

**Railroads and Restaurants:** A hundred years ago, some of the best restaurants in the country were in railroad stations. The Pennsylvania Railroad's restaurant in Philadelphia's Broad Street Station was considered by many to be the best one in town. My father would occasionally drive one of his Stanleys there to enjoy Sunday dinner. The Fred Harvey Restaurant in Kansas City's Union Station was the flagship of his restaurant chain and also the best place to eat in the city. Many of their patrons were not on a journey by train.

Some businessmen thought dining cars on crack long-distance trains offered excellent food. While the Pennsylvania Railroad offered the fastest and most direct service from the Wilmington-Philadelphia area to the Midwest on trains such as the Broadway Limited and the Spirit of St. Louis, diner service on the B & O, the C & O, and the New York Central was often superior. Some thought the few extra hours en route was offset by the improved food and service.

Fred Harvey was a Scotsman who made his way to the Chicago area and had some success in the restaurant business. He convinced some western railroads that it would be much more efficient to have good trackside restaurants along their distant right-of-ways than having the expense of dining cars on most of their trains. After working with several railroads around Chicago with this idea, Harvey centered on the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe, the only railroad with tracks running the 2,200 miles between Chicago and the West Coast. In large cities, of which there were few, and small railroad towns where steam locomotives would be serviced, Fred Harvey restaurants were built at trackside. In a period of one-half hour, passengers would disembark and be fed a full-course meal at long tables with linen napkins and tablecloths, served by neatly groomed young women. With a fresh locomotive and crew on the front end, the train would pull out with a load of happy passengers. I witnessed such a Fred Harvey restaurant in operation at Clovis, New Mexico, in 1944, when the wartime westbound California Limited made its daily stop. Of course I talked with the engine crew, not the waitresses. A Hollywood musical starring Judy Garland in the late 1940s glorified the Harvey girls.

In more modern times, restaurants with a railroad theme became popular. A small chain called Victoria Station had a popular eating spot near Boston's South Station in an area that was being redeveloped as a tourist attraction. There was a Victoria Station at King of Prussia (Pennsylvania) as well, located toward Norristown from the big mall. Soon after the Wilmington & Western was revived as a tourist railroad in the late 1960s, I solicited Victoria Station to open a restaurant next to Greenbank Station, and we had the blessing of New Castle County to build one on their land. Obviously, this never worked out.

The word *restaurant* comes up frequently in connection with the redevelopment of the former NVF site in Yorklyn, with the reasoning that it would be a great tie-in with the Wilmington & Western Railroad that also passes through the site. Although having a theme helps to get started, the success of such a venture would be determined by the quality of its food and how well the restaurant was managed.

**Work Report:** On Tuesday, September 8, six volunteers were on hand, plus those who attended the Events Committee meeting. Those working were: Jerry Lucas (in charge), Bob Jordan, Tom Marshall, Tim Ward, Bob Stransky, and Jerry Novak.

The firing problem on the Model 725 was checked over, and the cable and forks were cleaned again, but no restrictions were found. Further checking indicated that the problem must have been specks of dirt in the main fire valve, and when this was opened ¼ turn or more, a free flow of fuel resulted. The car will be fired up Thursday night in preparation for its trip to Chadds Ford Days on Sunday. The '32 Packard was also prepped for its trip to Chadds Ford on Saturday and Sunday.

The boiler in the Mountain Wagon did not syphon full after the car's use on September 6, so it was filled. The Model K was fired up and brought to the upper garage after fresh fuel had been put in its tank. The engine cover was removed, and the engine was thoroughly oiled and the packing glands snugged up. The nozzles were cleaned and some insulation was added around the back of the burner. This car is expected to be driven to the Hagley Show on Sept. 20.

On Thursday, September 10, nine volunteers were on hand, as follows: Bill Schwoebel (in charge), Jim Personti, Geoff Fallows, Tom Marshall, Jared Schoenly, Paul Kratunis, Bob Jordan, John Bacino, and Tim Ward.

Many old towels were cut up for much-needed shop rags. Several of the rusted bolts that hold the running board moldings on the '37 Packard were removed or broken off, so the molding can be removed. This has been a tough project but is progressing well, and new rubber is on hand for recovering these running boards when all is put back together. The leaking Stanley throttle on our Locomotive #401 was removed from the smoke box for rebuilding.

The syphon valve, now hooked up to the new "flue blower" on the Model 87, was re-worked and the point of the stem refaced. The leaking drip valve on the Model 740, activated by a cable instead of a rod (with universal joints), was rebuilt by making a new stem, repacking, and lapping in the seat. No guarantees are made, but we hope this corrects the problem. Great progress was made in re-assembling the engine for the Model H-5, and the new connecting rods with their bearings and bronze crosshead slides are now hooked up.

Intermittent rain prevented the 725 from being fired up and tested, but all should be good.

On Friday, the Models 71 and CX were cleaned and prepped for the trip to Chadds Ford Days on Saturday, as was the '32 Packard. Batteries were checked on the Rauch & Lang electric, which is scheduled to be at the Kennett Square Mushroom Festival, also on Saturday. The Packard will go to Chadds Ford again on Sunday, as will the Models 725 and 740.

The vaporizer cable in the Model 87 was shortened from 8 feet to 7 feet. The new vaporizer itself is eight feet long, and worked well on trips to the Strasburg Railroad in July and the Wilmington & Western in August.