

ATLANTIC DIVISION LOCAL



FALL 2001

ATLANTIC DIVISION HAS SUMMER FUN

Atlantic Division's Summer Picnic A Day on the Farm

Over thirty Atlantic Division members and their families, including grand children met at Bob and Carol Robinson's farm for a delightful picnic. The picnic was held Sunday July 22nd that happened to be a beautiful Summer day although the event was scheduled rain or shine. The Robinson's restored barn was available if it did rain.

Atlantic Division provided hot dogs, hamburgers, beverages and paper products. Our members brought their "special dishes" to fill out the menu. Everyone enjoyed a fantastic meal. The entertainment was varied and excellent. Besides the gathering of friends for conversation and fellowship activities were available and enjoyed. Croquet, horse shoes, fishing in the pond or canoeing were available as were horse back rides provided by Carol

children caught an 18" albino cat fish. What a sight, creamy white with red eyes!



Unfortunately the day ended too soon. Every one asked for and looks forward to next year's Division picnic that the Robinson's will again host. The sign up mailing will be sent to all division members in early June. This is an Atlantic Division event for us to enjoy and meet our fellow members. You won't want to miss this wonderful day.

Cruise on the Chesapeake

Some members and their wives enjoyed a trip



and antique car rides driven by Bob in his 1913 Packard.

The fishermen of all ages were catching bass, sunnies and to the surprise of all one of the



The group prior to departure

to nowhere on the waters of Chesapeake Bay aboard the "Good Grief". The boat, captained by Dave Allen is not a MARX model as you can see.



The 57 foot Good Grief



Capt. Allen

Meet Locations An Editorial Comment

For the past several months, the Meet Steering Committee has been struggling to find a location that would guarantee Meet dates at least one year in advance. (More about this in the President's Message) They thought that this had been accomplished at the Norristown Armory. Unfortunately that was not the case. Dates, which had been secured as early as last winter, were suddenly changed. For example

the Members Meet scheduled for September 23rd had to be changed to the 30th at the last minute. Then that date turned out to be unacceptable for a number of reasons.

In selecting a location, the Steering Committee had a number of criteria. First of all the cost needed to be sufficiently low so that the Division did not lose money. Secondly help was needed to set up and take down the tables at a reasonable cost. Third the location had to be accessible to the entire membership of the division. Finally, food of reasonable price and quality was needed.

It would appear that the new location, the Painter's Union Hall on Southampton Rd in Philadelphia meets all of the above criteria. Meets have been scheduled for November 18th of this year, January 13th, March 17th, May 19th (The Member's Meet), September 22nd and November 17th of 2002. The November 17th date is pending while the committee investigates conflicts.

Hopefully things will work out well at this facility and it will become permanent. The location, just off Rt. 1 is central to our members from Eastern Pennsylvania and Southern New Jersey.

We urge everyone to be patient and continue to attend our meets and support the hard work of the committee; while these bugs are ironed out. Meets are essential to the well being of our division. They are the major source of revenue that is needed to support our activities such as the traveling layout, now the Kid's club as well as the meets themselves.

The editors

President's Message

Dear Atlantic Division Member:

It has been necessary to change our meet location from the National Guard Armory in Norristown to Painter's Hall in Philadelphia. The following is the background information that led to this decision. The National Guard

had first choice of dates at the armory for its training sessions. We then scheduled our meets on dates that were not committed to the guard. However, the National Guard did not arrange its activities sufficiently far in advance to permit us to develop our own schedule of meet dates for the next calendar year. We felt that this lead-time was necessary for our advertising and for the information of our members. The armory also reserved the right to cancel our meets within several weeks of the scheduled date of the meet. The armory staff would not provide set-up of tables and required that we do this on the Friday preceding the meet. Restricting set-up to a weekday limited the members available to perform this service. Lastly, the armory did not respond to our phone calls and Faxes making effective communication difficult.

These factors considered; we felt a change in location was necessary. Bob Lubonski, Ed Kapuscinski and Dick Heineman inspected Painter's Hall. They found that it provided ample parking, easy accessibility to major roads and space for 100 tables. These findings were presented at the Meet Steering Committee and discussed with the Board of Directors who approved the change effective with our Members' Meet on September 30th.

Malcolm Kates

Financial Report

The Atlantic Division fiscal year is from 1 November thru 31 October. As of 30 September we have had income in the amount of \$19,321 with expense of \$16,174. The current bank balances in round numbers are \$766 in checking and \$12,014 in savings. All bills have been paid to date in accordance with the approved budget.

George E. Nelson

Traveling Layout

Here are the following dates for the layout:

Sept.29. Heritage Towers in Doylestown.
Oct. 28 Bryn Mawr Hospital Neonatal Intensive Care Unit Reunion, Bryn Mawr
Nov. 3 or 10 Montco Geriatric Center, Royersford
Dec. 1 or 15 Inglis House, Philadelphia
Dec. 5 & 12 Philadelphia International Airport, Philadelphia
Feb. 10 Lankanau Hospital Neonatal Intensive Care Unit Reunion, Lower Merion

We are also looking for volunteers to assist us in displaying the layout. If you are interested in sharing the joy of toy trains with children of all ages contact Scott Forsyth at 610-828-6554 or Karl Bowers at 215-855-7264. This outreach ministry needs the physical as well as the monetary support of the Division. The rewards of beaming faces are priceless. Help us bring the joy to others.

Thanks to Ed Kapuscinski for obtaining a donation to the layout from MTH.

Karl and Scott

Some Food for Thought And with an extraterrestrial twist

By Anonymous

The US standard railroad gauge (width between the two rails) is 4 feet 8.5 inches. That's an exceedingly odd number. Why was that gauge used? Because that is the way they built them in England, and English expatriates built US railroads.

Why did the English build them like that? Because the first rail lines were built by the same people who built the pre-railroad tramways and that is the gauge they used.

Why? Because the people who built the tramways used the same jigs and tools that they used for building wagons that used that wheel spacing.

Okay! Why did the wagons have that particular odd wheel spacing? Well, if they tried to use any other spacing, the wagon wheels would break on some of the old, long distance roads in

England, because that is the spacing of the wheel ruts.

And why were there wheel ruts? The first long distance roads in Europe and England were built by Imperial Rome for their legions. The roads have been used ever since.

And the ruts in the roads? Roman war chariots first formed the initial ruts that everyone had to match for fear of destroying their wagon wheels. Since the chariots were made for (or by) Imperial Rome, they were all alike in the matter of wheel spacing.

Thus, the US standard railroad gauge of 4 feet 8.5 inches derives from the original specification for an Imperial Roman war chariot. Specifications and bureaucracies live forever. So the next time you are handed a specification and wonder what horse's ass came up with it, you may be exactly right, because the Imperial Roman war chariots were made just wide enough to accommodate the back ends of two war horses. Thus we have the answer to the original question.

Now the extraterrestrial twist to the story...

When we see a Space Shuttle sitting on its launch pad, there are two big booster rockets attached to the sides of the main fuel tank. These are solid rocket boosters or SRBs. Thiokol at their factory in Utah makes the SRBs. The engineers who designed the SRBs would have preferred to make them a bit fatter, but the SRBs had to be shipped by train from the factory to the launch site.

The railroad line from the factory had to run through a tunnel. The tunnel is slightly wider than the railroad track, and the railroad track is about as wide as two horse's behinds.

So the major design feature of what are arguably the worlds most advanced transportation systems was determined over two thousand years ago by the width of a horse's ass.

The Re-railer Story

Not too long ago, Charlie Weber made an interesting purchase on eBay. This consisted of two brand new, in the box re-railers.

This re-railer was "discussed" in Popular Mechanics or Popular Science in the late 50's under "New Items". It was made in three varieties. No. 5401 for American Flyer Trains, No. 5402 for all Marx and Lionel trains in 0 & 027 gauges. Excepting those with Magne traction™ locomotives, and No.5403 for all Marx and Lionel trains including magne-traction™ locomotives. We assume it was made of plastic.

The re-railers were manufactured by the General Machining Works which was located at 214 W. Grand Ave in Chicago, Ill. Legend on the boxes indicated that a Patent was Pending.



The No. 5402



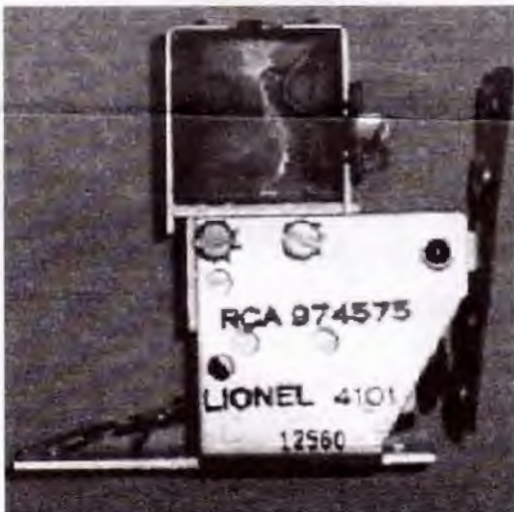
The No. 5401

The two rerailers obtained by Charlie are made of sturdy metal. The No. 5401 is enameled in dark green and No. 5402 in red. Since these were made of metal; the No.1 instruction is, **"Turn off transformer!"**.

A few Odds & Ends from a Collector of "Odd Balls"

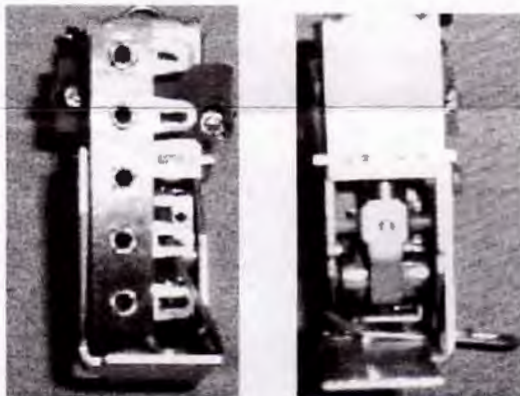
Ed Kapuscinski enjoys collecting odd pieces of toy train equipment that are very rare, factory errors or just plain interesting. For your enjoyment, Bob Lubonski photographed some of these; and we will present them here from time to time.

One of the most interesting is the part shown below. At first glance, this looks like an



The unit showing Lionel & RCA part nos.

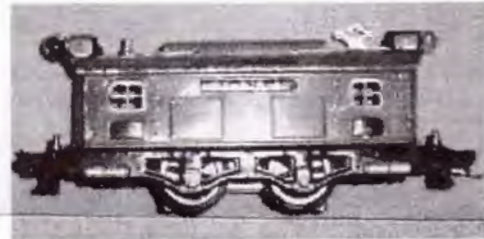
ordinary E-Unit. However closer inspection reveals that it is a special part made by Lionel for RCA. It is RCA part No.974575.



The front view on the left shows a number of connections. The rear view on the right shows a pall and barrel as is found in a standard E-unit.

Most likely RCA needed a switch to accomplish the type of cyclical function performed by an E-unit. We can only guess that Lionel's patent on this device was why RCA went to Lionel to have them made.

Finally, the 253 in Mojave shown above represents a factory error. The panels where the grills are normally inserted have not been punched out



A Mojave 253 factory error

By the way, can anyone give us the phone number for the Lionel Corporation located at 48-52 East 21st Street in New York? A free pass to the January meet for anyone who comes up with the correct answer. You may send in your replies to the editorial office.

Scheduled Meets Of Neighbor Divisions

Keystone November 17 @ 9:00AM
February 9, 2002
Farm & Home Center, Lancaster,
PA

WB&A
Chapter March 9, 2002, Tall Cedars #45
Hall, 2501 Patty Hill Rd.,
Parkville, MD
Sep 7, 2002, Tall Cedars #45
Hall, 2501 Patty Hill Rd.,
Parkville, MD

METCA Sept 9, 2001, Parsipanny PAL,
Parsippany, NJ
Nov 11, 2001, Parsipanny PAL,
Parsippany, NJ

The NTTM Express

By John V. Luppino, Operations Manager
Train Collectors Association

In the last edition of the Express, I mentioned the 1928 Lionel Dealer's display. It is the central fixture of the Gary Lavinus Historical Exhibit Gallery.

This exhibit awes many visitors. It contains a Bild-A-Loco kit in the original box, a turntable, a Hellgate Bridge and many other items from the late 1920s. As is the case with the operating layouts, this is located close to the floor allowing younger visitors a good look at the exhibit.

Older visitors enjoy the price list mounted on one of the wings attached to the dealer display. Of course, the prices appear to be quite low by today's standards. Once visitors realize that wages were considerably lower, they begin to realize that trains were, and continue to be, a sizable investment.

As with Historical Hall, these exhibits allow visitors an opportunity to examine artifacts from the Museum's collections "up close and personal." This area allows an opportunity to expose visitors (actually potential members) to one of the reasons many people collect toy trains: they are often miniature works of art. The Museum holds the potential to be our most powerful recruiting tool if we should ever desire to use it as such.

WANTED

Plaque #16 3/11/79

Bob Sattelmeyer 215-487-7132

Lionel 1677 Gondola, Peacock, nickel journals, latch coupler.

Walt Weitzel 609-324-7799

Shell for a B&O 2368: prefer excellent to like-new condition. Edward G Schmid, 610-793-1946.

Cardboard trains & accessories. Especially interested in Bilt-Rite. What do you have extra? Charley Weber 215-489-2286.

Lionel 2758 Semi-scale automobile car, with 1941 couplers in original box. End flap should read "For 0 Gauge Track". Chester Zmijewski 856-429-0591.

ATLANTIC DIVISION LOCAL

Barring derailments or other unforeseen obstacles to normal operations, the Atlantic Division Local is published four times a year. The editors are actively seeking new articles for publication. Anyone having material they would like published should submit it to the Editorial Office. The material need not be in polished form.

Charlie Weber & Chester Zmijewski, Co-editors

Editorial Office

1119 Yardley Rd.

Cherry Hill, NJ 08034

e-mail: chesterz@bellatlantic.net