

## Tom Marshall's Weekly News, May 13, 2013

**Fun with Our Mountain Wagon (Part One: T. Clarence Marshall):** Our Stanley Mountain Wagon is 98 years old, and those at Auburn Heights have owned it for 67 of those years. As my father was collecting many models of Stanley steam cars in the final years of World War II, he really wanted a Mountain Wagon, arguably one of Stanleys' most successful offerings, one of which he had owned and operated in 1913 on the Battlefield at Gettysburg. Original "Wagons" known to exist were scarce, even in 1946. However, George Monreau of suburban Boston (grandfather of Brent Campbell), who worked for Fred Marriott, knew of my father's interest and pursued the acquisition of a steel-framed 1915 "Wagon" with five seats from a man in southern New Hampshire who had used it in the 1930s as a log-hauling truck. Monreau, with a minimum of work, drove the car some 60 miles to his home, where he prepared it for delivery to my father, its new owner.

With my father following in his 1937 Packard, I drove it home, nearly 400 miles, in late October 1946, as has been mentioned in previous *Weekly News* stories. Once the car was at Auburn Heights, my father made many mechanical repairs, and with the seats off, he hauled clay targets up the hill from a box car on the railroad to the Yorklyn Gun Club in the spring of 1947. Finally, with a new top and red paint, it was ready for Kennett Square's Halloween Parade that fall, during which 19 passengers riding in or hanging on enjoyed the frivolity.

We have given pleasure to well over 100,000 passengers who have ridden on the vehicle since that time. No one had more fun over the years, however, than did my father and I. He enjoyed using it for tours, parades, and shows. With several passengers aboard, he drove it on the 1948 and 1949 Glidden Tours; on the former, he shared the Most Interesting Car award with Cadwallader W. Kelsey in his three-wheeled 1901 Kelsey Motorette. At the annual Old Timers' Picnic in Wilmington's Josephine Gardens, rides in the Mountain Wagon became a perennial feature along with the Three Little Bakers. On another occasion, my parents invited several couples, all required to wear dusters, to ride the Mountain Wagon to the Dutch Cupboard near Thorndale, Pennsylvania, and back, where they were treated to Sunday dinner.

In 1952, when the Pottstown Region hosted the first of three AACA Spring Meets at the Hill School, my father took the Mountain Wagon a day early (at the request of the committee) to help promote the event. The last time my dad drove his wagon was on May 1, 1963, when he was accompanied by my mother and other properly costumed friends for a Photo Day sponsored by Historic Red Clay Valley, Inc. and the Delaware Camera Club. He last rode with me on the "Wagon" in September 1966 on a BRAACA-sponsored tour around Sussex County, Delaware, where we covered nearly 200 miles on a perfect Sunday. My father prepared well for his trips, and he never had trouble or soiled his white shirt.

In his final years, other things, such as the building of the Auburn Valley Railroad and its locomotives and tinkering with his highly sophisticated Doble steam cars, may have taken priority, but the Mountain Wagon stands near the top of Clarence Marshall's "fun" toys. Next week, a continuation of how his son has enjoyed our Mountain Wagon will conclude the story.