

August 1, 2005

Hello, Steam Team:

There have been some interesting people at Auburn Heights in 108 years, those who lived here and those who worked for them. This "episode" will mention the five couples who lived in the "temporary" 3rd-floor apartment in the big house during and just after World War II. In 1942, the first full year of our involvement in the war, housing became very tight, and it continued this way through the rest of the decade. Those with more room than they needed were urged to take in roomers, boarders, or create small apartments. The third floor of Auburn Heights, used very little by the Marshalls, was so converted.

Although I was away most of the time from 1942 through 1946, I knew 4 of the 5 couples who rented the apartment during this period and just after. My parents took them in as if they were "family" and retained friendships long after they were gone.

One of the bedrooms became a living room, my father's photographic darkroom became a small kitchen, and a third-floor porch was screened in. Access was through the side door and up two flights of a back stairway, as there was no elevator in those days. The first couple was the Bebbingtons, Bill and Bobbi, from Solvay, NY. He was a young chemist with the DuPont Company, they moved in very early in 1943 and stayed just over a year when he was transferred to Belle, WV. The next couple was the Carrs, Bill and Peggy, he being a captain in the Air Transport Command flying C-54s out of New Castle Air Base. They were from Southern California. He was away on missions about half the time, and home the other half, during which time he was much interested in what my father was doing with his Stanley cars. In August, 1945, with the war just about over, his job terminated at New Castle and she was anxious to get home to California to give birth to their first child. 8-1/2 months pregnant, she drove across the country alone and all turned out well. The third couple was the McCarthys from Minnesota, here from late 1945 for about 9 months. He was a manager for Kennard & Pyle, a retail dry goods fixture on Market Street in Wilmington. I never knew them. The fourth couple was the Eichbaums, Bill and Ellie, he from Chattanooga, and she from Toms River, NJ, who moved in with their two young boys very early in 1947. He was an agent for pre-fabricated Butler buildings, and also a professional model builder. Finally, the last couple to rent the wartime apartment was the Janviers, Phil and Harriet, he from the Philadelphia area and working for NVF and she from Marshalltown, IA. They were between local homes, and were here with their two small sons a few months until early in 1949.

A very successful July Sunday is behind us, and our 100th Birthday party for the Stanley Model CX was a hit. Thanks to Rob and Chevonne Robison for chairing this event, and to ALL the 34 volunteers who entertained and accommodated our guests, everyone ended the day on

a high note. Believe it or not, I found the list from the Stanley register showing the dates our cars left the Stanley factory, and the CX left on July 31, 1905! It was truly its 100th birthday. We gave away chances to ride in this little car, which ran around the grounds every half hour with Bill Schwoebel at the tiller. A quick ticket count Sunday night overstated our ticket sales; the corrected numbers are 289 adults and 129 children for a total of 418. Gross receipts reported by Kathy Beck and Rose Ann Hoover were \$3,701 for tickets, \$418 for gift shop, and \$100 from ice cream, for a total of \$4,219. Very nice, everyone! Thanks go to WHYY Channel 12 which gave us a 30-second spot on their "Delaware Tonight" broadcast last Friday. Let's build on this success and promote even more for our "Back to School" Sunday on August 28.

The Museum looked very nice for Sunday's event, and I commend all who put on the finishing touches and cleaned the cars well from the Connecticut tour. While we have no immediate deadlines right now, August will be a good month to undertake several major projects. Stanley projects that come to mind are a little engine and rear-end work on the Model CX, checking out the slightly-leaking boiler on the Model 725, and repairing the feed water heater on the Model 76. I visited Byrd's paint shop again today, and a tentative plan will be to tow the Model 735 back here when the body and fenders have been painted, block it up, remove the wheels, try sanding and preparing the wheels ourselves (to save money), then return the wheels to Byrd for repainting. We hope the body and fenders will be done in two weeks.

I think we should activate the idea of taking the Orchestrion to Aaron Stoltzfus for rebuilding. Maybe this can be done this week. It needs to be loaded on my trailer for transport to Manheim, PA. When I see Aaron, I want to ask him if he can do some striping for us. If not, we'll touch base with some of our local contacts. The next step on the R.R. signal project will be the laying of wire around the grounds to activate these signals. Bucky and I hope to start this week.

Steve Jensen will need some help with the ongoing tie replacement on the Auburn Valley R.R. Anne Cleary has called a meeting of the Special Events Committee for Tuesday evening, August 9, at her home, 825 Benge Road, Hockessin, at 7:30 P.M. Finally, the BRAACA picnic is at Hagley on Saturday, August 13, at noon, rain or shine. Several of us are members of BRAACA, and if any others are interested in going with one of our cars, I'm sure we can arrange an invitation. Details on food and monetary charge can be had from Jerry Novak, Emil, or Rose Ann. It's a nice affair.

Steve Jensen's father Robert is going through a very tough time, in and out of the hospital. The last I heard, he was still at Brandywine Springs Nursing Home but he is fighting pneumonia. We wish Steve and his family our hope for his father's recovery. On a happier note, Mark and John Hopkins' father Walt, also a FAHP member, is home and doing better all the time. Keep it up, Walt, we're pulling for

you. Tom