

Trevor Proctor

Mrs. Jones

Model High School

10th Grade

“Traveling Through History on the Concord Coach 84”

The Concord Stagecoach was built in Concord, New Hampshire. These coaches were the main form of transportation before the invention of railroads and cars. Let’s take a trip back in time to the 1800’s to experience an expedition on the majestic Concord Stagecoach 84.

The person in control of the stagecoach is the driver. The driver controls the brakes of the stagecoach as well as the horses. Stagecoach 84 is a 6 horsepower. Wonder how that correlates to a 6-cylinder engine today? The stagecoach traveled at a speed of five miles per hour and only traveled on average seventy miles per day.

The horses would travel to different stops along the way and that is where the name “stage” in stagecoach comes from. The coaches would follow stage routes. Along these routes, stations would be set up. There were swing stations and home stations. Swing stations were very small, and offered a brief ten minute stop to change the horses. The home stations were larger and farther apart. They offered meals and sometimes lodging. Not only could horses be swapped out at the stations, but also drivers could be swapped out. The horses would wear down, and then a new set of horses would be hooked to the stagecoach. The new set of horses helped the stagecoach continue onto the next station on the expedition. It is hard to believe that people traveled for days in such a small space being driven by horses. Attempting to sleep on a crowded coach while continually rocking must have been very difficult. The coach’s only shock absorption is from the strings and leather straps supporting the carriage. There were no glass windows because the rough terrain would cause them to break. Instead of glass windows, there were leather curtains. Also the threat of being held up by wild Indians must have caused fear in the passenger’s minds.

Stagecoach 84 would carry nine passengers inside, six on top, and two in the driver’s seat. This means there was a total of seventeen passengers that could fit on this small coach. In my opinion, I don’t think that it would have been a very comfortable trip like a family mini-van. We have so many luxuries today that it is hard to place ourselves in the old Wild West to experience the lives of our ancestors.

Perhaps if we close our eyes and visualize the stagecoach, cowboys, Indians, dirt road, horses, and open countryside we too will appreciate the timeless masterpiece that Coach 84 represents. I can almost smell the fresh air and hear the wooden wheels as Coach 84 drives away.