

THE ATLANTIC DIVISION EXPRESS



AUTUMN, 1979

TRAIN COLLECTORS
ASSOCIATION

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6304 Park Avenue, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 19141

N E X T A T L A N T I C D I V I S I O N M E E T

Sunday, January 20, 1980

Westover Country Club - Norristown, Pennsylvania

C H A N G E O F A D D R E S S

Members are reminded to promptly notify Secretary Richard Heineman of address changes so as to insure timely delivery of meet notices, quarterlies and other Division mailings.

C R E D I T S

Front Cover - 6464-650 D & RGW boxcar in new Factory Error Contest on page 5.
From the Charles Weber collection.

Back Cover - Ives ad in The John Martin Child's Magazine for December, 1924.
From the Dr. Malcolm Kates paper collection.

P R E S I D E N T ' S C O L U M N

By Bob Robinson

Ironically, the subject matter of this column is basically the same one currently being discussed in a sister club's publication. I started my draft of this column in early April intending it for the Summer issue. However, the By Laws subject was more important from the point of timing so this was laid aside. It is now time to get to a problem which is being debated within our hobby, namely, reproductions.

Reproduction of toy train parts has long been a welcomed, needed sideline to collecting. Without replacement parts, good trains could not be made complete or operable and restoration of trains in poor condition would not be attempted. It would become common practice to cannibalize and scrap for parts those trains in poor condition or incomplete state. As collectors we recognize the value and importance of replacement parts.

Reproduction toy trains, however, are a whole different ball game. They are now being accurately reproduced and to the untrained eye, in some cases, cannot be detected from originals. The manufacturers of these trains, particularly Williams and Hudson Products, have produced fine examples of some of the rarest of toy train items.

The TCA long ago recognized the potential problems that accurate reproduction of parts and trains would create in our hobby. The major fault with accurate reproduction is the immediate possibility of fraud in passing off a repro for an original. In addition, mass reproduction of an item creates an artificial surplus of an otherwise scarce item, thus destroying the interest and pride of collecting by flooding the market with cookie-cutter look-alikes.

The TCA took early steps to prevent the multitude of reproduction problems by issuing Board Rules. These are spelled out on pages 15, 16 and inside rear cover of the 1979 Directory. The TCA additionally passed a rule prohibiting the reproduction of nameplates. This rule was made because a member reproduced the Lionel-Ives number plates that were used on Ives transition items. With these plates it would be a simple matter to convert common Lionel into extremely rare Ives items. Pages 268 and 269 of the same 1979 Directory have full page advertisements for reproduction nameplates. The furor about repros could be eliminated if the TCA as an organization would enforce its own rules and regulations.

The Association has passed the buck on enforcing the permanent marking rule by having it studied by committees. Meet officers always seem to look the other way when unmarked items are being offered for sale. The TCA Board of Directors is composed of the Division Presidents. This body must either scrap the existing rules and let caveat emptor prevail or, for the good of the hobby, enforce its own rules.

On two occasions I have addressed the TCA National Board of Directors and motioned for the banning of reproductions and enforcement of replacement part marking. I was unsuccessful on both occasions. It is now time for members to let the Board know their feelings on reproductions and parts markings. Then maybe the Board will act.

Bob



H A V E T R A I N S , W I L L T R A V E L

A Modular Layout in O-Gauge PART I

By Philip O. Ritter

Our Atlantic Division has been working on a TCA 25th Anniversary project to fulfill our charter obligation of sharing the fun and knowledge of tinplate toy trains with the public. We have designed and built a transportable, modular O-Gauge layout suitable for demonstration at institutions, schools and shows. Contrary to most train displays, this one is specifically designed for hands-on arrangement and operation by children, several at a time. It is our intention to take this layout to those who cannot easily come to it. We envision many happy, and possibly hectic, afternoons at children's hospitals, schools for the handicapped and perhaps retirement homes during family days.

The initial units have already been tested at the Atlantic Division Summer Fun Meet, July 15, 1979. Left fully in the hands of several young children taking turns at the various controls, with only initial guidance by a guest, the Modular Layout was decorated and operated for many hours without problems. It transports in a station wagon, is readily carried in sections, sets up in about 15 minutes and is as varied in scenery and operation as the participants' interest and imagination.

In addition to on-the-road use of the Modular Layout, it is also designed to readily grow in size and complexity for use at train meets and longer fixed displays. The track pattern of each table is self-contained and usable in itself, but also builds on to adjoining tables

through standardized track interconnection locations. Each table has its own accessory power and track control cable with sufficient length to reach two tables away to a common power pack for operation of five or more tables together. Accessory and switch controls are at each table's edge for manual or push-button operation by several operators in cooperation.

Additional layout tables may be built by several different groups with their own track plans and scenery following the set of construction guidelines. They may then be brought together at a joint meet or train show and operated in several different arrangements as long as desired.

The Division already has a reasonable amount of trains and accessories for the project but still needs a lot of trackside equipment, particularly the following: track bumpers, signals (flashing, banjo, block, semaphore), street lights, bridges, whistling station or billboard, log loader, crossing gates, #022 non-derailing switches, etc., etc. If you can help out on any of these items, please contact Phil Ritter or any BOD member.

Part II of this article will show how to build a Modular Layout unit and will include step-by-step instruction guidelines and photographs.

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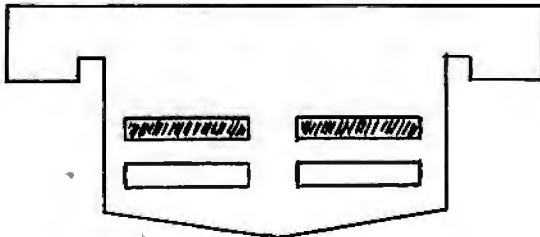
FACTORY ERROR CONTEST

By Bob Robinson & Ed Pinsky

The Lionel 6464-650 Rio Grande boxcar on the front cover will be an easy one for you 6464 buffs - or will it? That is all we will say. Free AD meet passes (for admission plus table) will go to five members picked at random from among those who correctly identify the error. Send your answer to the Editor and include your TCA number.

The last contest featured an early Lionel 254 in mojava. It elicited more response than any previous contest except the very first one.

Thirteen members correctly observed that the leading (left) pilot was improperly stamped. Instead of the four horizontal slots it should have, the pilot of the contest loco has only the lower two; the upper two were never punched out.



There were many incorrect answers regarding the manual reversing lever knob. That is a post-factory loss, alas, and not some exotic variation. Other members thought the headlights were wrong, the door improper or the flag holders "missing." Walt Stinger properly spotted the pilot error and also pointed out that the second rivet head from the right is ".0001" too small!

Finally, Al Beck not only identified the error, but explained how it happened:

"The 254 without the upper lateral stamping on the pilot is obviously one of the very few engines assembled by "Thumbs" Donovan. "Thumbs" came to Lionel from the Brooklyn Torpedo Works, where he assembled detonators until that fateful day

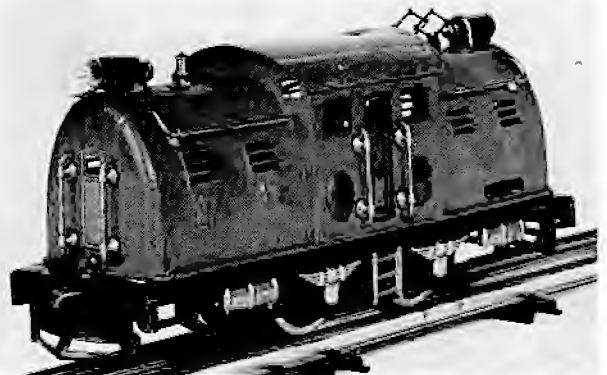
when Donovan (and ten other unfortunate colleagues) left the premises under rather dramatic circumstance. "Thumbs" never got over the incident at the torpedo factory, and his nervousness left its mark on his work at Lionel. In fact, every loco he assembled can easily be identified by the dimple in the roof, as in your sample illustrated. The broken coupler further indicates that this was one of the very last 254's assembled by Donovan, although the nature of his finished work was not the reason for his leaving Lionel early in his career. Rather, it is said that he left to take a position as metallurgist at Dorfan."

Pass Winners

Lou Blilie
L. M. Eggers
Bill McDonnell
Dr. L. D. Morris
Bob Poley

Also Correct

Al Beck
John Boyle
Jay Carver
Bob Fatzinger
Tony Hay
John Kelly
Walt Stinger
Marty Visnick



STORING RAILROAD MAGAZINES

By Charles Weber

As one who has been involved in one form or another of model railroading for some 30 odd years, I have accumulated quite a pile of magazines - probably around 900 issues or so. The question is, how does one store these in a fashion which will protect them, keep them neat, and still allow easy access upon occasion?

Originally I stacked the magazines vertically on shelves, like books, but this eventually led to a sloppy appearance. In addition, it was inconvenient to retrieve a particular issue and they got quite beat up in the process. Horizontal stacking with every other year stacked in alternate directions permitted easier retrieval and gave a slightly better appearance, but still allowed the magazines to get dirty and beat up and was, in general, unsatisfactory.

The next step in my search for a suitable storage method was to buy some of the "binders" as sold by both Railroad Model Craftsman and Model Railroader. One of these is pictured as #3 in Figure A. These binders give a neat appearance on the bookshelf and allow access. Unfor-

tunately, they do permit grime to get on the magazines' edges and they do not sit conveniently on the shelf. (The end toward the wall is thinner than the back which causes the binders to be triangular when viewed from the top rather than rectangular.) But the biggest drawback, especially if one needs a number of them, is the cost. As of this writing, Model Railroader lists theirs for \$5.95 + .75¢ shipping each.

One day, while trundling about a stationery and business supply store, I noticed the "box" shown as #2 in Figure A. These boxes worked out just fine for magazines. They are neat and sturdy, cost about the same as the above "official" binders, but held several years of magazines rather than just one year and therefore are actually cheaper. I purchased a dozen or so of these and similar boxes over several years until I found the variety shown as #1 in Figure A.

This kind of box is similar to the #2 box except it is slightly lighter and thinner and has to be assembled (folded together) by the purchaser as it comes flat. In any event, I have found this last type to be the best buy when one weighs the various factors discussed above. (The ones that I bought are now listed at six for \$15.11, #E-7823 from Markson Science Inc., 43 Maple Avenue, Dept. 565, New City, NY 10956. A product that LOOKS SIMILAR can be found advertised on page 6 of the December, 1979 RMC at four for \$4.95 + \$1.00 shipping. The address is DGM Industries, P.O. Box 388-E, Dover, NH 03820. I must emphasize that I have not personally bought nor even seen these last boxes.) In addition to making nice magazine boxes, these have been found to be useful for storing BofD minutes, receipts and other loose paper.

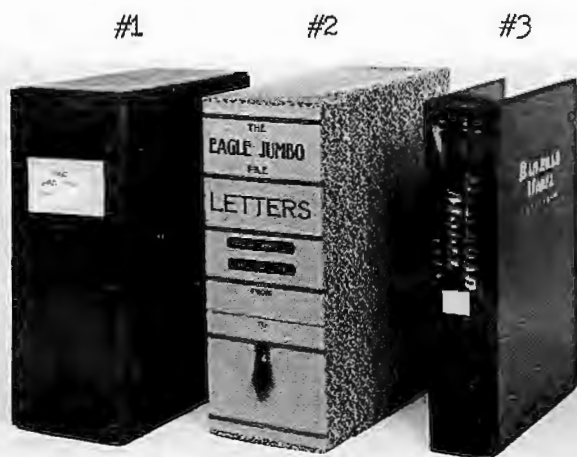


FIGURE A

" I N K B L O T S "

By Secretary Dick Heineman

The following major items were covered at the AD Board of Directors Meeting on November 1, 1979:

Meet Committee - Glenn Stinson reported that nearly all tables have been sold for the November 18th meet.

Division Car #2 - Ray Connolly reported that only 40 Conrail Cabooses are left.

Modular Layout - Phil Ritter reported that he expects to have three sections of the layout operational for Holiday display at hospitals, malls, etc.

Mortgage Burning Cars - National advises that there are a few cars available for those members who did not previously purchase one.

Division Quarterly - Ed Pinsky reported everything is on time but he could use articles for future issues.

Revision of National By Laws - Proposal was DEFEATED by the membership by a two to one margin.

AD 10th Anniversary Mini-Meet - Meet will be held at Westover on Sunday, May 18, 1980. Don't miss it! Meet will feature a sit down luncheon and some BIG SURPRISES.

Last but not least, the Atlantic Division Board of Directors wishes each of you and yours a Happy Holiday Season!

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STORING RAILROAD MAGAZINES

(Continued from Preceding Page)

While having the pictures taken for this article, Bob Robinson showed me his method of storing Quarterlies, as pictured in Figure B. According to Bob, stationery stores carry these 3-holed plastic envelopes (pages) as well as the 3-ring

binders. They are also occasionally advertised in magazines and seen at meets. This method appears to be between the above two kinds of boxes in cost with almost as much protection and convenience as the boxes.



FIGURE B

A final side note in favor of one of the box storage methods that may not apply to most of you readers: last year a sewer stoppage caused many gallons of water to back up and come out of the downstairs toilet. The water (and the muck in the water) ran down through the floor and all over my book shelves. None of the magazines in the boxes became more than damp whereas all of the magazines in open top binders got water damage and several had to be thrown out. I hope that nothing similar happens to you.

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BECKER HARDWARE RELOCATES AFTER 70 YEARS !

By William P. McDonnell

In the Philadelphia area, when you think of electric trains, you think of Eleventh Street between Market and Arch Streets. All that is about to change, however, because the redevelopment of center city Philadelphia has forced the oldest Lionel Service Station in Philadelphia (and one of the oldest in the country) to relocate. The William H. Becker Hardware Company has moved to a new location after seventy years on Eleventh Street. This will actually mark the third location for Becker's in their history. William H. Becker founded the company in 1909 at its original location, 50 N. Eleventh Street. In 1923, the company had outgrown its small quarters and moved two doors down the street to 46 N. Eleventh Street where it remained until recently. The new location at 925 Arch Street is about one block from the site of the old store.

Becker Hardware carried electric trains from its earliest days and a frequent visitor back then was Joshua Lionel Cowen. In 1916, Cowen was becoming hard-pressed for warehouse space at his manufacturing plant and so he made a trip to Philadelphia in an attempt to reduce his inventory. He approached Bill Becker about purchasing the remaining stock of recently discontinued trolley cars. Bill balked at this proposal but finally gave in after being assured by Cowen that any orders for trolley cars that Lionel received would be forwarded to Becker's for shipment. The trolley cars were subsequently shipped to Becker's and in a matter of months they were completely sold out.

Don Fernandez (CM-16) tells a story about the time in the early 1920's when he needed a cab for a #42 locomotive. He went to Becker Hardware in search of the

cab but Bill Becker did not have just the cab, only the entire locomotive. Don was disappointed and was about to leave when Bill Becker told him to wait for a minute. Bill then went upstairs, got a brand new #42 from the stockroom, brought it downstairs and proceeded to disassemble it. He sold the cab to Don for five dollars. Bill Becker was never one to lose a sale for any reason! By the way, Don still has that #42 and it still looks like the day Bill Becker sold it to him!

Since Becker's was, and is to this day, a family owned and operated business, both Mr. and Mrs. Becker worked in the store. In those early days, the Beckers would bring their infant son, Win, with them when they came to work. Customers from those days can remember coming into the store and seeing little Win fast asleep on one of the shelves in the shop.

Becker Hardware has always carried the full line of Lionel trains as well as American Flyer, Ives and even some European trains. Some mornings, after a shipment of trains had arrived, customers would find it extremely difficult to even get in the door of Becker's because the boxes of trains would be stacked almost to the tall ceilings. Many times it would take several days to unpack and check the order and carry it upstairs to the stockrooms.

In the 30's and 40's, the front display window of the store was jammed with such goodies as State Sets, Blue Comets and 700E Scale Hudsons. Becker Hardware always carried an ample supply of the better items shown in the catalogs and the Becker family has long since lost count of the number of these items sold in their store.

BECKER HARDWARE STORE

(Continued From Preceding Page)

By the time the 50's had come and gone, many of the electric trains that used to be made of metal were now being made of plastic, but you could still buy the old metal ones on Eleventh Street. Even the old standard gauge trains that were discontinued around 1940 were still readily available at Becker's in the 50's because they obtained many older sets of trains as trade-ins on the new trains they sold.

Bill Becker continued to work in the store until about a year before his death in 1969. At that point, Win Becker, Sr. took over the operation of the store in which he had worked from his earliest childhood days. Win continues as the proprietor of Becker Hardware with the able assistance of his son, Win, Jr., an



Win Becker, Senior, at work in the old store, as he has been doing for nearly sixty years!



One jam-packed corner of the old Eleventh Street store in Philadelphia.

active TCA member. Becker Hardware is still a Lionel Service Station, as it has been for almost seventy years, and it will probably continue to be so for an as yet undetermined length of time. You see, Winfield Becker III is only two years old and he is already starting to show an interest in electric toy trains!

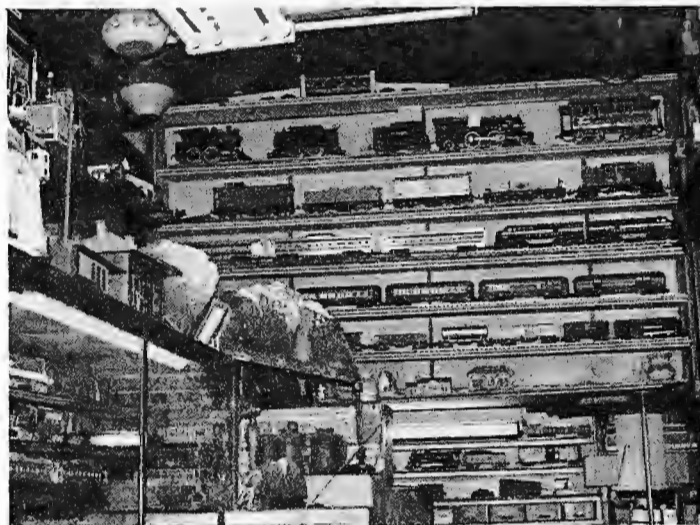
Editor's Note: The "Express" welcomes this first article by new contributor Bill McDonnell, who also took the accompanying photographs. Article is published with the permission of the Becker Hardware Company.

- More Photos on Next Page -

BECKER HARDWARE COMPANY



Exterior of the old Becker Hardware Co. as it appeared in the weeks just prior to demolition of the building, September, 1979.



Interior of the old 11th Street store. Going into Becker's was like taking a time machine back into the 1930's.



Post-war goodies in one of the store's many display cases.



Pre-war, post-war and brand new Lionel occupied the shelves of the old store.

(Continued From Preceding Page)

T O Y T R A I N S E M I N A R

By Sid Weiss
Chairman, Education Committee

In accordance with our mandated obligation to inform the public about the hobby of collecting toy trains, your Education Committee is pleased to announce that the following program will be presented at the next Atlantic Division Meet, probably in the Mojave Room.

Bob Sell will give an illustrated slide show entitled, "How To Tell the Front End of a Streamliner."

Dave Kreines will give a lecture on "Trains & Autos" - if he is not in Syracuse or Rochester or Buffalo.

Trickel, Weber and Weiss will conduct a seminar on "How To Run the World's Shortest Train Meet."

Elliott Smith will give a dissertation entitled, "How To Be a Dollar a Year Man While Grossing Twelve Million."

Dr. Mal Kates will lecture on "How To Be an Honest Physician and Yet Be Accused of Malpractice in His Dealings with Fellow Train Collectors."

Andy Weiss & Marv Laster will reminisce about "The Good Olde Days of Train Collecting, Circa 1977."

Dick Knowles has been around train collecting so long that he is blase about the whole thing - so he will discuss "Fast Cars and Fast Women of the 1930's."

Garry Spear will discuss the "Internal Wiring of the Buffalo Simplex."

Nick Ladd will explain how he manages to write nasty "Collector-of-the-Month" articles and still stay alive in seemingly good health.

Ed Pinsky will write an article on "How to Write an Article" and forward it to Nick Ladd before the next issue.

Bob Robinson will chair a conference on "How To Be an Effective President." We regret that the following have declined to participate: I. Amin, A. Somoza and J. Carter.

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A T L A N T I C D I V I S I O N E L E C T I O N R E S U L T S

Re-elected for 1980 & 1981

President Bob Robinson
Vice-Pres Stu Bearn
Treasurer Dick Knowles
Secretary Dick Heineman
Director Ed Pinsky
Director Sid Weiss

Terms Unexpired Thru 1980

Director Ray Connolly
Director Nick Ladd
Director Dick Trickel

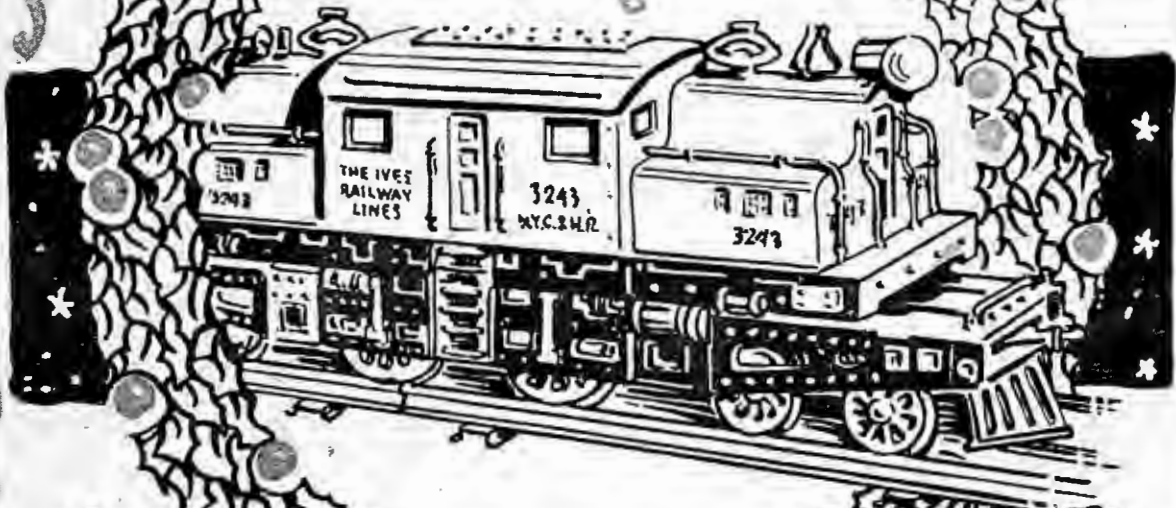
Elected for 1980 & 1981

Director Phil Ritter

Continuing on Bd. of Dir.

Past Pres Chuck Weber

On Christmas schedule



THE finest toy for any boy
 Is something that will go,
 The kind that he can run himself,
 And make it fast or slow.

Of toys that run and make good fun,
 There's nothing like a train,
 With switches, signals, brakes, and rails
 To teach the eye and brain.

**DON'T DELAY!
 MAIL TO-DAY!**

Just any kind that you can find
 Will never, never do.
 A real IVES railroad it must be,
 All strong and bright and new.

IVES MANUFACTURING CORP.,
 199 Holland Ave.,
 Bridgeport, Conn.

There's something here that's new this year
 To meet the boys' demand,
 Reversing locomotives that
 Are never touched by hand.

Gentlemen: I should like to know how
 to build a model railroad. I enclose 10
 cents, for which please send me your new,
 smashing 28-page book showing Ives Trains
 and power boats—it describes electric and
 mechanical locomotives; parlor cars, buf-
 fet cars, mail cars, freight cars, flat cars,
 semaphore signals, tunnels, stations, etc.

Just one control effects the whole,
 You start and stop and back,
 And don't forget your switch to set
 Or it will jump the track.

Name ..
 Address ..
 CityState

IVES TRAINS, you know, exactly show
 Big trains in miniature
 And you can feel you are a real
 Conductor, to be sure.