

December 5, 2005

Hello, Steam Team:

The affluent and more sophisticated shooters attending the Yorklyn trapshoots usually stayed at the Hotel duPont, although the Simon Hotel at 8th & King Streets, and the new YMCA were also recommended. Many liked the few tourist homes then available in Kennett Square and on Miller's Hill to the east, all about 5 miles from the Gun Club, where a nice room could be had for about \$1.50 per night.

During the 1930's, 3 meals a day were available in the dining room at the Gun Club, most often catered by the women of the Kennett New Century Club, who were paying off the mortgage on their nice stone clubhouse. Watermelon and peach pie were special favorites. Esther Marshall always seemed to be managing the operation. The women hired a strong, tireless, and excellent cook and paid her \$10 per day for 5 days, almost unheard of in those days. Her name was Laura Dorlander and she earned every penny of it, working on two wood-burning cook stoves in a very hot kitchen with "fly paper" hanging from the ceiling.

A screened-in "store" was a part of this concession, where home-made sandwiches, ice cream, and sodas could be purchased. It was always popular and especially in the evenings when the night shoots took place. With these night shoots attracting upwards of 200 shooters, it was not uncommon for 1,000 spectators to be on the grounds.

Some of the hardier shooters elected to stay on the grounds overnight. A large tent was pitched next to the parking lot and about 20 iron cots with thin mattresses were available without cost. Bath and toilet facilities would be completely inadequate in today's world, but everyone made out. There was a men's rest room off the club room, and a metal shower with no hot water in a rustic out-building. It seemed many of those staying over prevailed upon Clarence Marshall to let them sleep in the clubhouse instead of in the tent, so Clifford Murray ("Cliffey") would set up the cots there late in the evening and take them out the next morning before activity for the day picked up. When I was about 14, I wanted to stay there with the men in the worst way, but my parents did not allow it. By the time I was old enough to do so, my bed at Auburn Heights seemed highly preferable.

Who were the shooters who came? Some were the top shots in the country such as Frank Troeh from Oregon; Ted Renfro from Montana; San Sharman from Salt Lake City; Jack Elliott from Kansas City; Forrest McNeir, E. F. Woodward, and Fred King from Texas; Bob Coffey from Iowa; Hale Jones, Mark Arie, and Sam Jenny from Illinois; Doc and Ned Lilly, Karl Maust, and Fred Ford from Michigan; Phil Miller, Herschel Cheek, "Red" Hawkins, and the Jenkins brothers from Indiana; and a score from Ohio including the best of them all, Joe Hiestand. These Class AA shooters were pitted against the best we had in the East: Steve Crothers, Walter Beaver, Fred Tomlin, Roger Fawcett, Ernie Chamberlain,

and "Cap" Grier. The big names were here and were real drawing cards for the spectators, but the real supporters were the "average" shooters from communities all over New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and the District of Columbia. Some were here for one day, some for 2, and some for 3 or 4, but they are what really made the Yorklyn shoots successful.

Last week, Emil and Jerry Novak installed the new running board moldings on the 735, the Jensens, Jimmy Personti and Anne washed and winterized the locomotive boilers, Jerry Lucas reworked the flexible steam pipe fitting near the engine on the Model 78 roadster, and Bill Schwoebel, Butch, Rob Robison and I re-set the valves on the Model K. The Maute boys further organized the library in the museum, and the faithful Chuck Erikson continued his endless sorting in the shop. Willard Robinson repainted the wheels on the Model H-5 after Dale had sanded and primed them, and Teddy updated the insurance cards in all our cars, and painted the steering column and throttle rod on the 735 after his father had removed them from the car. Butch repaired two needle valves on the Model 76, and he and Bill S. repaired the bracket for the tail light and license plate on the same car. On Sunday, Bill, Butch, and I "buttoned up" the cylinder case on the Model K, and they found the problem on the Model 71 which had a "clunk" in the engine or rear. The bevel gear that forms one side of the differential has come loose from the axle shaft on the left side of the car. We will begin disassembling this week. Finally, on Friday afternoon, the indomitable Bill Rule and his faithful old Suburban drove in as if nothing had ever happened to him. Using his crutches, he swung out of the driver's door ready for action. BILL IS BACK!

Tomorrow night, Anne Cleary is hostessing the Events Committee at her home at 7:30. She has a full agenda, and it is hoped we can come close to establishing the schedule of events for 2006. The AAA magazine wants to run a story for us in the spring. Our Annual Appeal is coming along well, and we are at 3/4 of our \$50,000 goal with less than 4 weeks to go. Please help with it if you can. Remember, Rob and Chevonne's holiday party is next Saturday, December 10, starting at 6:00 P.M. Even though the deadline has passed for letting the Robisons know, Rob says you can still call in and "reserve" or just come! We welcome 3 new members: Walter O'Rourke, Larry Anderson, and Walter Higgins, bringing our total to 77. Many thanks to all. Tom