

**Tom Wisner talks with Alfred Greenwell about his work on the Chesapeake Beach Railway in the 1920's.**

**Mr. Wisner:** Were you firing engines?

**Mr. Greenwell:** I fired, I was a brakeman, hostler, running the engine one summer.

**Mr. Wisner:** Tell me about each of those jobs — like hostler. What is that?

**Mr. Greenwell:** That was taking care of the engine at nighttime — putting coal and water on them for the next morning.

**Mr. Wisner:** You'd back them off on the sidings?

**Mr. Greenwell:** Yes, up to the coal bin and —

**Mr. Wisner:** Did you actually drive them to do this?

**Mr. Greenwell:** Oh, yes. I run one summer there.

**Mr. Wisner:** Then the next job up was fireman; describe that job to me. I never got up inside one of those engines and saw somebody do that.

**Mr. Greenwell:** Well, it's just putting coal in there and making steam for the engineer.

**Mr. Wisner:** Did you make a decision how much coal went in there or did the engineer tell you?

**Mr. Greenwell:** No.

**Mr. Wisner:** You made the decision?

**Mr. Greenwell:** Oh, yes, how the fire would burn. The engineer didn't see it.

**Mr. Wisner:** You opened and looked and saw how the fire was and then fired more coal to it?

**Mr. Greenwell:** Oh, yes.

**Mr. Wisner:** Later on they came with these kind of screws that automatically fed coal to those engines.

**Mr. Greenwell:** Well, we never had them.

**Mr. Wisner:** Never had them?

**Mr. Greenwell:** No.

**Mr. Wisner:** How did you learn to tell how much coal to put in and things like that?

**Mr. Greenwell:** Well, it came to you. If the fire wasn't burning, you wouldn't make much steam.

**Mr. Wisner:** You'd need more coal; right?

**Mr. Greenwell:** Yes. Your engine would die.

**Mr. Wisner:** So, it wasn't a real delicate thing; it was just a matter of really keeping that fire hot?

**Mr. Greenwell:** That's right. Keep the temperature up on the boiler.