

## Tom Marshall's Weekly News, October 14, 2013

**Steam Car Tour to Rehoboth and the Eastern Shore, 1969:** Under the auspices of the Steam Automobile Club of America (SACA), I ran a three-day tour for steamers from our Holiday Inn near Newark, Delaware, in September 1969. It featured some long straight runs with light traffic, ideal for Stanley speedsters such as Carl Amsley (Model H-5), Brent Campbell (Model 76), and George Hughes (Model H-5, now owned by Bill Schwoebel). Several informal races took place between these three in the course of the tour.

I don't recall all who took part, but Frank and Weezie Gardner brought their 1912 Model 74 from near Boston, Abner Devilbiss of Union Bridge, Maryland, took part (and entertained) with his 1917 Model 730, Marvin and Olive Klair had their 1918 Model 735 (now owned by Bob Wilhelm), Bob and Kay Way had their 1919 Model 735, and Weldin and Dorothy Stumpf had their 1913 Model 77. I drove my father's 1912 Model 87. Including the three racing cars mentioned in the first paragraph, there were about 11 cars on the tour, a few of which I can't remember. Brent's grandfather George Monreau was with his grandson, Sterling Walsh was with Abner, and Pownall and Peggy Jones were with the Ways.

The tour route took us to Delaware City and then down Route 9 to Leipsic and west into Dover. After lunch, we stopped near Woodside, where a man from New York had bought some property and established a small amusement park, including a 15-inch-gauge steam railroad. He had invited us to stop and gave us a complete tour, including a train ride. During the afternoon, we covered the additional 45 miles to Rehoboth and stayed at the Atlantic Sands Motel and ate at the Avenue Restaurant, very popular in those days.

As we arose in Rehoboth the second day, the weather was cold and windy. Abner Devilbiss had everyone in stitches as he tried to light his burner by burning newspapers on the ground immediately under it. Somehow, he and everyone else got fired up, and we made our way westward toward Easton, Maryland. In late afternoon, we were entertained near St. Michaels at the estate of a man named West who had built a 7½-inch gauge railroad around his grounds. He entertained us royally, and free drinks were available to all. Carl Amsley carried a few too many to Abner Devilbiss, before we started the 10-mile trip back to our Easton motel. Sterling Walsh tried to take the wheel of Abner's Stanley, but the owner would have none of that. I had stopped for kerosene at a country store as they drove by. Abner was singing at the top of his lungs, and his Stanley was weaving all over the road. Fortunately, there was no traffic, and he made it back.

On our third and final day, we were invited to stop at the estate of Bill Willock along the Chester River downstream from Chestertown. Bill had moved from Long Island a few years before and brought with him his vast collection, including a full-sized (narrow gauge) steam locomotive, a 1906 Model E Stanley (now owned by the Rough and Tumble Engineers Historical Association), a steam power plant to generate electricity for his estate, traction engines and steam rollers, and a coal-fired steam-powered tug boat on which he gave us a ride on the river. On our way back to the starting point near Newark, we stopped for a seafood dinner at the Granary at Fredericktown, Maryland.

Although small, the tour was a success, and Bob Lyon, president of SACA, asked us to do one again the next year. Marvin Klair, Weldin Stumpf, Sterling Walsh, and I cooperated on a tour that included Strasburg, Pennsylvania, and Westminster and Edgewood, Maryland, in September 1970.