

THE ATLANTIC DIVISION EXPRESS



ATLANTIC DIVISION



T.C.A.

FALL 1989

TRAIN COLLECTORS
ASSOCIATION

ATLANTIC DIVISION EXPRESS

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Fall, 1989

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EDITOR

Charlie Weber

ATLANTIC DIVISION MEETS - 1990 - WESTOVER C.C. - NORRISTOWN, PA.

Sunday, January 21, 1990
 Sunday, May 27, 1990
 Sunday, July 15, 1990
 Sunday, November 18, 1990

ON THE COVER

Here is a photograph of the mockup of a standard gauge hopper car that was proposed to be one of the 1989 national convention cars. It is based around Lionel's current #216 type car. It, of course, was not produced. More details follow in this quarterly.

The national TCA convention this past summer was a success due to the efforts of around 70 volunteers. When the article was written for this quarterly no attempt was made to try to mention all of these fine workers, and only a few are specifically named where appropriate. One such person whose name is conspicuously absent is that of your president, Ed Pinsky. No, he was not out bumming around or chasing the opposite sex!! He was representing us for many, many hours at the board meetings. In addition, he was in charge of security. The fact that we have not complained about the security in this article really says something for the fine job that his people did!

Valley Forge Convention - A
Behind the Scenes View

By Joe Lehman and CWW

By the time you get this issue of the Atlantic Division Express, you will already have read the National Quarterly in which an article about the National Convention this past June will have been written by Phil Ritter. However, since this was a convention hosted by your division it only seems right that this issue of the Express should also contain convention information. What we have done is to try to document the convention from a different viewpoint.

In the beginning there were Messrs. Knowles and Wilson. By the time 1983 arrived, your board of directors had either forgotten the headaches associated with hosting a national convention (1976) or were more gluttons for punishment than I suspected. In any event, the decision to host the 1989 convention was made and accepted by the national board. The above gentlemen became the liaison people for all communications regarding this project. I suspect that there was not a whole lot for them to do during the first few years, but I know

this changed drastically as 1989 approached.

The first thing required, of course, was a site. Because of political difficulties and cost, Convention Hall in Phila. was ruled out. Considerable thought was given to Convention Hall in Atlantic City, but cost (again) and the prospect of 2000 TCA members fighting the summer tourists for berths and food, etc. negated this location. Then we heard that the City of Philadelphia was going to construct a new convention center near the Reading terminal in the downtown. This sounded super so the City was contacted. We have a letter from then Mayor Rizzo indicating that this new center would indeed be open and spiffy. In view of the recent and ongoing construction projects on the highways leading to center city, it is quite fortunate that your BOD did not trust the politicians in Philadelphia and looked elsewhere. The convention center in the Sheraton in King of Prussia was under construction at this time, so the people in charge were contacted. A contingent of BOD members visited this convention center several times and eventually inked a contract. They really felt that it would be a



Unstacking tables



Connolly and Heineman placing table cards.



Am I really supposed to understand this?



Betcha' my love handles are bigger than yours! (Messrs. Robinson, Wilson, and Connolly)



Setting up the Atlantic Division layout



Aren't those guys done yet?

wonderful place to hold the convention. In some respects they were right. By the way, we were the first convention to sign up for the Valley Forge Convention Center as it is properly called. Not very long after the contracts were signed the first problem arose. They wanted us to change our dates in order to accommodate another group, but we refused.

As 1989 rapidly approached it became apparent that we were in dire need of an official logo and slogan. This was a project headed by Malcolm Kates. Many people made suggestions but none of them clicked. Malcolm contacted Jim Burke who has done some great graphics for the Fort Pitt Division of TCA. He came up with a number of suggestions. Some were really neat. See the back of this quarterly to view a few. The one chosen was the unanimous choice of the convention committee. Malcolm contacted an artist in center city who then prepared the original oil painting that was then used to prepare all of the stationery and advertising paraphernalia. Dave Allen and his volunteers took care of that.

Once the logo had been designed, work could commence on the design of the convention

cars. The '0' gauge passenger car was the easiest to design, although the decision to make a passenger car OR a freight car was difficult to make. We decided to go with a dining car for the TCA passenger train IF Lionel could provide it at an appropriate price and IF the greedy national BOD would minimize their profit to keep the total cost at less than \$50. (Actually, we were hoping for something around \$40 -43.) Both Lionel and the national BOD concurred, so we simply adapted the previous cars' graphics to our particular situation.

When the passenger car idea was presented at a meeting of all convention committee chairmen, Bob Robinson (the head honcho by then) with the agreement of the group, asked us (the convention car committee) to also whip up a second car. The feeling was that the passenger car would only appeal to up to 3000 folks and that we should offer something for everyone else also. The committee (Donze, Lehman, Weber, and Weiss) came up with the cannon car. The idea came from brainstorming sessions which started in Weber's basement and continued for several weeks. Lots of ideas were played with - a soldier's hut on a flat car, a



Registration Starts



Mmes. Miles, Ladd and Spear start registration.



All set!!



Well, shall we let them in?



The rush starts.



Where are the bargains?

wood carrying car, a depressed center car with the Liberty Bell on it, etc. George Kane even found a supplier of cheap Liberty Bell castings to use. But, when the cannon car was proposed, we all agreed that it just sounded right. While brainstorming the cannon car idea, Weber dug out a variety of old cannons, but we didn't particularly like them. Then Lehman remembered the American Flyer cannon that was on a flat car in a set in his office. Once that piece was placed on the proposed car, we were off and running! Weber called a supplier of repro Flyer cannons, but he was not set up to produce the cannons in the expected quantity. The car committee is quite pleased with this car, although we do feel rather badly that the yellow color on the actually produced K-Line car was not the same bright color that we had specified and had placed on the mockup.

Mr. Robinson then requested that we also design a #1 gauge car and a standard gauge car. Kalamazoo sent us a car to prepare a mockup and, quite frankly, was a piece of cake to design. On the cover is a photo of the mockup for the never made standard gauge car. We

feel that it is a shame that it was not made available. The standard gauge car was designed, this mockup was made by Weber, and it was eventually submitted to Lionel for pricing. When Lionel came back with the cost, everyone was disappointed. They had raised their price from an estimated \$50 per car to \$97. But worse than that, they raised their minimum number of cars that we had to buy from our original estimate of 250 to 500! As a result, the Lionel standard gauge car was killed. The other 1989 convention cars are among the most popular to date and we feel quite sure that this car would have been well received also. The committee was then asked to design a McCoy car, but we declined.

It was decided to skip doing an Atlantic Division car for 1989 as the membership would be inundated with special cars, and the Atlantic Division car would only appeal to us and not the other convention attendees. So, as a division souvenir project a truck was considered. The convention truck was a natural as Mack Truck is located in the general area, although not actually within our division boundaries. Ray Connolly took the task to heart



Inspecting the merchandise.



Trains to run were there too.



All sorts of nice stuff!



The information center was always busy.



New trains.



A little plastic and a little Marx.

and ran with it from start to finish. As a result of Ray's fine work we were able to offer to the members a fine convention souvenir.

In addition to the various commemoratives mentioned above, a Campbell boxcar was made and given to one person at each table at the banquet. The committee chairmen had been impressed with the idea of a banquet car when Fort Pitt introduced the idea with the Heinz car at their national convention. The Campbell car was started about two years ahead of the convention. George Donze designed the car in cooperation with the advertising department at Campbell Soup Co. and had it made by Frank Rash. He also did the initial negotiating with Campbell to try to convince them to underwrite the cost of the project. As the convention dates approached, things looked poorly for this project. George put the bite on Nick Ladd and he got his nose into the negotiations. Eventually, a compromise was reached and Campbell Co. did underwrite a large portion of the cost of the cars as an advertising venture. When the shipment of cars arrived George noticed that many wheel sets had been jarred loose from their trucks in

shipment. This produced more headaches and required more time of our banquet chairman, George Kane, as he and other volunteers had to check each car as it was placed on the banquet tables and then fix them as required.

Everyone at the banquet also received a coffee mug souvenir appropriately labelled for the convention. But, some errors just seemed to follow the Atlantic Division from the 1976 convention. If you will recall, the word "Philadelphia" was misspelled on the 1976 convention car. In 1989 the spelling was correct on all of the convention cars, but the word "division" is misspelled on the mugs.

When the local hotels were approached about their rates so that we could prepare the January, 1989 mailing, some of them would not guarantee their rates. Fortunately, these motels did not change them in the ensuing six months. For the most part the hotels were not difficult to deal with except for the headquarters hotel. More about them later. The Valley Forge convention bureau assisted us every time that we asked.

A master layout had to be submitted to the local politi-



I'm sure there is one of those in here!



A decision is being made.



Do I really want this?



More spiffy new products.



A view of the pits from the information booth.



Another general view of the pits.

cians for the approval of the fire marshall. Dick Heineman laid this plan out drawing in all the little boxes, and the nice neat rows showing all of the tables, aisles, fire exits, etc. Approval of the plan was gotten from the hotel and then the fire marshall. Bob Robinson then received a phone call from the convention center asking him if smaller tables would be acceptable. It seems that they had screwed up and forgotten to order the requisite number of tables. Bob had no choice except to accept these tables, but he went through the roof when they had the audacity to ask for extra money for these rentals. No way ! Of course, now the nice, neat floor plan was no longer valid and the hall set up process became much more time consuming.

At the last meeting of the convention chairmen just one week before the convention was to open, it was learned that the convention center had filed for court protection from their creditors - "Chapter 11" as it is called. This certainly did make us nervous, as all we

could imagine was the doors being padlocked the next week!

When the TCA work crew arrived at the convention center on Thursday morning to set up tables in the hall, all hell broke loose. On the previous night the ladies of the East. Star had held their big show, dinner, installation of officers, etc. This had all been held in the room that we were supposed to occupy and lasted until after midnight. Although the center had a crew working all night, all that they had gotten finished was the knock down of the chairs and the stage. Of course, the place was a shambles! Luckily for us there were two construction bosses among our ranks. Gary Lavinus and George Donze did fantastic imitations of Atilla-the-Hun and got things rolling. Tables were taken down, a large stage backdrop was dismantled, floors were swept, boxes and seemingly abandoned trucks were removed from the hall tunnel. All by TCA members. The hotel felt so guilty about the mess they had put us in that they brought down very large trays



Accessories



More nice prewar.



Any one for a President's Special?



Maybe you like foreign trains?



Giving out the door prizes.



Kathy Ladd and the tour guides await their charges.

of sandwiches and sodas for lunch. If you are an older member of the Atlantic Division, you may recall that a similar mess occurred at one of our meets at the Ivystone Inn in New Jersey. As at the Ivystone, many volunteers stepped forward to help the crew get the hall ready. Incidents like this can surely bring out the good will and camaraderie in TCA members.

Lots of other problems kept popping up. For instance, the public address system had a mind of its own in respect to when it would work. Some of the microphones seemed to eat batteries. On Friday the rains came with a vengeance. The ceiling in the exhibition hall leaked, the road leading to the loading tunnel was washed out and the hotel crew was standing by with sand bags to prevent the hall from being flooded. While the Valley Forge area was being deluged by the sudden downpour of this vicious storm, the wives were on a boat trip on the Delaware River. Kathy Ladd, who had worked diligently and efficiently to plan all of the trips, had no control over the weather. Fortunately she had rubbed her mezuzah or said her Hail Marys or something like that as the storm never hit the area where the boat

trip was occurring and none of the wives even knew a storm had hit the convention. The ferocity of this storm was such that it might have been dangerous as well as an inconvenience.

The next day Kathy was leading the group to Longwood Gardens. Some of the folks decided that they would rather drive than take the bus so Kathy had to keep track of the caravan following the busses as well as the people who did take the bus. Three cheers for Kathy as she lost no trip takers on any of the "excursions and diversions" as she so aptly named these trips.

Perhaps the biggest problem of the entire convention came from the headquarter hotel itself. They were totally unprepared for two things: the ladies of the Eastern Star and the TCA members. As we mentioned above, the ladies finished their activities late on Wednesday night and many of them simply chose not to check out by 11 AM Thursday as expected. Instead, many of them requested late check out. The front desk was so besieged that they granted virtually all of these requests. This meant that the maids could not get into the rooms to do their jobs. By 1:00 PM many of the TCA members



Williams 'O' gauge trains.



Bachman #1 gauge display.



Kalamazoo #1 gauge.



Lionel display.



REA #1 gauge display.



Another shot of the REA display.

started lining up in the lobby in order to register. "The rooms are not ready but soon will be." the front desk people kept saying. This went on and on and on until it looked like a riot was about to happen or some desk clerk was going to get a train on his head. Nick Ladd and Bob Robinson appeared on the scene and managed to calm the people down. Many of them had been waiting in the hotel lobby for 3 hrs. Bob and Nick talked the hotel into opening a complimentary snack and drink bar right in the lobby. This seemed to sooth the wild beasts, and after a little while, the people who already had their rooms trundeled down to the lobby and the first party was underway.

The banquet was a highlight to the convention. George Kane and his crew worked long and hard to pull it together as well as the Mummers Party and the Lilly Langtry dinner on the previous nights. (Dick Heineman had arranged for us to have the Mummers do a show along with some lady singers called the Sweet Adelines. As in 1976, people seemed to really like this entertainment.) Almost everyone agrees that this is one area where the hotel did a good job.

The display area, which was handled by Bill Wilson, had several club and personal layouts in operation along with a fine representation of the current toy train manufacturers showing their lines. Except for the prominent exception of Lionel, these manufacturers also had provided catalogs for convention attendees. The display area sometimes looked a little empty as the public did not attend in nearly the numbers expected. In addition, Right of Way Industries contacted Bill several weeks before the convention and withdrew the sixty (80??) foot layout that they had been expected to bring. However, this just made viewing of the displays and discussions with the manufacturers much easier for us.

The last scheduled event for the convention was a fan trip which took place on Sunday morning. Dave Kreines was in charge of this aspect of the convention and did a fine job. He had originally made arrangements with the Blue Mountain Co. to book a steam excursion behind a Reading T-1, but the committee felt it was just a little too expensive. So, Dave contacted SEPTA and arranged the interurban and trolley trip. We have now been told



Atlantic Division modular layout in operation.



Huey came with 402s and huge 516 and 514R consists.



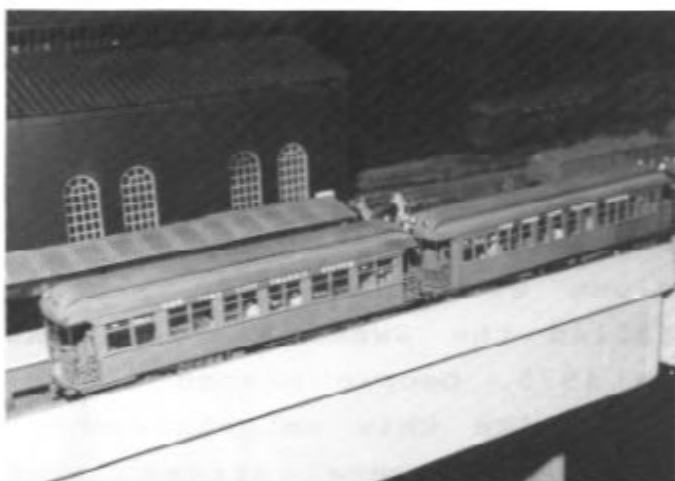
Bob Wither's postwar Lionel layout.



George Kane's beautiful and scarce 1929 Lionel layout.



The North Penn Traction club set up a gorgeous layout.



Another view of North Penn Traction's layout.

that our excursion is the last that SEPTA will allow due to the insurance costs.

One of the myths that seemed to float around the convention was that the TCA workers got in for free. This is absolutely untrue. The National TCA guidelines are clear; everyone pays! Whether an individual worked zero, 20 min. or hundreds of hours, he/she had to pay the \$29 fee along with any other fees. One of the drawbacks to having this convention was the non-availability of a one day registration fee. Somehow this seems terribly unfair to the locals: those within commuting distance. Several division members mentioned this to "ye editor" before the convention and the subject was brought up at one of the meetings of the Committee chairmen. It seems that there is a National rule against having a one day registration fee and we couldn't do anything about it.

One of the largest jobs in a convention of this size is the registration. Garry Spear agreed to take on this task. He wrote a computer program for our needs and then taught his wife Ellen how to run it. According to Garry's daughter, Ellen did all of the work from

there on. Regardless of whether this is true or not, Garry and Ellen did a super job along with the scores of volunteers who took their turns manning the registration desk at the convention. Probably no job requires more man hours than this task. From the stories we have heard from the convention floor, there were very few, if any, screwups.

One detail that many times is overlooked is the advance publicity for a convention as well as the give away type souvenirs. Nick Ladd took care of these aspects quite well. Nick's avocation in this area allowed him to whip up straw hats, pens, buttons, tee shirts, luggage tags, and the banner which was sent all over the country to TCA meets.

All in all, we feel that the convention was quite successful. It is a shame if you had to miss it.

P.S. Lehman attended a 3 day convention at the V.F. Convention Center in October. The last announcement from the promoters of the event was "We appologize for the terrible conditions in the Sheraton Hotel. We will make sure a mess like we just endured will never happen again." Some things never change.



The Sweet Adelines arrive.



The girls harmonize.



Pinsky, Ritter, and Robinson introduce the mummers.



The mummers enter.



The leader demonstrates the mummers strut.



The musicians played while the captain really strutted.



The mummers play some more.



Pinsky and Huey Jenkins try the mummers strut.



Knowles and Stoughton handling the auction records.



Pinsky receiving accolades for a great convention.



Handing over the reins of national TCA politics.



The raffle is drawn.



Robinson starts the banquet activities.



A comedian tried.



Mrs. Stoughton proudly wins a Campbell car table prize.



Lou Redman with his special "thank you" presentation from the A.D.



Action at the banquet auction.



More action at the auction.

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania



Governor's Office

PROCLAMATION

TINPLATE TRAIN COLLECTORS WEEK June 19 - 25, 1989

WHEREAS, The Train Collectors Association, Inc., is the largest club of its type in the world with more than 24,000 members throughout all fifty states, the District of Columbia and 20 foreign countries; and

WHEREAS, The Association promotes fellowship among individuals interested in collecting, preserving and operating tinplate trains and related items; and

WHEREAS, The Association was founded in Yardley, Pennsylvania, in 1954, and maintains its national headquarters in Strasburg, Pennsylvania; and

WHEREAS, During the week of June 19 - 25, the Association will hold its 35th national convention in Valley Forge in celebration of the 35th anniversary of the founding of the Train Collectors Association.

Therefore, I, Robert P. Casey, Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, do hereby proclaim June 19 - 25, 1989, as TINPLATE TRAIN COLLECTORS WEEK in Pennsylvania.



GIVEN under my hand and the Seal of the Governor, at the City of Harrisburg, this first day of June in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and eighty-nine, and of the Commonwealth the two hundred and thirteenth.

Robert P. Casey
Robert P. Casey
Governor

Through the efforts of fellow TCA member and State Senator Ed Holl, the governor provided a special proclamation.

There's Something New In The Stores

By Nicholas B. Ladd

If you frequent toy shops as I do, You have probably noticed that quality toys are coming back to the shelves - at least the kind of toys that I consider quality. Thanks to the Ertl Co. we have a variety of die cast toys to play with. Most interesting is the line of die cast British locomotives from the television show "Thomas the Tank Engine and Friends". Narrated by Ringo Starr himself, the show appears on public television stations in this country. The stories revolve around a British railway yard and the locomotives that reside and work there. There are five little locomotives, a bus, and a tram in the series. All are well done and beautifully painted. In addition there are two O gauge size locomotives in the assortment. These, like their smaller counterparts, are die cast and painted in bright colors.

Ertl has also made available a boxed set of three locomotives which has a scenic background and should never be opened! All of these locomotives are available at the TCA Museum, dime stores, and toy stores around town. I recommend them highly.

Tootsietoys has just issued a line of die cast cars in a size not seen since the 1950s. You can choose sports cars, cars of the 50's, corvettes, hot rods, and assorted convertibles. All are nicely finished and sold in sets of three under the "Hard Body" label. Some of the cars are sold separately, but most are seen in sets. These will look great on your layout and Tootsie collectors will appreciate the quality, finish, and design of the new line.

"Micro Machines" are the hottest cars and planes in the toy shops. It would seem that smaller is better all of a sudden. Now come the smallest free wheeling trains

ever! Each set of "Micro Machine" trains comes with 42 inches of track, and there are eight different sets. The passenger sets are much more attractive than the freight sets and they are very well painted and proportioned. Choose from TGV, Bullet and USA prototypes. About the size of 'Z' gauge trains, these little dickens are a real conversation piece when displayed in front of a 400E or something just as large.

The last find is an expensive one. Don't fail to consider buying some of the Paya trains and toys now available in selected stores. Paya (Spain) was not bombed out of existence in WW II and still has all of their pre-war dies. Recently they have reissued, in very limited quantities, some of their best trains and toys. The lithography is beautiful and the castings are warranted to be free of impurities which affected the pre-war product. Fragile looking and delicate, the Paya items are a joy to see and own.

The line is handled by Reeves International in the east. I mentioned it briefly in my earlier toy fair report. I bring it up again because, while expensive now, the items are bound to quickly increase in value once the current production is sold out. There will be no more after this.

Wait! One more item. Ertl has just released a great die cast Batmobile. Just the thing for the Gotham City on your platform. What railway crossing wouldn't look great with this baby waiting for the train to pass?

Editor's Comment- Shortly after entering this article into the computer, I happened to go to a local mall and stopped into a Kay-Bee toy store. There I saw some of the things Nick is writing about. Although I was not impressed with the "micro machines", the Tootsie Toy Hardbodies are something else again! The cars are a bit oversize

for an O gauge layout, but I would have no qualms regarding their use on a toy type layout. They are certainly less out of scale than many of Lionel's accessories, and their price was right! The individual cars were about \$3 and the three packs were about \$8.50 including tax!

UNCATALOGUED SETS - Part VII

By CWW

Also in the stores this Christmas will be found several un-catalogued Lionel Sets. The one shown here is being sold by K-Mart.

Fig. #1 shows the set box with the rolling stock visible through the windows. It is quite colorful and really grabs the shopper's attention. Fig. #2 (See P. 24) shows the locomotive and tender. They are bottom of the line items: all plastic, DC can motor and no "extra" operating features. It does have an operating coupler on the tender and a light in the loco, and the chrome plated bell and "whitewalls" on the drivers do add a certain pizzaz.

The cars are shown in fig. #3. The caboose is orange with black

trim and graphics and has two operating couplers, as do the other two cars in the set. The tank car is entirely molded and has no added trim. The color is yellow with black graphics and ends. The really different car is the special flat (?) car. As you can see in the photo, it is a barrel car that has been labelled to carry a set of four "micro racer" cars. The cars that came with the pictured set are red, blue, silver, and yellow. The flatcar is red with white graphics, while the sign on the top is white with black lettering. The end of the car carries a black cannister labelled in white "MICRO RACERS OIL" and also has a pair of winners flags printed thereon.

Also packed in the box is a circle of 027 track plus two straights, a small DC power pack, a plastic manual uncoupler, four telephone poles, 1989 Toy Fair Edition catalog, instruction sheet labelled "micro racer set", an invitation to join the Lionel Railroaders Club, a warranty card, and a list of 1989-1990 authorized service stations.



Fig. #1 - The Set Box.

SOME OF THE UNUSED CONVENTION LOGOS



1989 TRAIN COLLECTORS ASS'N
35TH NATIONAL CONVENTION



Fig. #2 - The locomotive and tender.



Fig. #3 - The cars from the set along with the micro racers.