

## Tom Marshall's Weekly News, February 2, 2015

**Traveling by Steam with the Gardners (Part 3):** Frank Gardner helped the Bourdons run several steam car tours at Woodstock, Vermont, where he and Weezie bought a small house in town in the early 1970s and later a property called Sky Farm a few miles to the southeast. In the back yard of the Woodstock house, Frank built a two-floor garage-shop that could accommodate at least a dozen cars, very handy for his Franklins, Packards, and his Model A Ford phaeton, in which he and Weezie once toured the British Isles. He let me use this facility as a garage for one of our Stanleys on several occasions.

In November 1980, I drove our '37 Packard Twelve to West Newton, stayed a few days with the Gardners, and the three of us visited Ray Stanley at his home in York, Maine. The next summer, the first steam car tour to Kingfield, Maine, was held, with Frank, Jim Hancock, and I leading the effort to visit the remote town where the Stanley twins were born. We started and ended at the Hancock home in Fitzwilliam, New Hampshire, the total trip taking about a week. Frank drove his motor home with trailer behind, providing back-up service. From the excitement created by our visit, Sue Davis of Kingfield founded the Stanley Museum.

In 1994, after completing the Gorham-Kingfield steam car tour, Frank sold his beloved Model 74 to Brent Campbell. After 40 years of great pleasure, it was becoming too hard for him to climb in and out. In Frank's later years, the Gardners and Ruth and I visited many times back and forth. On one visit to Auburn Heights, we took them to Cape May. They also enjoyed the Amish country. In 1996, they took us to a special restaurant in Manchester, Vermont, when we were on a progressive steam car tour that passed through there. When we went to Newton with the Mountain Wagon in June 1997 to celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first Stanley, we stayed with them, and they took us out for dinner to celebrate Ruth's birthday. They joined us at Cooperstown, New York, when Ruth and I ran a Finger Lakes steam car tour. In November the same year, we were at their home again and visited the Adams homes in Quincy. In September, 2003, we stayed with them at their farm (named Sky Farm) near Woodstock. Frank insisted on preparing dinner for us. It was our last visit. He died the next March at the age of 83.

Number two daughter, Nancy Powlison, is a member of FAHP, and visits us at least once annually from her home in Glenside, Pennsylvania. Very mechanical herself, she enjoyed her father's steamer more than her sisters and her brother. In the spring of 2013, Weezie came with Nancy to visit us, and they both had a ride on the new trail in our Model 71, which brought back many memories. Weezie sold her home in West Newton and resides in a retirement community in Lexington, Massachusetts. She still retains Sky Farm in Vermont and enjoys three or four months there each year with various members of her family.

Frank Gardner was about six feet one inch in height and had a deep baritone voice, making him an excellent public speaker. About 1941 at a bachelors' ball or something of the sort in the Boston area, Frank and M.I.T. student Irénée du Pont Jr. found they had much in common as they both liked old cars. I'm sorry I didn't know Irénée better when Frank visited Delaware, as both would have enjoyed renewing friendships. Frank occasionally mentioned this 1941 event, and in recent years Irene says he remembers Frank quite well.