

REVIEW OF PRE-CONCOURS DINNER TALK

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As the dinner crowd stared at the stage a murmur of anticipation flitted through the room. There were props and a power point presentation and even an old arm chair! What was this presentation going to be like?

Soon, the answer was revealed as Captain Jeff Mahl took the stage and began the retelling of the 1908 New York to Paris Automobile Great Race in first person. Taking on the character and the spirit of his Great-Grandfather George Shuster Senior, Captain Jeff Mahl mesmerized the dinner crowd. Laughter, gasps, amazement, and jaw dropping moments encased the next 45 minutes as dinner guests and wait staff alike could not believe what they were hearing or seeing. Each image that Jeff brought to the screen emphasized and pierced the story that he was retelling. He was funny, charming, and most of all, one of the best storytellers that most people have ever heard. While the audience wished that he could have continued his story, Jeff allowed enough time to answer a few pertinent questions that the audience members couldn't wait to ask.

The following day the York County Heritage Trust staff heard nothing but praise, admiration, and adoration for Jeff. Everyone found him "amazing", "mesmerizing", and an absolutely "wonderful story teller". There was not a moment where people found themselves bored and looking for a way out. There was also not a second where Jeff seemed uncomfortable or overwhelmed, which speaks highly to his character. He seemed to enjoy the questions and the interest as much as the people who were asking him. The ultimate moment during Jeff's stay was when the Saturday attendees watched with amazement as Jeff rode into the event in a 1907 Thomas Flyer, the sister car to his great-grandfather's race winning automobile. What a truly stunning and emotional moment, not just for Jeff but for everyone that was watching.

The Trust staff cannot begin to thank Jeff enough for his time, his patience, and his stories. The York County Heritage Trust's 5th Annual Concours d'Elegance was a success and that was mainly due to Captain Jeff Mahl.



Captain Mahl at the wheel of a 1907 Thomas Flyer during the 2007 York Concours d'Elegance

Photo by Victor L. Ferree, Jr.