

## OCTOBER 6, 2008 F.A.H.P. NEWS

**Joyce L. Nickerson (1933- ):** Joyce came to live on the third floor at Auburn Heights in 1965 and learned to help my mother with house work. This turned out to be her residence for 43 years. A native of the Odessa area, she had lived with and cared for an elderly uncle there until his death. Another Odessa resident, James T. Shallcross, Jr. (1879-1972), my mother's eldest brother, knew my mother was looking for help to take care of her big house and wondered if Joyce might fit in. With great trepidation, she took the job on a trial basis.

My mother was not easy to work for, often expecting her helpers to do things exactly as she did them, which was usually impossible. At the age of 80, she was still in good health, however, and taught Joyce many things including some of the idiosyncrasies of Auburn Heights. Joyce had never driven a car but the Short Line Bus was still running past our driveway, and it was suggested that she could ride the bus to Wilmington and then to Odessa on her days off. She tried this but the schedules were such that it was not very practical, and her relatives often transported her. It was not long before she learned to drive and purchased her first car. In the 40 plus years since then, she has owned about 5 cars, and although they were used only 2 days per week, she has driven about 300,000 miles, with only one very minor accident. At first, my mother wanted her here on Sunday some of the time to help with Sunday dinners when guests might be invited, so she was off on Monday and Thursday. After my mother came down with shingles on her face and behind her eyes in 1966, from which she never recovered, there was little entertaining, and Joyce was off on Thursday and Sunday. This worked out well as she enjoyed attending the Methodist Church in Odessa, after which she would have dinner with her sister Hilda and leave there at precisely the same time each Sunday night to drive to Yorklyn.

My father died in 1969 and Joyce helped during my mother's long illness, did the washing and house cleaning, and a limited amount of cooking. In the early '70's, she went with Mary Glenn and my mother to Rehoboth for a few weeks each summer. When my mother died in 1979, she felt an obligation to take care of me, and she did her best to please my many whims. When Ruth and I were married in 1985, she felt she was no longer needed and prepared to move out. I suggested that she might be of help to us, so she consented to try it. A few years after the third floor was remodeled with its new kitchen in 1988, Joyce began to use this kitchen and took her meals alone in her private apartment. Around the house we could count on the waste baskets being emptied and my bed made daily. Monday was "vacuuming" day, Tuesday was the main wash day, Wednesday she cleaned bathrooms, Thursday was her day off, and Friday she changed bed linens, washed again and ironed. This schedule never changed. A very generous person, she bestowed gifts on many relatives and friends on their birthdays and at Christmas time.

This past week has been active and traumatic. With the help of her sister Norma and Norma's family, all her things have been moved and she has settled in at Foulk Manor North, a very nice retirement home about 12 miles east of Yorklyn. Last night seemed very strange when Joyce didn't arrive at Auburn Heights at 9:50 to say good night, tell Ruth about her day, and climb the two flights of steps to her apartment. We will miss her.

For some of our members, this is the most important week of the year, as it is “Hershey Week”. Those who live there all week usually arrive Tuesday and remain until after the Car Show on Saturday. For those who have not been, it is a HUGE automotive flea market and swap meet, by far the largest in the world, and is attended by interested people and collectors from all parts of the globe. Covering many acres (I don’t know the exact number, but I would think well over 100), it is also a major social event for segments of those in the antique auto hobby. “See you at Hershey” rings out whenever friends gather, such as at the annual Steam Car tours. Rob Robison, Bill Schwoebel, Butch Cannard, Mike May, the Hopkins family, and many other F.A.H.P. members are perennial residents for the 4 or 5 days. You have to “know the ropes” to get the most from your time there, whether looking for something in particular, just browsing, or locating friends. Several of our members stay for the week; others go for one or more days. The attendance at our work sessions this week will be slightly depleted because of “Hershey”.

Last week the pilot was tested on the Model 725 after a thorough cleaning, and pronounced very good. The same is now true for the pilot on the Model 76, rebuilt by Steve Bryce. Jerry Lucas re-flared a piece of copper fuel line in the pump box of the Model K, and Mark Russell began the building of a new 20-H.P. burner. Anne Cleary cleaned up the locomotives from their 9/28 runs, Butch Cannard and Bob Jordan continued to polish the copper fuel tank from the Model 78, and Art Wallace cleaned and polished cars that got wet on our latest public day. Richard Bernard brought the registrations up-to-date that would have expired on 12/31/08 on five of our cars.

Catherine Coin returned to the office today after a week’s vacation on the West Coast. A small committee consisting of Richard Bernard, Bill Schwoebel, and Steve Bryce have been working out a viable approval and reimbursement system applicable to all of us who buy things for FAHP, large and small. Another group, in conjunction with the Collections Committee, is deciding on which cars should have a major restoration starting very soon. They are leaning toward the Rauch & Lang electric and the 1914 Model 607 Stanley. Several have expressed an interest in attending the event at Dover Downs Hotel on October 23, where the volunteers of FAHP are to receive the Governor’s Volunteer(s) of the Year Award. Tom