

May 8, 2006

Hello, Steam Team:

The March 20 Weekly News promised that the story of the final 1/3 of our 1972 "Trip of a Lifetime" in our 1912 Stanley Model 87 would follow in 7 weeks, so here it is- the previous edition left you at the end of the 4,100-mile "Trans-Con" tour in San Diego.

Most of the 21 cars that finished in southern California were shipped to their owner's homes, but it had been our intention to drive the whole way, unaccompanied by anyone on the eastbound trip. So we had planned our overnight stops, as well as water and fuel stops, with the same precision as while we were on the tour. Having been away 5 weeks, however, I wanted to come home to see my mother and "check on things", so the steamer was left in the capable hands of the Stumpf family, and I flew home from LAX. Before I came east and while we were staying near Disneyland for a few days, Weldin Stumpf and I had replaced the inside burner pan; otherwise the car was approved by us for the 3,500-mile trip home.

The Stumpfs traveled in the Stanley from Disneyland to Fort Collins, CO, with planned overnight stops at Barstow, CA, Las Vegas, North Rim of the Grand Canyon, Bryce Canyon, Salt Lake City, Rock Springs and Cheyenne, WY. I flew back to Denver and early one morning they picked me up at a motel in Fort Collins, we drove the few miles to Loveland and picked up Leon Fedderson, then the owner of the Stanley Hotel, who had asked us to come to Estes Park to help promote the hotel. With Fedderson aboard, the 5 of us drove the 30 miles up Big Thompson Canyon to the Park in 65 minutes, climbing 2,500 feet on the trip. We sat in the lobby or the music room on a bright, clear morning, gazing out the picture window toward the Rockies while answering questions from the reporters who came to interview us. However, to our knowledge, the story of our trip was not worthy of media attention.

Leaving Estes Park the next day, the Stanley made 1,872 miles in 9 days before reaching Yorklyn on August 9. The Stumpfs and I piloted the car to Omaha, then they flew home. Don Tulloch was my passenger from Omaha to Dayton, OH, and Bob Reilly from Columbus to Yorklyn. From Dayton to Columbus, about 70 miles, was the only stretch where I was alone on the 8,328-mile trip. The most memorable event on the trip from Colorado was in Iowa after we left Omaha. In writing to postmasters asking for help with soft water, a few communities saw promotional possibilities from our brief visits. One such place was Creston, IA. In advance, they had tried to pin me down as to what time I would be there, and several weeks before I had said 1:00 P.M. I forgot about it until 11:45 that morning and we were still in Stanton, IA, about 50 miles to the west. It was Don Tulloch's first morning in

the Stanley and I told him we would be hard-pressed to make Creston on time, but we would try. We moved right along and at 1:00 we were about 1-1/2 miles short of our destination, when a sheriff's car pulled out of a side road in front of us. We noticed a radio tower in a field where he had come from. The signal had been given that the Stanley was passing that point, and the sheriff had been designated to escort us into town. He directed us to a stop at a filling station which had ordered in 100 gallons of soft water (probably rain water). There were close to 1,000 people who immediately surrounded the Stanley, including TV people from Des Moines. We talked for ½ hour or more.

Then we filled our tanks and took off again, stopping at Ottumwa, IA, that night. Finally, on August 9 as we approached Yorklyn, Weldin Stumpf had told us to arrive at 5:00 P.M., as he had invited the press to be on hand to celebrate the completion of our trip (we were promoting the "Magic Age of Steam" in those days). At 3:45 Bob Reilly and I were at John Springer's on Route 41 (very close to the Simpkins' home), and when I called him, again he said, "don't arrive until 5:00".

So we waited, and pulled in the driveway at Auburn Heights about 4:55 P.M.

A few of our friends were here, but no one else showed up. We were still not newsworthy, but it had been the longest trip ever made in a steam car, and done throughout with no accompanying vehicle for tools, parts, supplies, and mechanical support.

This past week was busy and successful. Our conversion hydraulic brake kits for the Models EX and 735 were picked up in Angola, NY, by Butch and Jane Cannard, and Jerry Lucas and the Simpkins' have already started the 735 installation. Having replaced the plugs in the '32 Packard, Jim Personti is now rebuilding a carburetor for this car. Bob Reilly and I visited in Dover with Chazz Salkin, Matt Chesser, Clyde Shipman and Paul Nicholson, all of the Division of Parks and Recreation. Many things were discussed relating to the Auburn Heights property, and we are in the final process of refining an agreement between the State and FAHP. On Saturday, Butch, Bill Schwoebel, Anne, and Bob Reilly took the Models 87 and 76 Stanleys to Dover for Old Dover Days, and almost 500 people rode in these two cars during the afternoon around the Dover Green. The same day, Jerry Novak, Dale and Ted Simpkins and I took the two Packards to Winterthur where they were on display in a beautiful place on a beautiful day. John, Mark, and Robert Hopkins were here Saturday working on the 725 and they drove it several miles with good success. Today, Aaron Stoltzfus was here and completed the repair to our orchestrion with the rebuilding of the vacuum pump and bellows.

Next Sunday, May 14, Jerry Lucas plans to take the Model 76 to the Willowdale Horse Show. If anyone else is interested in going and taking a car, it is not too late. On Monday, May 15, pre-schoolers and kindergarteners visit the Auburn Valley R.R. We need a few, but not many, volunteers to help in the morning; so far, we have only two groups signed up. John McNamara, Bob Reilly, and I can handle the

train operation; in addition, we will let them climb on the wooden locomotive and view the operating electric trains. Then on Saturday, May 20, we are due at the Wilmington & Western R.R. for the Red Clay Valley Days celebration sponsored by the W & W, the Greenbank Mill, and the Friends of Brandywine Springs. On Sunday, May 21, the annual spring meet of the Historical Car Club of Penna. is held at Linvilla Orchards, south of Media, PA, and we usually have several cars going.

The Quarterly Board Meeting of FAHP will be held on Thursday, May 18, at 7:30 P.M., probably in the reception room of the Museum. There may be other Board committee meetings that week, either on Wednesday or Thursday (if required). Bob Reilly is coming down the home stretch in getting his office established in the apartment over the garage. He expects to be moved in, if not finished, by next week. Thanks to Stan Wilcox, Matthew Harris, Cam Yorkston, Rob and Chevonne Robison, Butch Cannard, and the Division of Parks for making it possible to acquire equipment and furnishings at very low cost to FAHP.

Stan Wilcox had a very painful kidney stone removed about a week ago. We are glad he is on the mend and we hope he will be back to normal soon.

For our 2-day weekend, June 3 and 4, volunteers are needed for one or both days. Sign-up sheets have been in the garage near the shop. Even more immediate is our need for the "promotion team" to start working next week to get the word out about the event. Bob Reilly has written a good press release, but it won't be used without personal contact with news outlets. Since no one has signed up for this team, we will be asking some of you this week whether you can help with it and how you can spend your time to best advantage. MANY THANKS! Tom