Tom Marshall's Weekly News, July 11, 2016

Walter S. Lumley Jr. (1922–2000): Walt Lumley and I were classmates at Wilmington Friends School, being graduated in the Class of 1941. His father was a revered family doctor in Elsmere, with his office in his home on Capitol Trail. That was usual for family doctors of his time, as the four or five physicians in Kennett Square had the same arrangement. I think Walt had two sisters, one older and one younger than he, but he was the only son.

Dr. Lumley had a '37 Lincoln Zephyr with a sporty body and a small V-12 engine. Walt was allowed to use it in his final years at Friends School, and I think he was responsible for transporting his younger sister as well. It was a fast car for its time, and Walt had a heavy foot. His classmates knew he was the wildest driver in our class (he loved that reputation), but to my knowledge, he never had an accident.

The brand new Pennsylvania Turnpike from Middlesex (Carlisle) to Irwin, 20 miles east of Pittsburgh, 168 miles in all, opened on Labor Day 1940. I was anxious to see what this new road with its six or seven tunnels and no speed limit was all about, so my parents said I could drive my '40 Packard 110 to Pittsburgh and back on a weekend in October. I asked Walt to go with me, which he did. We had a great time.

Leaving early Saturday morning, we had an uneventful trip westbound, using the old roads through Lancaster and Harrisburg before reaching the eastern terminus at Middlesex (there was a second exit called Carlisle about two miles west of Middlesex; after World War II, it was decided that two exits that close together were unnecessary, the original Carlisle was closed, and Middlesex became Carlisle). The turnpike had been built with two traffic lanes in each direction, each lane being 12 feet wide, and a median strip with no barricade 10 feet wide to separate the directions of travel. Although it was not allowed, it was possible to cross this median strip if you wanted to turn around. The route utilized railroad tunnels under the Allegheny ridges originally dug in the mid-19th century by Andrew Carnegie's people. Carnegie had fallen out with the Pennsylvania Railroad (PRR), built over the mountains in the late 1840s, and was planning his own railroad to compete. However, before any tracks were laid, Carnegie and the PRR got together so the second railroad from Harrisburg to Pittsburgh never materialized. Eighty or 90 years later, these tunnels came in very handy. The single bore of each accommodated both directions of traffic, one lane in each direction, but traffic for the first 20 years was light enough that this was not a problem.

After Walt and I got off at the western terminus at Irwin, the weather worsened, we missed a turn and landed in McKeesport, a very hilly manufacturing town up the Monongahela River from our destination. Righting ourselves, we stopped for something to eat as we entered Pittsburgh. There was a football game at the University of Pittsburgh, and traffic was heavy, so we decided to turn around and head toward home. As we approached Irwin again it started to snow (on October 19!). No one was prepared for slippery roads in October, so crews were not out with sand or salt. As darkness approached, the turnpike was very slippery, but traffic was light. Once I spun around 180 degrees and ended in the westbound lanes, but no other cars were in the way. Walt was used to that kind of thing, so he enjoyed it. When we reached Bedford, we decided to call it a day and got a room in the old Fort Bedford Inn in the center of town.

Sunday morning the storm was over, and it was a glorious October day. We got off the turnpike and paid a visit to Mercersburg Academy, about 50 miles from Bedford. Several Wilmington boys were already attending Mercersburg, and we enjoyed a short visit (never did I think I would be a student there the next year). Traveling at 60 m.p.h. when we could, we arrived back in Delaware by mid-afternoon, and I delivered Walt to his home in Elsmere.

In the fall of 1941, Walt became a freshman at Bucknell University in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania. Like most of us, he was in the armed services within a year or so, which military service lasted until World War II was over. After the war he returned to Bucknell and met his future wife, Margaret. She was from Birdsboro in Berks

County, and I was invited to their wedding, but I didn't go. Fresh out of college with a degree in Engineering, Walt got a job with Hercules Powder Company, where he worked until his retirement about 1990. Walt and Peg had two sons and either two or three daughters and eventually owned a nice home in Westminster off Newport-Gap Pike. Our paths had not crossed since school days, but I saw where Walt was helping as a volunteer at the Greenbank Mill, in which Historic Red Clay Valley, Inc. had a direct interest.

When I was scouting for people who might have an interest in learning the operation of Stanley cars in 1997, I called Walt, and he became a charter member of our Steam Team. Right away, he asked if he could invite his son David to join the group. Dave, who worked for DuPont, caught on fast and became one of our first qualified operators. Dave attended two Eastern Steam Car Tours with us at Mount Washington in 1999 and at Quechee, Vermont, in 2000. His parents also joined us at Quechee. They were great members of the Steam Team, although Walt left the operation of Stanleys to his son Dave. Unfortunately, about 10 days after our return from Quechee, Walt suffered a heart attack and died at the age of 78. About a year later, Dave's job with DuPont (he worked with Jerry Lucas and was responsible for bringing Jerry to FAHP) was terminated, and his best job opportunity was in Atlanta, so he, his wife, Stacey, and their four children moved away. Dave helped his mother sell her home in Westminster, and Peg spent her last years at Cokesbury Village, where Ruth and I live now. Dave Lumley usually visits one of our work sessions when he is in Delaware about once a year, as he did on June 30. We are always glad to see him.