

June 11, 2007

Hello, Steam Team:

Projects in the “new” shop, late 1930’s: T. Clarence Marshall always liked to work on and build things, so he needed some kind of shop. Retiring from daily activity at the fiber mills in 1926, he had a woodworking shop in the basement of Auburn Heights but soon moved it to one end of the garage and upstairs in “the loft” nearest to the present snack bar building. Having built two Eli Terry clock cases and the O-gauge circular railway still in use in the Museum, he turned his attention more toward metal work than to woodwork. He also enjoyed much of the mechanical work required on his Packard cars.

In 1935 he had bought a used 15” South Bend lathe with quick-change gear, and this was mounted in the rear of the garage (carriage house) near the glass walk-in door that has not been opened since. He invented and had patented a gasoline-saving device and installed it quite successfully on a 1935 Standard Eight Packard Club Sedan. The mileage was increased from about 12 m.p.g. to 16 m.p.g. When he installed a similar one on his friend Clarence Walker’s ’36 Packard One-Twenty, however, it gave some trouble, and my father turned his interest to other things.

When the shop addition was completed in late summer, 1937, the big lathe, a smaller 9” South Bend bench lathe, a new drill press, and a used shaper were moved into the new room, with a power hack saw in the basement driven by a belt from the shaper. A heavy wooden work bench with cupboards below ran the entire 26 feet along one side of the room. There was room for one car in the new shop and removable planks in the middle of the floor made it possible to access the underside from the basement below. I remember a beautiful used 1934 Packard Standard Eight 7-passenger touring with side mounts in the shop (which my father did not buy), and then the ’37 Packard Twelve still in our collection when it first came to Yorklyn. Although this 13-year-old had hoped for a Model T Ford, this Packard was long a favorite of my father and me.

The first real project in the shop was the invention of an improved clay target trap. Using parts from older Western Cartridge Company traps (which had been used at Yorklyn) and some special castings, he tested his invention by opening the big door and throwing the targets or “clay pigeons” over the rose arbor and onto the sloping lawn beyond. On a cold January 20, 1938, Paul J. Buxton, chief engineer for Western at East Alton, IL, came by train to inspect my father’s new trap. Favorably impressed, a deal was made: my father wanted no money but was to get 10 new traps for the Yorklyn Gun Club if, indeed, Western began manufacturing them along the lines of his invention. On a pleasant day in May, this same trap was set up in one of the traphouses at the Gun Club, and Fletcher H. Woodcock, a Western “trade man” from Ithaca, NY, was on hand along with Leo Shaab of Elk Ridge, MD, who took care of the Yorklyn traps for Western at the big tournaments. In late June, 1938, Woodcock showed off one of the first made by his company at the New York State Shoot held at Johnsonville, northeast of Troy, NY. Eight of these traps were delivered to Yorklyn in time for the annual tournament in early August, and they were used at the Grand American Tournament at Vandalia, OH, later the same month. At the end of the “Grand” week, Joe Hiestand of Hillsboro, OH, a regular at Yorklyn, completed a long run of 966 straight (unfinished), breaking all 900 single targets he shot at in Vandalia. Coincidentally, my father was elected president of the Amateur Trapshooting Association by a vote of 18 to 10 over “Rock” Jenkins of Orleans, IN, that same week. 1938 had been a big year for my father in the world of trapshooting.

Last Tuesday, June 5, seven Stanleys made the trip to Mitchells' Woodside Farm Creamery for a most enjoyable evening "ice cream run". Many of the cars to be used on the upcoming Steam Car Tour were given a final test. On Sunday, June 10, three Stanleys and their occupants attended the New Garden Air Show. On Friday, June 8, Bill Rule and I retrieved our Model EX Stanley from the AACA Museum at Hershey, where it had been on loan for 7 months. Now the cars are back in our Museum for the visit of the Steam Car Tour and its participants on Monday, June 18. Following that day, we will be using about 10 of them on several of the remaining days of the tour.

Not everything works out as planned. Our '32 Packard Twin Six was scheduled to go to the Burn Foundation Concours d'Elegance at Allentown, PA, last weekend, but the trip was canceled when the car wouldn't start. Jerry Novak, Emil Christofano, and Walter Higgins believe the problem is the self starter motor. Thinking our Model 76 Stanley was 100%, Steve Bryce planned to take it to the New Garden Air Show, but he, Bill Schwoebel, and I spent the afternoon replacing the steam pipe and connecting elbow. Bill also relined the brake bands from the Model 607, which still has mechanical brakes. Art Sybell is our tireless painter, who, having finished staining and varnishing the new museum closet, continued to detail "Little Toot" which is nearing completion. Art Wallace polished cars and cleaned floors, both labors of love. Kelly Williams removed the bands and now will re-install them on the Model 607. The Hopkins brothers worked most of Saturday tightening 3 fittings in the bottom of the boiler on the 725, and Butch tested their work on Sunday when he drove this car to the Air Show. Steve Jensen has checked the A.V.R.R. track, preparing it for our June 18 and July 1 operations. Jerry Novak, Emil Christofano, and Lou Mandich have installed new lighting in the shop basement, so illumination will be better when working on the locomotives. Anne Cleary held an Events Committee meeting last Thursday, with good attendance.

This week will be the final count-down for our Steam Car Tour which begins next Sunday, June 17 (early arrivals are expected on Saturday). Bob Reilly got the Tour book, about 100 pages, to the printer on Friday, and a proof has been delivered to him for final approval. A final meeting of the Tour Committee will take place in the museum's reception room tomorrow night, June 12, at 7:30. Bill Schwoebel has the volunteers well in hand for the Tour's visit to Auburn Heights on Monday, 6/18 (about 50 of them plus house "docents"). Ruth and her many helpers, especially Chevonne Robison, Barb Reilly, Aileen Krewatch, and Jan Rivera, have the grounds looking very nice and the house is shaping up, too. I am assembling the volunteers needed for Wednesday's visit to Granogue. The qualified drivers and the cars from here to be used are nearly finalized. We expect 58-60 visiting "steamers" and about 175 people. Bob Reilly has worked very hard on this tour and we've had wonderful cooperation from our active volunteers, who have successfully taken on the many chores associated with running such an event. Soon we'll see how it all works out. MANY THANKS!

There will be no edition of the "NEWS" next week; we'll be in the middle of the big tour. Tom