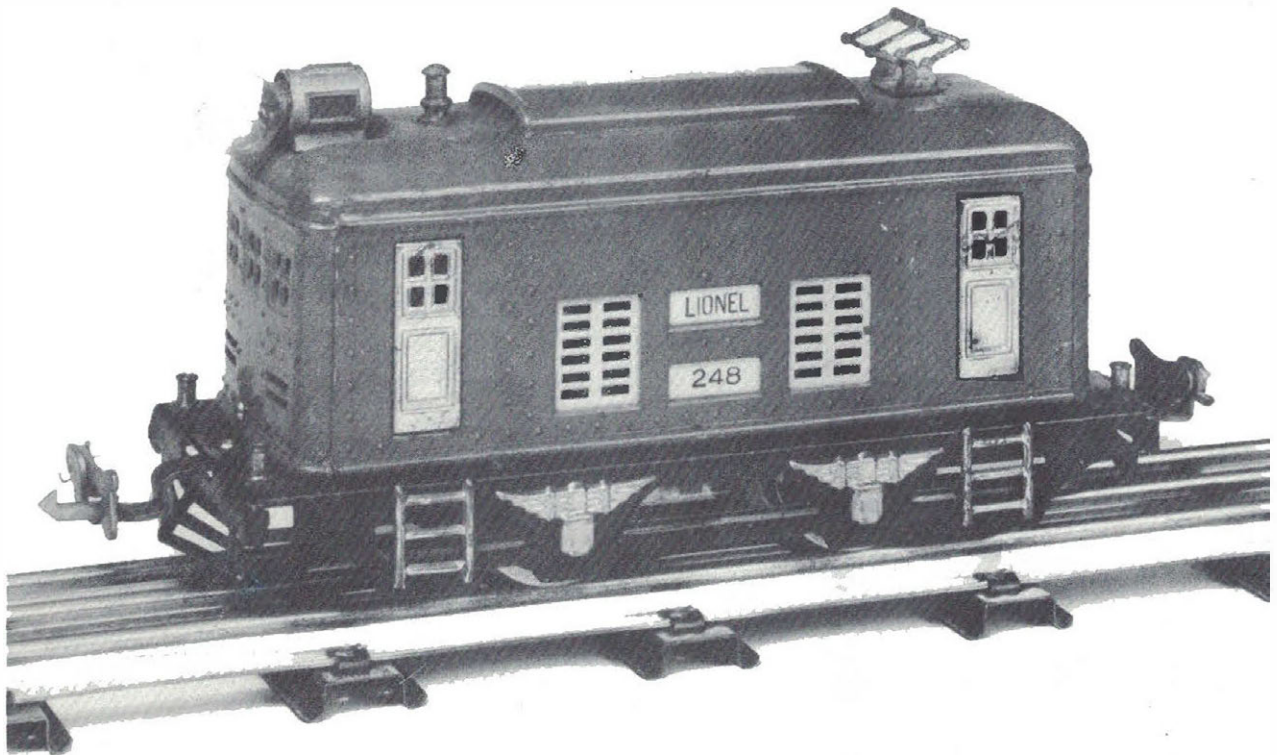


THE ATLANTIC DIVISION EXPRESS



AUTUMN 1984

TRAIN COLLECTORS
ASSOCIATION

DIVISION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICERS

DIRECTORS

President	- Nicholas B. Ladd	Stewart E. Bearn	William W. McKay
Vice President	- Edward B. Pinsky	Raymond M. Connolly	Richard G. Robinson
Secretary	- Richard D. Heineman	Edward DeVincentis	Sid Weiss
Treasurer	- William E. Miles, Jr.	George M. Donze	William J. Wilson
Past President	- Richard H. Knowles		

"Express" Editor - Edward B. Pinsky
 Assistant Editor - Philip O. Ritter

The Atlantic Division - Train Collectors Association
 6304 Park Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19141

Copyright 1984 "Atlantic Division Express"

A T L A N T I C D I V I S I O N 1 9 8 5 M E E T S

Sunday, January 20, 1985
 Sunday, May 26, 1985
 Sunday, July 21, 1985
 Sunday, November 17, 1985

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 both the Atlantic Division Secretary & the National Business Office of any address changes so as to insure timely receipt of all Division and National mailings.

F R O N T C O V E R P H O T O G R A P H

See back cover for Bill McKay's findings on the Lionel "no handrails" terra cotta #248.

PRESIDENT'S POINT OF VIEW

When I first joined TCA we were still meeting at Hershey, Pa. (the BIG meet) and in fire halls and basements of various establishments - especially a certain bar in Baltimore. Collecting was a laid back affair then with low prices and a lot more emphasis on trading trains, tall stories and friendship. Today, like so many other things, the emphasis has shifted toward selling and to making a "killing" on each item one sells. Too bad, but it is not too bad ... if only everyone played by the rules of honesty and fair dealing.

At present, the TCA has a record number of "actions" pending against members for modifying trains to make them appear to be rare, inventing family members in order to get more tables at train meets, failure to deliver products as advertised, downright dishonesty as far as restorations go and actual stealing. It's a sad bag of tricks these dishonest members carry around and we all have to be on our guard against them. Of course, the TCA is your best line of defense in such matters. Deal only with TCA members at TCA train meets and you have some measure of protection.

Regardless of TCA efforts to eliminate the cheaters, you have to help yourself. Here are a few tips:

1. Never leave your table unattended at a meet. If you want to go shopping, use

the "buddy system" with your next door table neighbor, if possible.

2. If you leave the hall to eat, or for any reason, before the meet ends - cover your table with a blanket or cloth.

3. Never leave any small items on your table. Secure them in a table top display case.

4. Keep the really valuable items at the rear of your display.

5. Watch your customers! Look out for open shopping bags and a situation where one "shopper" occupies your attention to the point where you cannot observe what others are doing.

Do you remember when people left money for items purchased on a member's table, and it was safe to do so? No more!

The Atlantic Division wants everyone to have a good time at our meets. We will rigidly enforce TCA rules regarding the marking of restorations and we will move against any member conducting business in an unethical or dishonest manner. AND, we will institute the use of undercover security at our meets to watch for shoplifters. We hope to avoid hearing, "Will the person who took such-and-such from so-and-so's table please return and pay for it!"

NICHOLAS B. LADD

A T L A N T I C D I V I S I O N S T A T I O N D I S P L A Y

W E S T O V E R M E E T - M A Y 2 7 , 1 9 8 4

The Atlantic Division has long striven to make each Westover Country Club Meet interesting, informative and something more than just another run-of-the-mill meet. A small but beautiful commemorative plaque denoting a toy train or accessory is available to members attending the meets. At the recently held meet on May 27, 1984, the plaque featured a Lionel #115 Station.

Prior to the meet, the AD BOD and Meet Chairman Sid Weiss decided it would be interesting to expand on the theme of the plaque by presenting a display of stations. George Kane was asked to organize the display with the assistance of Stewart Bearn. From the accompanying photos you are able to see the final results. An artificial grass mat served as a base and step-type shelves were built to hold the display.

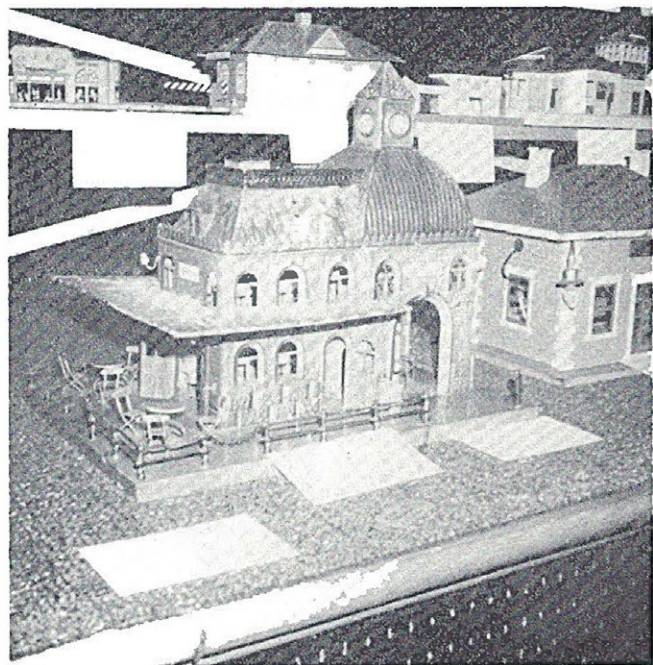
Appreciation is expressed to all those A. D. members who were thoughtful enough

to bring the eighty-four (84) stations that were displayed. Included were stations from Lionel, American Flyer, Ives, Chein, Hafner, Dorfman, Marklin, Bing, Marx, Bachmann, Skyline and others. Of special interest were a rare Carlisle & Finch printed paper on wood station, a very early Lionel station described in a recent issue of the TCAQ, a Lionel cardboard station available only as part of a train set, and a beautiful Victorian era station by Marklin.

A sincere thank you to Phil Ritter and Spence Stoughton who spent hours arranging and labeling the stations that were on display. Enthusiasm for the station display was so high that future displays are planned when the theme of the meet's commemorative plaque permits.

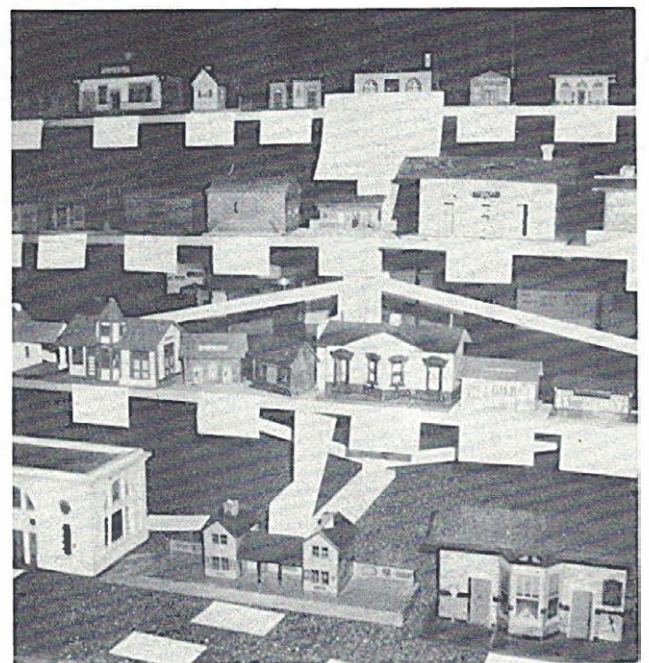
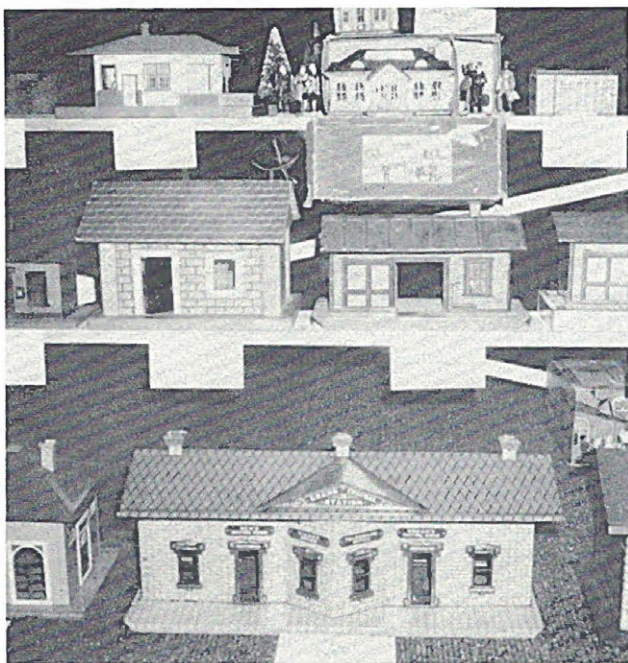
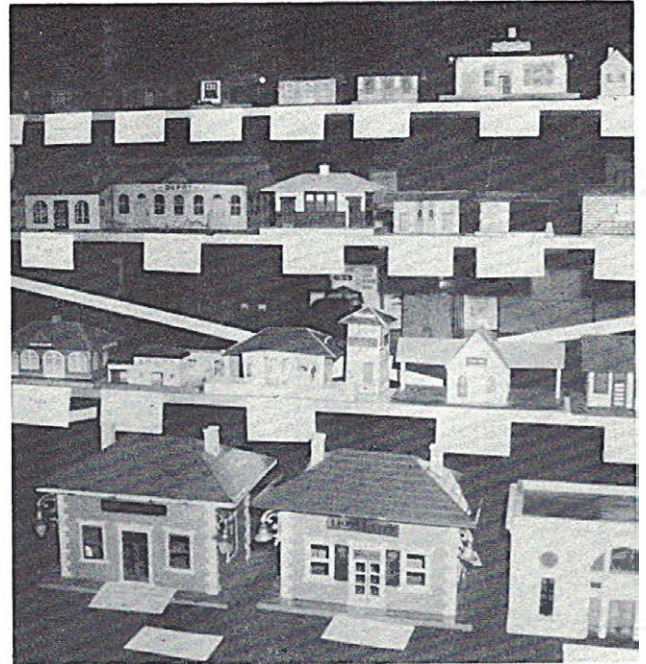
Photography by Phil Ritter

#####



ATLANTIC DIVISION STATION DISPLAY

(concluded)



FISCHBACH TRACK GUARD RAIL

ANOTHER COMMENT

By Sid Weiss

I may be a little bit late now, but I want to comment on the article about the Fischbach Track Guard Rail which appeared a few issues ago.

I do not own any of it nor do I know of anyone who does - however, my Uncle Harry, who used to patent and manufacture things in Pennsburg, Pa., had some dealings more or less in the same vein. Sadly, none of his stuff exists anymore, having been made in very limited quantities.

I remember in November of 1924 he got quite excited about the prospect of making guard rail for 45° and 90° crossovers for people who would not be able to obtain them from Fischbach Specialty Company, as they were not producing them.

As luck would have it, the first production run was made for 2 7/8" gauge and the second run was for H.O. gauge, which was about ten years ahead of its time.

He then conceived the idea of attach-

ing the guard rail to the train (rather than to the track) reasoning that this would require far less guard rail and it would always be in the right position.

If you remember, I wrote to you a few years ago about an Animal Car that Uncle Harry designed in his plant on Railroad Avenue in Pennsburg. It's just a shame that the plant was never rebuilt after the great fire destroyed the whole south end of Pennsburg which consisted of my Uncle Harry's plant, an old tool shed and Robbie Henry's Outhouse.

I forgot to tell you that Uncle Harry was terribly worried about how the guard rail would interfere with the American Flyer wide gauge mail pick-up.

Finally, if some one ever decides to re-manufacture the guard rail, I hope the T C A will make sure it is marked as not being original - after all it is not a toy, is it?

|||||

A THANK YOU FROM GEORGE KOFF

Many thanks to the Atlantic Division officers and members for the beautiful fruit basket which you sent to me upon the passing of my wife, Esther, on August 3, 1984. May you all enjoy good health.

MY FIRST BLUE COMET

By Ray Connolly

The year was 1933, I was 11 years old and coming home from school in the late afternoon when my Dad and Mother pulled up in our 1929 Dodge sedan. My Father was a City of Philadelphia Fireman, a former Reading Railroad machinist and a train lover in every sense, so he didn't mind that the price paid for what he had just bought was more than his total pay for two weeks as a City employee.

My Mother wore her usual smile and all seemed right with the world, especially when I saw those "speeding" locomotives on the end of the large carton that Dad was carrying. Years later I would know what those engines were.

It seems that my Father had tried to buy the Standard Gauge Blue Comet Set from either of two centercity suppliers, namely, Supplee-Biddle or Philip Cass & Company, but neither firm had the set in stock, but supplied my Father with the proper paperwork so that he could go directly to Lionel and purchase the set at the 1932 catalog price of \$70.00, less any possible shipping charges. So, on his "long" day off (Firemen received one 24-hour day off every week) he and my Mother drove the 60 miles (each way) to Irvington, New Jersey, and purchased the set for \$65.00.

It seemed like ages, but actually was only a minute or two, until the large box was opened and the smaller cartons inside it were removed, their sealing tapes cut and their contents revealed. What they revealed elicited a long sigh from my patient Mother, but a verbal explosion from my Dad that was heard, no doubt, in South Philly. The opened inner boxes revealed TWO (2) #400E locos, one #400T tender, one #422 observation car, some cardboard fillers and nothing else - specifically, NO coaches!

I suppose the look of disappointment on my face was very evident, but my Mother assured me that Dad would make things right, and make things right he did, for

on his next "long" day off they returned to Lionel and explained what had happened. The people there were most helpful and concerned to the point that over one dozen cases were opened and all of them were found to be packed wrong! One explanation was the possibility of BULK items for export shipment. (Possible??) In less than an hour, Lionel made up a COMPLETE Blue Comet Set, deducted an additional \$3.00 (for dinner money), and thanked my parents for their interest.

Our Standard Gauge layout platform was 10' x 18' wired and with some animation. This was set up in the living room every Christmas until 1937, when a decree from Mother was handed down (read "or else") that new living room furniture had been ordered and the space was required.

My Dad said the new 8' x 12' platform was much too small for Standard Gauge, and so the Blue Comet Set was sold to a neighbor for \$25.00 (Lord, forgive us!). A new O Gauge train consisting of a gun metal 263E loco, a 263W tender, a bright green 812 gondola, a yellow/brown 814 box car, a silver Sunoco 815 tank car and an all-red 817 caboose, was picked out by me (now age 15 and very train-wise!) and carried home by Dad via the Frankford Elevated and a Route 60 trolley.

All the O Gauge trains, accessories and wooden Schoenhut buildings disappeared during the 1942 War Effort, according to my 82 years young dear Mother, who vividly recalls all of the preceding story. We all know of, and have had documented by others, all kinds of Factory Errors. This personal account of mine not only could happen, it actually DID happen.

Time dims the memory of many things, but this 11 year old boy, now age 62, will NEVER, EVER forget all that led up to his first wonderful Blue Comet Set back in 1933.

#####

INVENTIONS THAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN BUT NEVER WERE -- OR WERE THEY?

THE AUTOMATIC REVERSE IDEA OF EDWARD FODERARO OF SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA

By Hilly Lazarus*

In 1955, Lionel introduced the automatically reversing trolley and gang car that each changed directions after bumping into almost anything. The same principle was patented 31 years earlier by our Mr. Foderaro, as will be seen in the accompanying diagrams for his patent. He designed the idea where, due to the momentum of cars being pulled behind an engine when the electricity was shut off, the forward motion of the cars would push the couplers together and thereby trip the reversing mechanism attached to said couplers. If the current was shut off while the train was running backward, the momentum of the cars would pull out the couplers to their full length, thus re-positioning the "forward" circuitry.

What we seem to see in Figure 1 is an Ives engine and an American Flyer coach. The couplers shown in the other figures are pure American Flyer. In any case, this patent was not assigned to any manufacturer, so it probably never got into production. The electrical hook-up is shown in Figure 2, the trip mechanism is shown in Figures 4, 5 and 6 and the all-important "switch mechanism" is shown in top view in Figure 3.

Was a model ever made? Did it work? You collectors up in the Scranton area might want to follow up on this by looking up the Foderato family in your phone book. Who knows, you might make a very interesting discovery.

*COPYRIGHT 1984 BY HILLEL DON LAZARUS, D.D.S. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

#####

IN CASE YOU WONDERED

By Phil Ritter

Our ATLANTIC DIVISION MODULAR LAYOUT is operating and actively bringing much pleasure to lots of shut-ins in the Delaware Valley. During 1984, we were out an average of once a month, visiting the Shriners Hospital, Wayne Nursing Home, Melmark Home, Rest Haven Nursing Home, St. Christopher Hospital, Inglis House, Dunwoody, Haverford State Hospital, Elwyn Institute and Bethanna Home.

In addition, in August we had our 2nd Annual week-long set-up at the TCA Toy

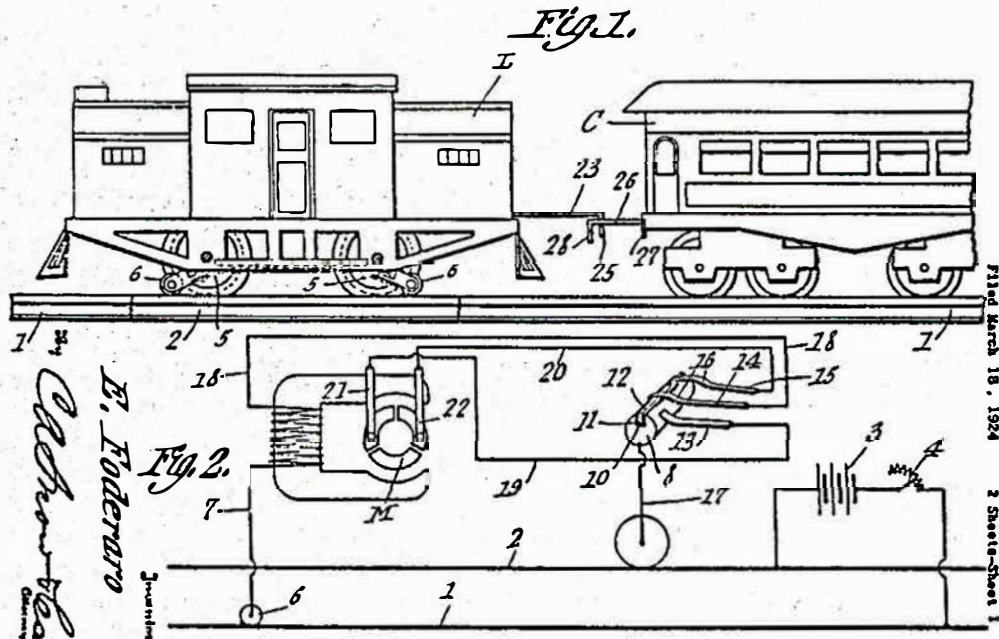
Train Museum. Several A. D. Layout Crew members were on hand to guide the visitors' use and enjoyment of our trains.

Can you help our A. D. Modular Layout project for all or part of a day? What better way to enjoy and share our hobby. The more the crew, the better the trains will run (ask any railroad union). If you want to join our crew, call me at 215-647-0235. You'll be glad you did.

#####

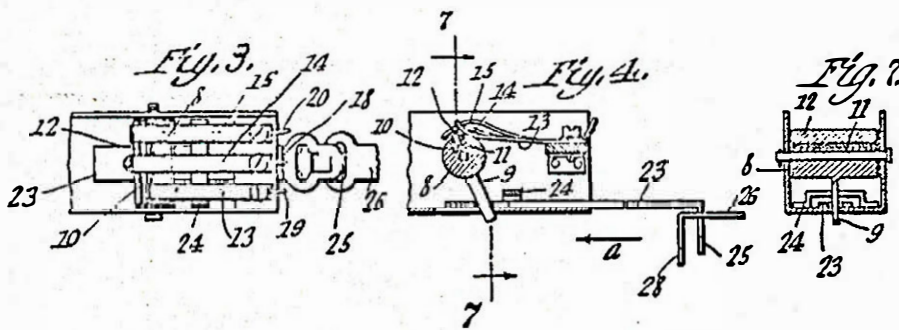
THE INVENTIONS OF EDWARD FODERARO OF SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA

(concluded)



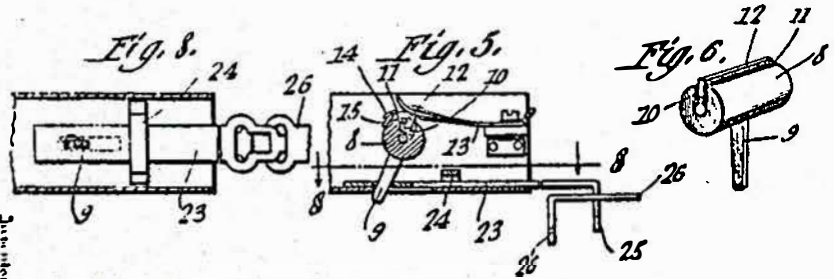
E. Foderaro
 Scranton, Pa.
 Inventor

July 1, 1924.
 E. FODERARO
 ELECTRIC FOR
 1,499,816
 Filed March 18, 1924 2 Sheet-Sheet 1



E. Foderaro
 Scranton, Pa.
 Inventor

July 1, 1924.
 E. FODERARO
 ELECTRIC FOR
 1,499,816
 Filed March 18, 1924 2 Sheet-Sheet 2



A. D. B O A R D O F D I R E C T O R S

M I N U T E S O F S E P T E M B E R 1 3 , 1 9 8 4 M E E T I N G

By Secretary Richard D. Heineman

SECRETARY'S AND TREASURER'S REPORTS: Both reports were approved as submitted.

PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE: Chairman Bill Wilson reported that the EXPRESS is slightly behind schedule but is expected to be back on track by the next issue. The November Meet Notice and the 1985 Dues Notice will be mailed together; the 1985 Election Ballot will go out separately.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE: Chairman Nick Ladd presented the list of candidates selected to run for the four Director seats that are open for 1985.

MEET COMMITTEE: Chairman Sid Weiss reported a heavy sign-up for the September Mini-Meet. [Attendance was excellent, there were door prizes galore, great contests for the youngsters and the Mini-Meet was a fine, fun affair.]

1989 NATIONAL CONVENTION REPORT: President Nick Ladd reported that the Valley Forge Sheraton has a new Convention Manager and we will soon be meeting with her.

NEW BUSINESS: President Nick Ladd reported on TCA National affairs.

Treasurer Bill Miles pointed out the responsibility of Committees to get members involved in Division activities rather than depending on Board members to do it all.

FLASH! The Division will be sponsoring a major toy train exhibit and layout at the CAMPBELL MUSEUM in Camden, N J, from November 15, 1984 through January 4, 1985.

" I N K B L O T S "

By Secretary Richard D. Heineman

By the time you read this, you will have received your Atlantic Division dues notice for 1985. Dues were increased by \$2.00 to compensate for higher costs of printing, higher hall and table rental costs, and probable postage increase. It is still the best buy in the TCA.

Please return your dues remittance promptly - it makes all the paperwork a good deal easier.

The Atlantic Division has 880 members as of this date, a new high.

A BILLER THRILLER

PART I

By Nicholas Ladd

The little trains had to be the cutest things I had ever seen. Winding their way around a very intricate layout involving countless switches and crossings the clacking BILLER trains were fascinating. Gene Handler had invited me over to his Kensington, Maryland home to see his collection and I was really impressed. His love for unique little lithographed toy trains was evidenced by the most unusual collection of battery and clockwork models I had ever seen. I did not know Japan had exported so many different train sets... and the MARX... and the BILLER !?! What in the world was BILLER?

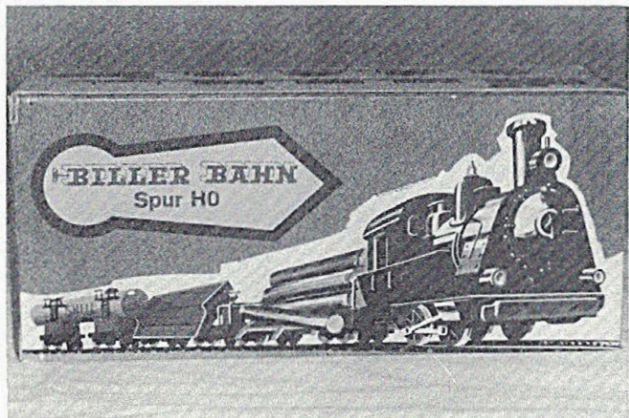
Gene explained some of the history of this small post-war German firm and other collectors, especially Bob Marshall, have filled in many of the gaps for me. Of course, the bug bit and I am now a fanatic on BILLER, too.

For those of you who are World War II history buffs, I am sure you have seen

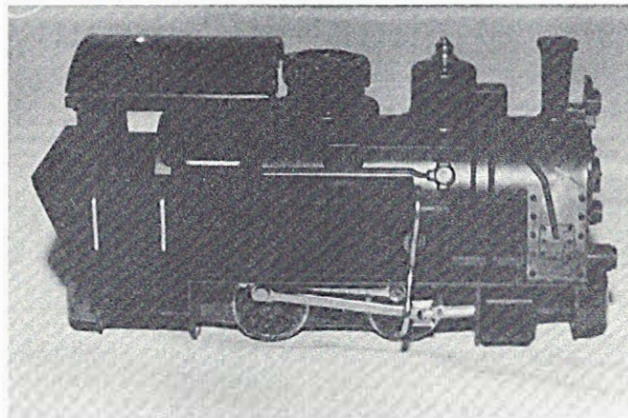
many pictures of devastated German cities. To help clear the roads and fill in damaged areas, the Allies and German workers used small locomotives and side dumping cars. The track sections were portable and were bolted together much like tinsplate track. This track work and the size of the rolling stock made the job of clearing and reconstruction very flexible. Known as "Trummelbahnen" in Germany, these small work trains were the prototypes for the first BILLER sets which came on the market place in 1948 or 1949.

The narrow gauge BILLER RAILWAY grew from simple little cars with four wheel cars to larger sets with eight wheel cars. Locomotives were marketed either with clockwork or battery power, and a fascinating assortment of clockwork toys and accessories were added to the line in later years. At present BILLER is no longer being manufactured despite rumors

continued on next page



OUTER BOX FOR CAR



STEAM LOCO - PLASTIC - CLOCKWORK

A BILLER THRILLER

(continued)

to the contrary. About 4 or 5 years ago our John Wanamaker toy buyer was at the giant Nuremberg Toy Fair and took photos of some "BILLER" products for sale. A quantity of lithographed unformed blanks were also on hand. The manufacturer had bought the BILLER dies and stock and was attempting to market the line. When I saw the photos, I had a telex order sent to Germany for information. Our purchasing agents could not locate the firm or the manufacturer and thus the mystery continues to this day. Somewhere in Germany the BILLER dies are resting, and some day ...

Back to reality! In addition to being really cute, the little BILLER trains are marvels of German craftsmanship and invention. The clockwork motors are simple, strong and can be reversed by manipulating a plunger knob on the boiler which resembles a sand dome. After winding the loco, you push the knob to start or stop. To reverse, you twist the knob and off you go in the opposite direction. Later locomotives were provided with battery power but the unique manual start/stop/reverse mechanism was never changed.

The cars couple by means of a hook sy-

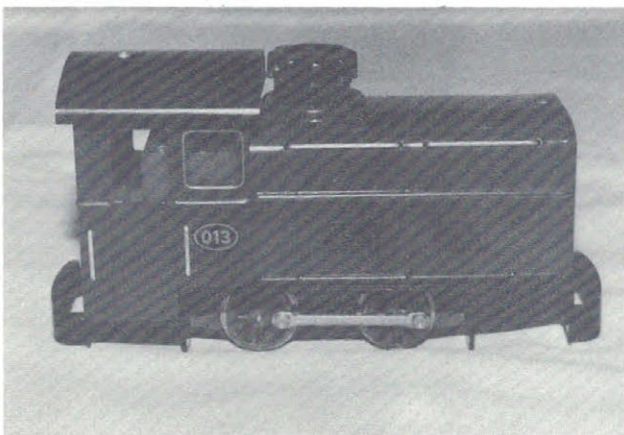
stem which lifts on a V-shaped hinge. When the cars are coupled, the two hooks overlap to insure secure connections. Even if one hook is broken, the other will suffice.

The rolling stock began with the four wheel side dump cars similar to the Lionel version. The dump cars are numbered "one" through "nine" although they were not marketed as a nine piece set. Other four wheel tin cars followed including small gondolas, barrel cars, people wagons and zoo cars. Later, larger passenger and freight cars arrived with eight wheels and these updated the BILLER product line.

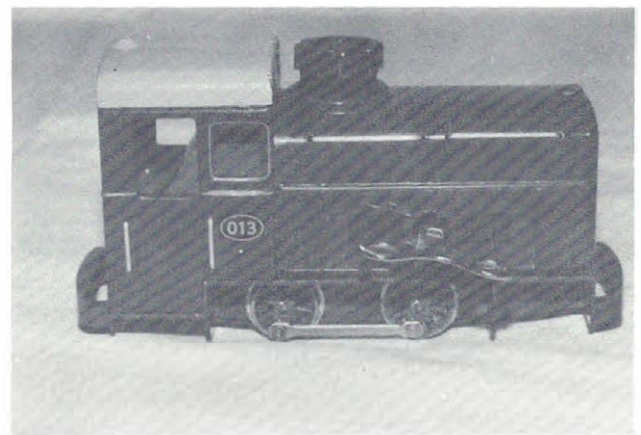
Locomotives in lithographed tin came in two styles: 0-4-0 Diesel and 0-4-0 steam. The Diesel loco was available in green, blue/yellow and red colors. The sample shown at Nuremberg appeared to be orange, but I have never seen that color. Steam lithographed locos are only known in green and the last series of plastic steam locos were all black. All had red wheels.

The narrow gauge trackwork is really

continued on next page

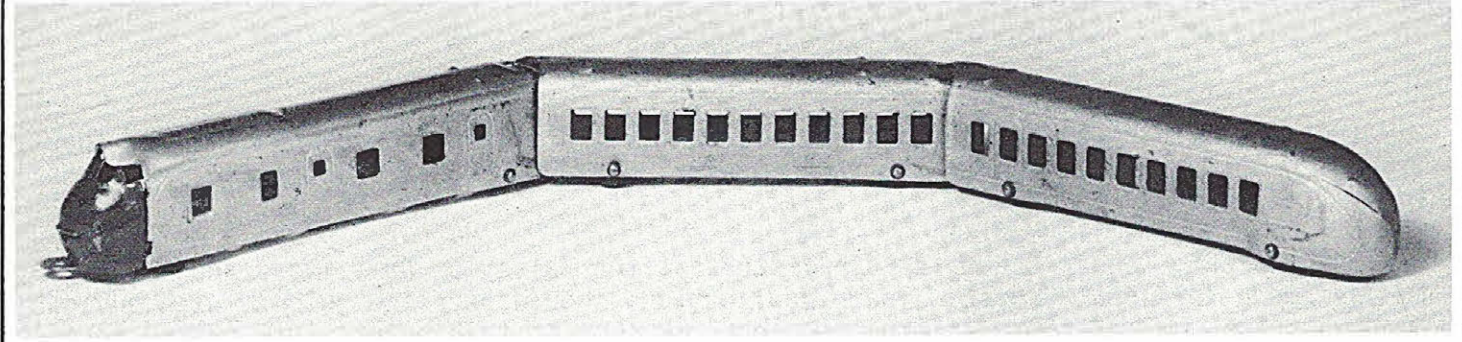


DIESEL - TIN LITHO - BATTERY POWERED



DIESEL - TIN LITHO - CLOCKWORK

WHAT IS IT?



Prizes, as usual, for the most complete answers. Send your responses to the Editor.

A BILLER THRILLER

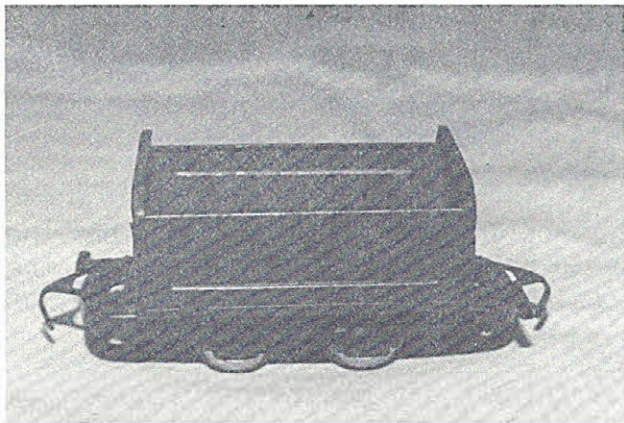
(concluded)

fascinating. Hollow tinplate rails are fastened to real wood ties. The track sections slide together and no separate track pins are required. The fit is snug and few sections separate during operation. The switches can be thrown manually or will be thrown by the weight of the locomotive as it passes through a closed switch. Wrecks are few and far between. There are many other track accessories which allow very complicated and exciting layouts to be constructed without too much pre-planning - in fact, some of

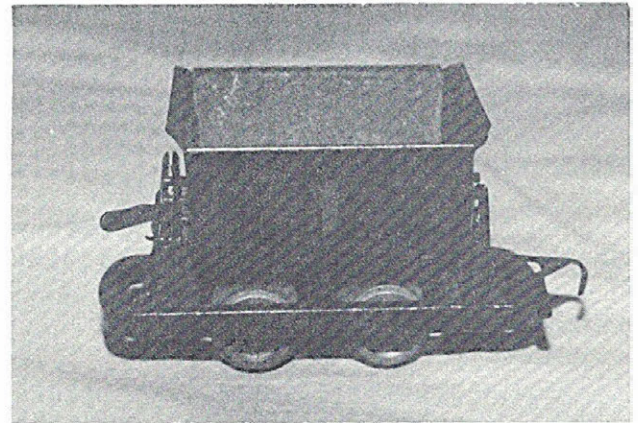
the most enjoyable BILLER layouts I have ever made were ones that just happened as I went along.

In the second section of this article I shall delve into detailed descriptions of the locos, cars, track, accessories and toys which complement the trains. By now my BILLER BAHN needs rewinding... if I can just find the key!

#####



GONDOLA - TIN



SIDE DUMP CAR - TIN

A N I D E A F O R T I N P L A T E R S

By Cliff Shirley

I can readily understand why tinsplaters want to reform their various clubs. They might do well to form three separate groups to fulfill their respective needs, as identified below.

SPECULATORS: Their dream is to buy stuff at the Salvation Army Store and sell it to pay for a Love Boat Cruise. Their publications should be price guides, with advice on how to talk sellers into selling for less and how to talk buyers into paying more. Their success stories could tell about the man who told the old lady selling her kid's trains that nobody wants anything today pertaining to obsolete steam type locomotives. So she paid him to haul the stuff away and he had it sold the next day and took off for Switzerland on the proceeds.

COLLECTORS: Their dream is to acquire a toy train just like the rich kid in their neighborhood had 50 years or more ago, then display it and tell people that at last a boyhood dream has been realized. Their publications should deal with history and non-operating nostalgia and memories of the old Lionel radio program. Their main activity is to talk about the Good Old Days.

OPERATORS: Their main activity is the operation of toy trains. They may build stuff in tinsplate style that tinsplate manufacturers didn't make. Their publications should be about building things, about good layouts and maybe even about mistakes made in tinsplate, such as the use of the NYC electric locomotive (that was built for passenger service only) to pull a freight train with a PRR caboose. Their dream is to run something on a layout that has 100 consecutive sections of straight track.

When the Speculator group has a gathering, they may call it a "show" but it is a lot of haggling, sounding like market day in some far-away land. If a stranger enters, they pounce on him like ducks on a June Bug to see if he'll buy at sucker prices or if they can gyp him out of what he may have. Anyone so odd as to ask why it is called a train "show" but has no trains in operation is looked at as though he is a candidate for the funny farm.

When the Collector group has a gathering, talk of the 1930's and earlier predominates and nobody even mentions a date after World War II. One hears how the speaker wanted a train like in the store display but Santa Claus didn't have them for depression kids, but now he has one finally. Anyone with a good memory of the American Flyer display at the 1933-1934 Chicago Fair is a celebrity.

When the Operator group has a gathering, they not only advertise a "show" but they have one. They set up a big layout, tell people to bring their trains to run, or they can watch the group's trains run on a layout with lots of straight track, switches and working signals.

Speculators stand alone. Collectors may also think a bit about operating or may be just Collectors because they don't have space, time or money for track. Both the true Collector and the Operator look upon the Speculator as being responsible for the high prices of trains that they want to buy. The Speculator looks upon the Collector

continued on next page

AN IDEA FOR TINPLATERS

(concluded)

as sitting on a gold mine when the Collector doesn't want to part with boyhood treasures, and he just sneers and goes on his way when he sees an Operator. To the Speculator, trains aren't to shelve except while waiting for a buyer, and aren't to operate because they might get a dent and lose some inflated "value."

Let us consider an imaginary situation where a Speculator, a Collector and an Operator each see a train set that is old, but new to them. The Speculator's first comment will be: "What is it WORTH?" The Collector will ask: "Was it made in any other COLOR?" The Operator will ask: "Does it RUN?" Then imagine how it would be if each of them acquired the set, and what they would then reach for. The Speculator would reach for a telephone to call somebody who might buy the set at an inflated price. The Collector would reach for his reference library to check if there had been something printed about this particular set that he had missed seeing. The Operator would reach for his oil can, to get the new-to-him train to run.

So that's the way I see it - let tinplaters form three separate groups of their own: one for those who are strictly buyers-sellers, one for those who acquire trains only for nostalgia's sake, and one for those who run trains.

Editor's Note: Mr. Cliff Shirley shared the above comments with Atlantic Division member Dick Stafford. The opinions expressed are Mr. Shirley's and they are printed here with his kind permission.

#####

A T L A N T I C D I V I S I O N M E E T P L A Q U E S

By Ken Hartshorn

Starting in Beth Ayres and Conshohocken, our train meets grew larger and on to Westover Country Club in Norristown. The idea for a memento came and spread to the Holiday Inn in Valley Forge, to the Ivystone Inn in Pennsauken, to the Highpoint Racquet Club in Chalfont, and back to the Westover Country Club. We thank the Delaware Valley Chapter and now the Atlantic Division for THE PLAQUE.

The plaque is used to commemorate Fall Meets, Polar Bear Meets, Summer Meets, Mini Meets, Benefit Meets, Swap & Sweat Meets, Fun Meets, May Meets, Summer Swap Meets and other occasions. The plaque is

colorful, educational and a great souvenir.

Most collectors like the fact that it is full of V A R I A T I O N S. For example, there were two 10th Annual Polar Bear Meets, one in 1978 and another in 1980. We had our 13th Annual Polar Bear Meet in 1983 and our 15th Annual Polar Bear Meet in 1984. Several other variations add to the fun.

My plaques are framed and on display and I can't wait for the next one. Thank you, Atlantic Division!

#####

KEN SHERER'S PUZZLE SOLVED - ANOTHER PUZZLE POSED

By Bill McKay

Dr. Kenneth Sherer gave us his fine article on "THE UBIQUITOUS NO. 248" in the October, 1966 TCA QUARTERLY. In the article, Ken listed the many variations of this little "bottom of the line" Lionel loco. Although its prototype was a Pennsylvania Railroad switcher, the 248 is a non-reversing, forward-only engine. Also included in the article was Ken's (and/or Lou Redman's) system for numbering Lionel motor variations.

With Ken's usual care for detail, he refused to list a positive identification for the motor in the TERRA COTTA 248 WITHOUT HANDRAILS BY THE DOORS that was produced originally for a group of Ives 3260 transition locomotives. He was sure that his sample had been altered with a motor and frame from a different loco. Subsequent to the article, Nick Ladd let me know that several small Lionel four-wheel items were available from his collection. He remembered my interest in 248s and offered an original terra cotta set with a "no handrail" 248 and matching 529 and 530 passenger cars. After checking the motor of Nick's excellent original locomotive, I was able to let Ken know that the terra cotta "no handrail" 248 loco came with a Type #7 motor which he has dated as 1930.

This article fulfills my promise to Ken and clears up one puzzle, but I'd like to offer another. The earlier 248s in my collection have flag stanchions that are just a bit thinner and possibly a bit taller than those on later 248s. I haven't been able to sort out a reliable pattern as yet because most of my 248s are tucked away in various places around the house while my offspring fill the rooms (rather than the reverse). I'll be checking them and searching for more at meets, but perhaps a few other detail-hounds could help date this "variation" which would be likely to appear on other locomotives as well.

Just as Ken has fond memories associated with the little green 248 loco and freight cars of his youth, I remember a bright red 248 locomotive that appeared only on Christmas Mornings on the train platform that Santa Claus set up every Christmas Eve in a farmhouse outside of West Chester. It was, and still is, my 248 - and its bright red paint, the long Christmas tree bulb in its headlight, and the ozone that swirled in its wake as it buzzed around the platform, have a special meaning and bring back my fondest Christmas memories.

