gabriel Heatter, Edwin C. Hill, and Earl Godwin always seemed to come on right after the evening dinner hour. Presidential candidates could be heard on the radio for a few weeks prior to the general election, and political conventions and election returns received good coverage (Murray Metten of the News Journal traditionally reported Delaware results on Station WDEL). Weekly comedy "hours" (they usually ran ½ hour) featured entertainers like Fibber McGee and Molly, Eddie Cantor, Jack Benny, Bob Hope, Red Skelton, and Fred Allen. Musical shows really did not come on strong until World War II engulfed us, but singers such as Dinah Shore, Bing Crosby, Dennis Day, Helen Forrest, Kate Smith, Frances Lankford, Ginny Simms and several others were a regular part of comedy shows. Big bands were in vogue among young people, but they seldom performed on radio. The Hit Parade on Saturday night, sponsored by the American Tobacco Company (Lucky Strike) was paramount among musical radio shows, and featured the ten top songs as evidenced by the week's sales of sheet music or phonograph records. The DuPont Company's weekly "Cavalcade of America" (Better Things for Better Living through Chemistry) was a very popular informational show.

Radio stations that had good reception in this area were WDEL and WILM in Wilmington, WIP, WCAU and WFIL in Philadelphia, WOR in Newark, NJ, and WJZ in New York. Most were affiliated with NBC, CBS, or ABC, but WOR was part of the Mutual Broadcasting Company, and some of the stations were not a part of the major networks. A small but good simple radio cost about \$20. Radio listening did not compare to going to the movies, but it was the next best thing in occupying young people's leisure time.

Last week, Jerry Lucas and helpers fired up the Model H-5 and ran it in place. On Wednesday, the Stanley Museum's Model 70 was delivered here by John Linderman, chairman of the Museum's trustees, on his way to Hershey. We plan to evaluate what the car needs, and send a report to the Museum. How much they want us to do is yet undetermined. Jim and Jeff got one step closer to completing the burner for the Model CX. Kelly Williams and Steve Bryce cleaned on several cars and made two ready for the trip to HCCP's Fall Meet near Media on Sunday, 10/21. Walter, Emil, and Art Sybell worked on the Rauch & Lang and the Model 740, and Art continued his painting of "Little Toot". Steve Bryce is organizing mechanical projects and parts inventories on the cars now owned by FAHP. Dan Nichols has agreed to take on the paper work associated with the 13 cars now owned by our organization. Bob Hargraves, our Arkansas member and close friend of Walter Higgins, visited with a friend last Thursday night as a side trip from Hershey. Bob has bought a former coal-burning Stanley owned by the Schuck family of Stockton, NJ. Bucky and I finished the track work over the bank stabilization project. Rose Ann and Emil did yeoman work in cleaning out the Museum's closet, and Rose Ann further prepared for our public days coming up October 27 and 28, as well as our charter events on the 21st and 22nd (Historical Society of Delaware, and Delaware Community Foundation). The Delaware Museum Association plans to meet in the Museum on October 18. Bill Rule and I have completed work on Norman Schaut's Model 61 Stanley, and hope to return it to him on Friday, Oct. 19.

Last Thursday, I transferred eight more cars to FAHP, and the title work is complete. These are the 1902 Stick Seat Runabout, the 1908 Model EX, the 1908 Model H-5, the 1908 Model K, the 1913 Model 78, the 1916 Model 725, the 1922 Model 740, and the 1932 Packard Twin Six Dual Cowl Sport Phaeton. Five cars are still owned by me going into 2008. Four meetings took place over the weekend while Mike and Kathryn May were with us. On Sunday, Bill Enslen, our treasurer, called a Finance Committee meeting, followed by a special Board Meeting to authorize an increased budget for 2008 to support a full time Executive Director and part-time office staff. Seventeen Board members attended and the increase was approved. On Monday, Dan Muir called a meeting of the Search Committee (for a full-time Executive Director) that set standards for an interviewing process. As of this writing, we have had six applicants. Mary Hopkins chaired a Development Committee meeting, the main topic being this fall's Annual Appeal and the apparatus required to meet our \$70,000 goal. Also on Sunday, about 20 high-wheelers with their riders visited Auburn Heights, celebrating the 40th anniversary of the Wheelmen. Art Sybell and Emil ran the Rauch & Lang electric and Mike May ran the Model H-5 for the enjoyment of our visitors. Their ride began at Kennett Square, stopped here for an hour plus, and continued to Spring Valley where they boarded a flat car on the Wilmington & Western R.R. After a visit to Greenbank Station, they returned to Kennett via the same route (but with no stop at Auburn Heights). In the early afternoon, Mike and I took the H-5 up the road and back and had a good ride. Jerry Lucas and Art Wallace are "touching up" the car before returning it to the Museum. I'm a day late with this week's "News", but WE ARE BUSY, and this is good. Tom