

The Lion Roars

Volume 28, No. 6 June, 1999



Published by the LIONEL® COLLECTORS CLUB OF AMERICA

Bimonthly February, April, June, August, October, December

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Magic,
He's
Cutting
a Record
at 100**



LCCA 1999 Stocking Stuffer

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Photo by Mike Dupslaff

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LCCA Convention RegistrationGIFC
 1999 Stocking StufferIFC
 President's Report2
 The Adventures of Rail Road Mike3
 The Mane Line8
 Looking' Down the Track9
 Tinplate Cannonball10
 At Trackside12
 The Fourth Layout Is for Me14
 Standard Gauge.....19
 Bill's Special 100th Anniversary23
 Lionel News and Views26
 Upcoming LCCA Events.....31
 A Kid-proof yet Kid-friendly Train Layout32
 Lionel's Animated Gondolas34
 Toy Trunk Railroad36
 LCCA Convention Supplement37-48
 Mainline to ChesterfieldIBC
 Radison Plaza Registraion FormGIBC

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August 10 - 15 • Ft. Worth, Texas
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THE COVER: William Schmeelk performs an impressive trick — 100 consecutive articles published in *TLR*!

Contacting the LCCA Business Office:

The **only** way to contact the Business Office is in writing to address **below**. They will take care of: applications for membership, replace membership cards, reinstatements, **change of address, phone number changes**, death notice, commemorative orders, convention registration and club mementos.

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The Lion Roars (USPS 0011-994) and (ISSN No. 1079-0993) is published bi-monthly by the Lionel® Collectors Club of America, 1622 Fourth St., Peru, IL 61354-3527. Subscription rate of \$15.00 per year is paid through membership dues. Periodical postage paid at Peru, IL 61354-9998 and additional mailing offices. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to *The Lion Roars*, 1622 Fourth St. Peru, IL 61354-3527. The LCCA is an Illinois not-for-profit corporation. Lionel® is a registered trademark and is used with the permission of Lionel L.L.C. Copies of Lionel® copyrighted materials have been used in this publication with the permission of Lionel L.L.C. The LCCA is not affiliated with Lionel® or Lionel L.L.C. Opinions and comments made in by-lined columns in this publication do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the Officers, Board of Directors and Appointed Officials nor do they indicate a Club endorsement of any products mentioned.

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- President* - Always available and as a last resort.
Vice President - Schedule a meet.
Immediate Past President - Complaint against another member.
Secretary - Any administrative action not handled by LCCA Business Office and Certificates of Membership and Appreciation.
Treasurer - Club finances only.
Librarian - Back issues of *The Lion Roars*.

The President's Report

by Harry H. Overtoom

RM 1185

Forth Worth Convention

For those of you who have delayed sending in your registration, please get with it. We want you to see and enjoy Fort Worth. Glen and Karen Kroh along with their Co-Hosts, Mike and Rene Walters, Bill and Joselin Wuester and Murray Hill, Jr., have been working overtime to make this a great, (even by Texas standards!) convention. It's going to be fun, interesting and educational, so get your reservations into the Business Office. Also, make sure you are in the center of activity by staying at the Radisson Plaza Fort Worth which is our Convention hotel. The Convention hotel is where the action takes place. Don't miss out on any part of the fun. See you there!



had been involved in all phases of Club activities. He served the Club as President for 3-1/2 years, Director for 8 years, Assistant Secretary for 2 years, Secretary for 2 years, 1983 Convention Chairman, Constitution Committee member for 9 years, chairing that committee

4 years, and Registered Agent for 19 years. When he passed away he was a Director and an active confidant of your Board, the officers and your President. He, to say the least, will be missed. Happy Trains, Chuck!

Trains Online via e-Bay

At the York meeting of the four national train club Presidents, the main discussion was centered on e-Bay, the online auction website, and the problems it has generated. Briefly, the problems center around those e-Bay sellers who claim a club affiliation — thereby guaranteeing grading standards — and then forfeiting on their commitment because they actually are not members or sell to buyers who are not members. If caught, they are not allowed to trade on e-Bay. However, they can easily change their name, use a relative's name or otherwise avoid the punishment and continue their crooked ways. If any of you have had any bad (or good) experience in dealing with online trading, I'd be interested in hearing from you.

Time to Vote

It's that time of the year where you the members decide who will lead your Club for the next year. Please read the ballot and vote for the people of your choice. We have more than the normal number of members running for Director. Vote your choice; this is your Club. This is the one time everyone can take an active part in determining the Club's future.

In Memory

On April 6, 1999, Chuck Seddon, CM46, one of the pillars of our Club, died after a prolonged bout with emphysema. He was a Charter Member of the LCCA and



LCCA President Harry Overtoom (at left) visited with Lenny Dean near the MTH display in the Yellow Hall at the April '99 TCA Train Show in York, Pennsylvania.

The Adventures of Railroad Mike

The Little Salesman

by Mario Evangelista

RM 19687

On a bright and clear summer morning, Bud walked up to his store, stopped at the front door, and gazed at the “Closed” sign. This would probably be the last time he’d perform this 41-year-old morning ritual. He raised the key to the lock.

His mind time-shifted back to September 25th in 1958, and he remembered as if it was yesterday — the day he first opened the door of the Trolley Stop Toy Shop. He was 27 and his wife, Jeannette, was pregnant with their first child. He quit a secure job at the Philadelphia Navy Yard so he could realize his dream — to own and operate a toy train store. He thought, “God, how did I ever get the courage to go into this business?” After a moment of reflection, a smile formed on his face to accompany an array of images from bygone days dancing in his head — the good and bad, the ups and downs. His mental mini-movie created a soft warm mist in his heart that drifted upward, formed a knot in his throat, and escaped his eyelid as a lone tear. “Steady boy,” he whispered as self-encouragement. He turned the key in the lock, put his handkerchief to an eye, and repeated for probably the 100th time the phrase, “What has to be, has to be. But I do love this place.”

When he pushed the door and entered the shop, he was awakened from reflection by the scream of a Lionel Lines coal tender whistle on the top display shelf behind the service counter about 75 feet across the room. The 2046W tender sat behind a 646 Hudson as part of an active display. He watched as the engine side rods worked in a futile effort to escape the grasp of roller bearings that countered the kinetic energy generated by the motor. Behind the engine sat four Lionel Lines Luxury Liners. These aluminum Pullman cars also remained motionless, but their interior lights illuminated a painted backdrop rolling in a counter direction. This imparted an illusion of forward motion to the display.

He reflected on the light-hearted ribbing he took from friends and customers over this elaborate door buzzer he had built. “That’s a keeper,” he thought. “Perhaps a bit much, but effective.” Bud wondered how Jeannette would respond to their new doorbell when re-installed at home.

It was a beautiful little train store with oak shelves, glass front display counters, and a pine plank floor made

from lumber that he cut and installed with his own hands. About thirty-six inches from the twelve-foot-high ceiling was a 28-inch-wide LGB operating display shelf that traveled the perimeter of the store. When it reached the front wall, the train exited the store through a portal with an automatic roll-up garage door. This door would open and then automatically close to permit the train to pass yet ensure that curious birds could not enter. The train would make a right turn and run along the top of the Colonial-style display window. At the center of the storefront, it passed under a four-by-twelve-foot neon sign with a three-dimensional, 72-inch long Philadelphia Transportation Company (PTC) PCC trolley car on top. The sign dramatically announced to everyone within a half-mile zone that this was the “Trolley Stop Toy Shop.” The train would automatically stop there, blow its whistle, and then continue down the track and return inside the store through an identical portal at the other end of the front wall. Back inside the store, the train zig-zagged around LGB accessories placed on the shelf.

Bud’s years of work at the store created a warm and friendly ambiance. He was rightfully quite proud of this special place. Every scratch in a display case and each modification to the floor plan bore memories of people and events from long ago yet now instantly remembered. He was momentarily resentful of the antique dealer who took one look at the place and made an offer that he could not refuse considering the current state of the toy train business. Then the feeling passed.

The 2046W “doorbell” announced the arrival of his repairman, Tim. “Hi Bud, ready for the big day?” he said in his usual warm greeting. He placed a box of sandwiches and soft drinks on the edge of the 8x20-foot display layout in the center of the store. Tim had worked with Bud since he was 14 years old. Although he now worked for a local aircraft manufacturer, he took a few personal days off to help his old friend and mentor close down the store.

“Mixed emotions, Tim. Mixed emotions,” was Bud’s pensive reply

“I can understand that.” Tim answered.

“I wish there was another way out of this, but Jeannette and I can’t live on memories. I’m 62, and most of my pension is tied up in inventory. If the manufacturers start dumping their excess product into the big dealers hands at a fraction of what I have to pay for it while requiring me to maintain high inventory levels, there’s no way I can compete.” Tim nodded with complete understanding. “In fact,” Bud said, “I don’t think I can survive to the next Christmas season if that happens again.” Bud walked to the back room for the folding tables and coffee urn.

“I know the business is tough,” Tim acknowledged as he followed him, “but you love the toy train hobby! Could you be happy doing anything else?”

“If they don’t get me with their sweetheart deals to the distributors, then the Weekend Warriors will kill me,” he continued — even though he knew he was preaching to the choir. “They can buy at the same price that I do, but they don’t have a store with an operating layout to maintain nor state and local taxes to pay.” When they passed the service bench with tens of thousands of dollars worth of assorted parts above it, Bud threw his arms in the air, released an exasperated breath, glanced upwards and lamented, “Not to mention the ungodly cost of maintaining my full service status!”

Tim shook his head and then repeated what everyone except the manufacturers has been saying for the past five years. “How could all these companies hope to stay in business for the long term if they don’t get kids into the toy train hobby today? They spend so much on duplicated effort and new product for a fixed market. You’d think they would hit the TV channels with ads at Christmas time to get kids’ heads out of those video games!”

“They should do it for altruistic reasons,” quipped Bud.

Tim chuckled and then started to relate a story that happened to him the previous Saturday. “A kid about ten years old came in and asked me if we had any Yomega yo-yos. I told him no, but we have some Duncans. They’ve been in the yo-yo business since Bud was a kid.”

Bud looked away and with a tight smile sarcastically extended his thanks.

Tim continued, without showing joy in his light-hearted “dig.” That boy looked at me like I was from another planet and said he wanted a Yomega! So I asked him what was so special about it. That ten-year-old spoke to me as if I was an idiot and said in a condescending tone, “Because it’s on TV, man!”

Bud added, “I guess that says it all.”

The two friends quietly carried out the folding table and set it up at one end of the display layout. They then placed the coffee urn and food on it. Bud plugged in the urn and said, “If you feed them, they will buy.”

Turning to smile at his friend he continued, “Look Tim, you’ve been with me since you were a kid. In fact the money you made on this job helped you get your engineering degree. The business was good for the both of us, but the market has changed. The hobby is in better shape now than ever before. Unfortunately, there is far too much competition

today. Look at the products being offered. Who is going to buy all this stuff?”

Both men looked around the store at the shelves packed with items from six different manufacturers in O gauge alone. “I think most customers are confused,” added Tim.

Bud nodded his head in agreement then continued, “Why would anyone buy from the Trolley Stop at five below list when they can wait until it all gets dumped at half-price at a train show eight months from now? I can still sell trains at the shows but I’d better not take any of the new stuff, at least not until the big dealers clean out their warehouse at half the price I have to pay for it. So if I can’t beat them, I’ll join them! I’ll unload the store and large inventory and will become a weekend warrior. I guess you can say that the hobby and I are both doing fine, it’s the retail business that smells.”

Tim was digesting what Bud said when the Hudson announced the arrival of some customers. Looking to see who it was, Bud turned to Tim and whispered, “Oh yeh, it’s the new train club, RRACK; here with their parents. Sell them what they want at cost.”

Tim looked at Bud and slowly shook his head and said, “Why am I not surprised?”

Bud shrugged his shoulders and spoke with wisdom based on experience. “In a few years — after they get out of college — these kids will be the future collectors, our future spenders at train shows. Besides, what the fathers spend will more than make up the difference.”

The kids all ran to the area of the store that held the most interest for them. Mike, Arthur, Charley and Tommy went directly to the accessories and Rita, Sally and Lauren ran over to the art supplies.

“How much is the new Back Shop?” asked Tommy.

Tim shot a quick glance at Bud and by the pensive look in his eyes he knew to suggest that they would probably be more interested in the Culvert Loader or the Cattle Loader. “Come over here boys and I’ll show you how they work,” called Bud from the display layout. Mike and Arthur’s fathers stayed with Tim and were looking at the items on the shelf. “What can I show you today?” asked Tim.

Arthur’s dad knew what he wanted, “How much are you asking for the Lionel War Horse J?”

“Is that for the kids club or for your collection?” responded Tim with a chuckle.

Art said that he should get the same deal because his wife keeps telling him that he is nothing but a big kid.

Tim took the piece down from the shelf so the two men could admire it. He then asked as diplomatically as possible if Art would be more interested in the Pennsylvania Alco PB1 as the latest addition to his Lionel collection. Art gave a knowing shrug and said, "This unit is for the display shelf, not to run. I have a complete Lionel "J" collection, and I just can't bring myself to break it up, no matter what!"

Tim shook his head as if to show his understanding of Art's logic and presented the engine for the two men to inspect. Looking at the price tag, Mike's dad said, "Hey, this is the Internet price."

"You are going to get Internet service on it too," Tim said. "After the auction today we'll close the doors and take the rest of the inventory to train shows. If your trains need service, you'll have to mail it in to us." He handed each man a flyer with a P.O. box address on it. "Or you can call Lionel and they'll mail you a letter with a work order label so you can ship it to their repair center in Michigan. They are very dependable but understandably much slower."

"Do you have the hopper cars to go with it?" asked Arthur's dad.

"Sure do. And the caboose also," responded Tim as he wrote up the receipt.

"Well, I guess we could take our repair work to Louie's or Chris Gordon's," added Mike's dad.

"You could do that," Tim acknowledged, "but Lou always worked with Bud on their repair orders since he started in this business. That way each shop would cover the other when work got backed up. Lou is going to have to find some qualified help, and that's a problem. There are many repairmen in this hobby, but only a few that really know what they are doing and can work fast. As for Chris, he has Howard, but his shop can only do so much. As old as that establishment is, they will have the same problem finding trained help. In short, every time the hobby loses a full service dealer, everyone suffers."

"What about Bud, can't he help them when they get busy?" The three men looked around and saw that Mike was standing there listening to their conversation. He had a concerned look on his face because he could always count on Bud for special help whenever the club came into his store.

Tim smiled and with a shrug of his shoulders he added that without the expense of the store he doubted if Bud would be concerned about putting in the long hours required to do repair work. "But, you can always see him at the area shows," he continued with a reassuring smile. "Besides from

what I hear Lou has been taking care of you guys!"

"I know," said Mike as he looked down at his shoes and recalled all the hours Bud spent teaching them how to service their trains and operate the accessories. The three men stood quietly for a moment lost in the realization of what Bud's work had come to mean to so many.

Mike gave a polite but disappointed smile, turned, and walked over to his friends. Arthur's dad brought them back by announcing that Tim could pack up the "J" along with the rest of the War Horse set.

Across the room Bud was approached by a customer he had not seen for a few years.

"Hi Bud", he said holding a Lionel C&O Streamlined Hudson. The yellow and silver beauty was wrapped in a towel. He handed Bud the engine and asked him to look at it. With one sniff he knew what the problem was, but asked "What happened?" anyway.

"I kept it stored for two years and never ran it until yesterday. It wouldn't work."

Bud looked at the man and asked if he bought it at this store.

"No," came his apologetic response. "I bought it on the Internet. The site has closed down and the phone disconnected. All I have to deal with is a P.O. box, but the Post Office said it is no longer listed in the seller's name."

Bud slowly shook his head and told the man that he was closing his store. The man looked a little shocked but continued, "Please Bud, I tried Lionel. They'll send me a work order number, but the whole process could take a couple of months. I'll need it in two weeks when my grandkids come to visit."

Bud agreed to do the best that he could and walked to the counter to write up a repair order. Then he said, "If this is really important to the grandkids maybe you should take a look at the new Lionel C&O Hudson." Bud removed the 305 from the shelf and explained that it had been fully upgraded to Command Control with sound. The customer looked a little skeptical, but then Bud said, "At this price it's always good to have a back-up because I can't guarantee that I'll have the parts for your Streamliner until I open it up."

The man agreed to Bud's suggestion and started to reflect on his Internet purchase. "I thought I was saving some money on the Internet."

"The Internet is OK if you know the company you're dealing with." Seeing that the man was a little confused,

Bud explained, "Like how long they've been in business. Will they stand behind the product and test it product before shipping it to you. The same thing holds true when dealing with a mail order house."

The customer looked at Bud for a moment and then said, "I don't know why I didn't come to you in the first place."

"Neither do I," replied Bud with a sigh as he took the man's credit card. "Neither do I!"

Bud suggested that he take his new Hudson over to the display layout and give it a spin before he takes it home. With a slight tilt of his head the man voluntarily admitted that you couldn't do that on the Internet. "Or by mail order," replied Bud.

The store was filled with customers when Steve Stanley walked in. "Steve, I'm glad you could make it," greeted Bud. "Those letters you sent out to our good customers seemed to work."

"What did I tell you," replied Steve in a knowing tone. "Where do you want me?"

"How about over by the display layout so you can explain Command Control."

Bud didn't have to ask Steve twice. He went immediately to his station and the RRACK club members closed in around him. Steve was a favorite of the group because he had been very generous with his help and presented donations to their train display at the South Philadelphia Community Center.

"Why doesn't somebody buy Bud's store?" Mike asked. Steve looked down into the face of Mike who was obviously speaking for the group.

"Someone is buying the store," he answered matter of factly.

"Yeh, but they won't be selling trains here," came Mike's reply.

Steve looked at the kids and didn't know what to tell them because he had the same feelings about the place.

"Look, all things pass," replied Steve with a quick shrug of his shoulders. "It's been that way from the beginning of time, and it will be that way until the big clock stops ticking."

The kids looked at each other and then they all said at the same time, "Yeh, but they won't sell trains."

Steve rolled his eyes and tried to explain it better. "This place means a lot to me too!" After college, when I first moved here and met Tim at work, this place was my club house. I met quite a few friends here, and I don't want to

see it go away. But what can I do?"

"Why don't you buy the place?" asked Mike.

Steve looked down at him and smiled without knowing where it might lead to. "I would work at night here, but how could I buy the place? I have a job and there is no way I could run a business like this without being here all day."

Just then Chris Gordon walked in from North South Trains. Mike left the rest of the kids with Steve and walked over to say hi.

"Hello Mr. Gordon," greeted Mike, "are you here to get a good buy on a train set?" Chris looked down at Mike and thought about his warehouse that was stocked with just about everything ever made. He gave Mike a big smile and a pat on the head.

"I was thinking more along the line of the auction; that is, if you left anything for me." The store was now full with about fifty people milling around eating and talking about trains. But most of the conversations centered on the history of the Trolley Stop.

One man was telling his friend how Bud helped him get his turntable working like a clock by installing an indexer. Another was recounting how Bud came out to his home and installed new track using super elevation and now his big articulated engines never throw their front trucks.

Two women were talking about how their friend meet her husband at one of Bud's new product shows, and they now enjoy one of the largest train collections in the area.

Chris walked over to Bud and said hello. The two men made some small talk and then he brought up the subject of the sale of the store.

"I was talking to your new realtor."

"Who's that?" asked Bud.

"Railroad Mike!"

"He asked me to buy the place in order to keep it open and suggested that you do the repair work." Both men laughed and then Bud got a serious look on his face and said, "Hmmm. Out of the mouths of babes. A guy like you could make this place work, Chris."

Chris looked at Bud for a moment as if he was examining the concept for its possibilities. Then he came back to reality. "Bud, I would love to keep this place open, but when I bought North South Trains 25 years ago I got more than just a business. I inherited a tradition. I worked for Nick since I was a kid before buying the place. He was like a dad to me. I have been selling toy trains for almost as long as Lionel, and you are one of the oldest establishments

in the industry. Unlike all the fly-by-nighters out there today, I'm doing this for the love of the hobby. If I was only interested in the money, I'd concentrate on my speed shop. There's a far greater mark-up in auto parts than toy trains. I just don't think I can do any more and still have fun selling on a one-to-one basis. When my customers call my store they can talk to me or one of my counter people, never an answering service."

Bud nodded his head in agreement, and smiled. Then Chris noticed Mike at the other end of the room talking to Harry Ritchie — a banker with a long toy train history and Lou Bronson who owned the Crazy Caboose Train Store.

He gently nudged Bud and gave him a good-natured warning of more Railroad Mike salesmanship to come. Mike left the two men talking and drifted over to the display layout where Steve and Tim were running a train. Lou and Harry walked over to Bud and Chris to say hello. After a few minutes Lou asked Bud if they could discuss an idea he had. Chris smiled and said, "Gee I wonder where that came from." He then excused himself and walked over to one of his long-time friends.

Lou was first to speak. "I was wondering, Bud; could we pool our resources and come up with an arrangement that'd work for both of us?"

"In what way?" replied Bud.

"Have you signed any lease agreements on the store yet?" asked Lou.

"No, I had no idea how long it would take to liquidate my stock."

"Good. Harry's bank has agreed to back me on a discounted purchase of a large block of assorted inventory. But I don't have enough space to store it in my warehouse, and I need to be able to show that I have a retail outlet to dispose of it in a timely manner."

Bud looked at Chris and realized that the kid who started with him after school 30 years ago was now on the threshold of becoming a major player. Bud was definitely interested so he asked Lou to continue.

"This might sound a little strange, but Railroad Mike asked me to buy the Trolley Stop. That gave me an idea."

"I'm not surprised," responded Bud. "Did he ask you to hire me to do the repair work?"

"How did you know that?" asked Lou with a curious look on his face.

Bud pointed to his head and said that he knows everything that goes on in this place. Then he asked Lou to

continue. Lou gave a slightly confused but gratuitous chuckle and got back to business. "If you would sell me the Trolley Stop after you auction off your inventory, I will have plenty of space to store my purchase."

"Also, with this store as an outlet, Lou could certainly meet the retail qualifications for the loan," added Harry.

"There is one caveat to the deal," Lou said. "Because of my debt to income ratio, I need you to carry the mortgage on the store."

Bud liked what he was hearing because he knew Lou to be one of the most energetic and dependable people in the business. He estimated that his auction return should provide more than enough income for his retirement. But he had one serious concern.

"That sounds OK to me, Lou but how do you plan to run both stores? You know how demanding this business can be."

"I know. My workers Dave and Doug can run my other store, and they are already doing most of the shows for me. If you'll agree to handle the service department, I'll find the help for this place somehow."

Just then Steve and Tim walked up and said they heard that Lou was looking for them and had a part-time offer to make. Lou asked the men how they found out about the deal but before they could answer an old worker of his named Pete walked up and asked about the new store manager job. He explained that the big retail store he was assistant manager of in South Philadelphia was going out of business soon, so he could be available whenever needed. Lou looked at Bud and asked, "How is everyone finding out about this before we even knew it was happening?"

Pete pointed to Mike and as if a light bulb went off in their collective minds all six men realized who had pulled them together. With mouths open they watched him standing by the counter explaining to his dad the features of a new Lionel ZW transformer.

Mike's father noticed the men staring and gave them a nervous wave. He wondered what the attraction was. When the six men turned back to each other smiling and shaking hands, his attention was pulled back to the ZW by the little salesman touting its many advantages.

The Mane Line

by Dennis Leon Clad

RM 10430

Lionel Licensee Alert

One of the problems in doing a bi-monthly column is — sometimes the information is too late by the time you read it. Such was the case with the 1998 Sears Test Program Lionel Tractor Trailer by Taylor Made Trucks. As handsome a rig as the 1998 Legendary Lionel 18 wheeler is, even I had no idea it would sell out so quickly. But wait, there's good news at the end of the track. After talking with the Vice President of Taylor Made Trucks, Walter Matuch, the 1999 Legendary Lionel model truck is available directly from the manufacturer. Be sure to tell the super-nice folks at Taylor Made that you read this column in *TLR*. When you do, along with your 18 wheeler they will also give each LCCA caller one year's free membership in their toy truck collector's club. Just a few of the many club benefits include a full color catalog/brochure published eight times a year sent to you first class mail and special, members-only toy truck offers — who knows, one might be a Lionel rig. So call Taylor Made at 1-800-685-0333 and for only \$39.95 plus shipping and tax, one of these beautiful highway haulers with sounds and lights can be yours. In the August issue of *TLR*, I'll have a photograph of both their '98 and '99 models. The only minor difference is the rear trailer door stamp and license plates. Be sure to order a display case to protect your toy — the small extra cost is worth it. Believe me, when you get your hands on this must-have Lionel souvenir, you too will say, "How does Taylor Made Trucks stay in business selling so much quality for such a low price?"

Another new Lionel licensee is the Zippo Lighter Company. At last year's Lionel Ambassadors Conference in Colorado, these classy lighters were passed around for us to look at, but without any packaging. I thought at the time, "Very nice," but how could I possibly display them or even fit them into my memorabilia collection? If I had known then that fellow LCCA member Neil Kresge (RM7253) was spearheading the Zippo Lionel Program, my excitement level would have reached the top of the Rockies. As will yours, the moment you set up the official Lionel Zippo Dealer Display in your train room. The display top shows a lightning-striped New York Central F-3 in all its glory. The engine's interior is lit in gold — as are the headlights and number boards. To the

lower right is the official Lionel logo. One need not be a NYC fan to appreciate the artistic beauty of this display with its burst of power emerging from the darkness. The bottom edge of the display is molded like a curved piece of track and the Lionel lighters snap in like railroad ties. This display is freestanding thanks to a very strong easel back. To date, four different types of Lionel lighters have been produced. The first features the round Lionel LLC logo. Two engines made famous during the Lionel postwar era, the Pennsylvania GG-1 and the Santa Fe F-3, are wonderfully reproduced on these quality lighters. The fourth, and only steam locomotive so far, is the Pennsylvania Steam Turbine made famous by the LTI folks. Each lighter comes in a protective tin with a paper sleeve to match the display. With rumors of phony displays being sold via the Internet, if you're like me and want the real thing, call Neil or his charming wife, Barbara, at 1-540-992-6085 and order a display and two sets of lighters for a special price of \$170.70 — that's 25% off. Plus, Neil will include two free catalogs and free shipping.



Photo by Gordon Wong

Lionel colors, but I have the feeling that this quality series is sadly at its end.

Late this fall, Lionel will be making 1,000 promotional sets for Case Cutlery. Call 1-800-523-6350 to find the Case Dealer nearest you for information on reserving your set. Photos of the prototype of this set did not arrive from Case Cutlery in time for inclusion in this edition. I'll plan to include them, and more on this set and its very special flatcar load, in the August issue.

A final note. I've received my LRRC Gold Level Membership Kit. This is a first class offering from the company club and is worth much more than the cost of membership. With all LRRC memorabilia going up in value, don't miss out on the fun of membership. Call Brenda Schlutow at 1-810-949-4100, ext. 1413.

Happy Tracks!

Collector Alert

If you've been waiting for the prices to drop even further on the Corgi Lionelville series of vehicles, wait no longer. At this past York train meet, prices reached an unbelievable low of \$15, but the selection of models was equally as low. The prices on their fire engines are beginning to rise. I had a nice talk with Gene McKuen of Reese International, the importer of this streets-of-Lionel-would-be-empty-without series. I made my best pitch for a B-61 Model Mack Wrecker in

Lookin' down the Track

by Ron Stem

RM 537

I have a confession to make. I almost never look under a fellow's table for the potential "goodies" which may lurk there. For some inescapable reason during this last Southern Division TCA meet, my eyes wandered to one fellow's stacks beneath his table.

What particularly caught my eye were old magazines — *MR* and *MRC*. Being the curious type, I glanced through his stack of vintage published material. Then, something in particular caught my eye on the front cover of the January 1957 issue of *RMC* — *Toy Trains*, the vintage precursor of *Classic Toy Trains*, but from a different publisher. It was late in the trading day. I did not have the time to continue this detective work, so it had to wait until the second day of the meet.

Just after the lunch hour that Sunday, I wandered back over to this gentleman's table. He allowed me the courtesy to take the time to find what I was really after — the sequence of *RMC* from January, 1957 forward. Yes, he did have all the issues January to June, 1957. At fifty cents per issue, I considered this a REAL bargain!

However, it wasn't until I got home that I had the opportunity not only to read these particular issues, but also seriously to study them for their historical value. In the June issue, Carsten ran an ad for *Toy Trains* back issues — 19 in all. This got me to wondering, exactly how many were there? So, I sat down at the ol' IBM and fired off a letter to those fine folks at the TCA Reference Library. Turns out Carsten, or should I say Penn Publications, Inc., published 35 issues of *Toy Trains* as a separate publication

from November, 1951 (Vol. 1, No. 1) to December, 1954 (Vol. 3, No. 11).

Evidently, Hal Carstens thought enough of the O gauge, mass produced, three rail marketplace to resurrect *Toy Trains* as a regular monthly section of *RMC* beginning in January, 1957. He says as much in his editorial for that month. I still don't know if the toy train section continued after June, 1957. The staff at the TCA Reference Library did not address that particular question. I did follow-up on their suggestion to make an inquiry to Carstens Publications.

While it is not my intent to give you a critique of *Toy Trains*, I do feel that the material contained therein is worthy of note and mention. There was a good mix of material — technical and informative; both supported with photographs and line drawings. Material which, I feel, would still have merit today despite the advance of progress and technology.

One feature that I feel is particularly worthy of mention, is a monthly column entitled, "The O Gager" and authored by a Tim Plate. I am quite certain that this column was created by one of *RMC*'s staff, possibly even Hal Carstens himself. The column's title and author's name evoke an amusing tone with the deliberate misspelling of "gauge" and the name take-off on "tinplate." There is a sense that we don't always have to take our pastime THAT seriously.

All this goes to prove once again that you just never know what treasures may lurk under that fellow's table at the next train meet you attend. In the meantime, I'm goin' to seriously search for those 35 issues of *Toy Trains*.

Keep trackin'



To Register for the Convention, Use the Forms Provided

- **Club Registration Form — see inside front "ghost cover"**
- **Radison Plaza Hotel Registration Form — see inside back "ghost cover"**

The Tinplate Cannonball

by Ken Morgan

RM 12231

Welcome back to my world of early O gauge Lionel trains. Does 48-52 E. 21st Street ring a bell with you? Maybe it does — if you've been around a long time or are into paper!

In the past few installments, I covered the early electric locomotives and their accompanying passenger equipment. This time

I'd like to review the freight rolling stock. As I noted before,

Lionel Lines apparently took after the Long Island Railroad (a line with which I am very familiar), in that it seems to have carried more passengers than freight. Maybe Lionel Land was an early victim of trucks. Has anyone seen too many

Tootsie toy Macks around a train layout? See **Photo 1** if you're not sure how to identify them. By the way, this particular Tootsie toy — but not the earlier Mack Bulldog — is allegedly 1/48 proportion (i.e., O scale). Some of the cars and panel trucks are 1/43 or 1/48 too. So if you're into period trucks, you might try an occasional toy meet in between train meets! But I digress.

Unlike the varnish, which came in four sizes, Lionel offered freight cars in only two sizes. This practice became the norm for freight cars, in both O and Standard gauges. At the outset, Lionel did not offer very many different types of freight cars in either gauge.

Apparently, smaller cars sold better than larger ones because the small freights, all little four-wheeled cars, outnumbered their larger

brethren. There were four of them: 800 boxcar, 801 caboose, 802 stock (or cattle) car, and 901 gondola. Like the passenger cars, there was a rare gray over-painted car; the 900 boxcar (ammunition car) version for the 203 armored loco. Be careful when buying this car. Over-painting is easy to do, and someone may be tempted to "create" one for sale to an unwary collector. The difference in price is at least an order of magnitude (adding a zero, or more!), so there may be an incentive to "fake it." These cars are five-1/2 inches long and have the familiar drop hook couplers, as do the longer freights. All were introduced in 1915, except for the gondola, which was first offered in 1919. They ran through 1926, again except for the gondola, which lasted a year later.

There were only three large freight cars: 820 boxcar, 821 cattle car, and 822 caboose. These cars have eight wheels in two pairs of simple black trucks and are 7 inches long. Like the small cars, all were catalogued in 1915 with the boxcar and caboose running

through 1926. The large cattle car, while it was first catalogued in 1915-16, apparently was not produced until 1925-26 (per both TCA and Greenberg — I wasn't around to take notes). **Photo 2** shows all seven cars, the four short four-wheeled ones on top, the longer eight-wheeled ones on the bottom.

Let's look at all of them in a little more detail. For all except the cattle cars, Lionel used real railroad names, a practice that did not last beyond these cars. This seems



odd, because both of Lionel's major competitors, Ives and American Flyer, did use real railroad names on many of their freight cars. This is especially true of Ives, which produced some very nice looking, highly desirable boxcars in many RR liveries.

The cattle cars in both sizes come only in green and are lettered for the "Union Stock Lines." They have slatted sides and sliding doors. In a kind of reverse prototype move, about 10

years ago, I built a Bev-Bel scale kit (the same as the Atlas O scale equipment from the '70s), lettered it "Union Stock Lines," and painted it dull medium green. But I digress again.

The boxcars in either size are fairly common in orange, and come with several minor variations. The 800 may be lettered either Penn RR 4862 or Wabash 6399. It may have either an orange or a maroon roof. The TCA book also lists an all-green version. **Photo 3** shows the orange Wabash boxcar. Both the TCA and Greenberg say this car should have a maroon roof. I'd like to say I have a rare variation, but since the roof pops off easily, I doubt it! The 820 is similar in that it,

too, is usually found all orange, but it may have a maroon or brown roof. It bears either a rather complex Illinois Central diamond emblem, as shown in **Photo 4**, or Union Pacific, which seems to be harder to find. Both are numbered 65784, and have prototypical weight and capacity data rubber-stamped on the sides.

There is also a scarce green AT&SF version, of which I have only seen a picture. For both proportion and lettering, the 820 is probably the closest to the real thing Lionel would produce until just prior to WWII when scale and semi-scale cars were introduced.

The third car in each series was the caboose. Both sizes came in brown or maroon, always with a black roof. The 801 came without a number and lettered for NYNH&H (New York, New Haven & Hartford, the formal name for the New Haven RR) or Wabash, numbered 4890 (the TCA also lists 4390; Greenberg does not). The 822 came lettered for New York Central Lines only.

The extra car in the four-wheeled series is the 901 gondola, first offered in 1919. It's an interesting change of number. It's clearly out of sequence with the others, unless we assume it was introduced later — after the gray 900 boxcar (in 1917), which obviously needed a distinctive number. It also set a precedent; the later gondola in the next four-wheeled series had an odd number. Like the caboose and boxcar, it bore real railroad lettering: Lake

Shore on maroon, gray, or dark green bodies, or Pennsylvania on gray only. In case you're wondering, there were several "Lake Shore" railroads. One likely candidate for the 901 is the Lake Shore & Western, which was merged into NYC before Lionel produced the car, but the name might have shown on rolling stock. The original LS&W was bought by Commodore Vanderbilt to obtain a good grade alignment between Buffalo, NY, and Chicago for his growing NYC empire.

There were also two transitional cars, the 803 hopper and 804 tank, which appeared in 1923, but really served to introduce the next line of freight cars, so I'll cover them in more detail in a later article. If you want to lengthen your freight consist, an early hopper or tank car would fit in. These cars look like the later ones but do not have the brass ladders, handrails, or small domes and oil company decals of the later ones. They would also have drop hooks instead of latch couplers.

That concludes my review of Lionel's earliest O gauge trains. They were market leaders when introduced and set the stage for much of what Lionel did later. Many of these cars can easily be found if you're not too picky about condition. I highly recommend that you look into them and consider adding a piece or two to your collection. They provide a "where we came from" take-off point for everything that followed.

And finally, about that address on E. 21st Street. That's midtown Manhattan, and it was the Lionel main office address during the period when these trains were produced.

Photos by Ken Morgan

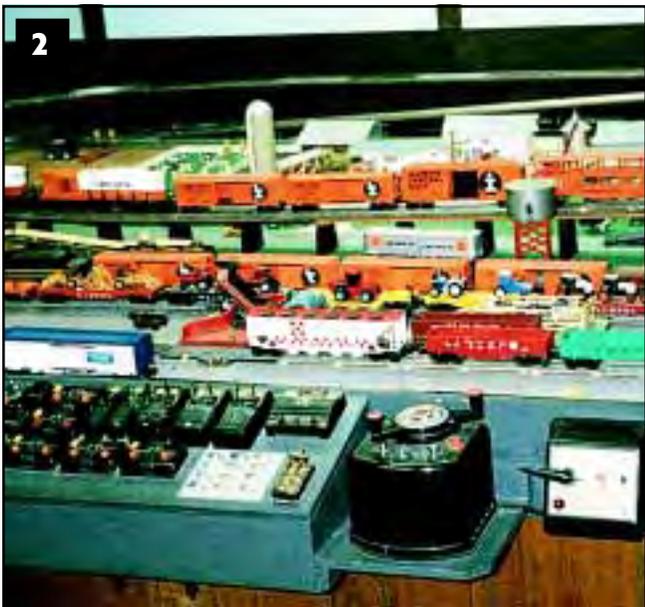


At Trackside

LCCA Members in Action



Grandpa Rollan Schnitker's IC-dominated toy train layout was a field trip for the Kindergarten class of his grandson as the teacher led the class in a study of the Word of the Week: Transportation. He explains the uses of the different cars of a railroad.



Several trains ran on the rural agri-based layout for enjoyment of the youngsters, but many focused their interest on "the candy train" loaded with goodies for the students. One visitor said he would ask for only one Christmas present this year — an electric toy train.

Photos 1 and 2 provided by Rollan Schnitker, RM 17164



One of the "perks" of serving as Editor of *The Lion Roars* is visiting other LCCAers around the country while on vacation — as I did recently in Florida. Arnie Travitsky (RM 12193) and his grandson, Aaron (2-1/2 years old), opened up the "inner sanctum" train room to this visitor and ran trains on the multi-level layout for shared enjoyment. The wall shelves hold his extensive collection; including many variations that show his appreciation for and knowledge of details.

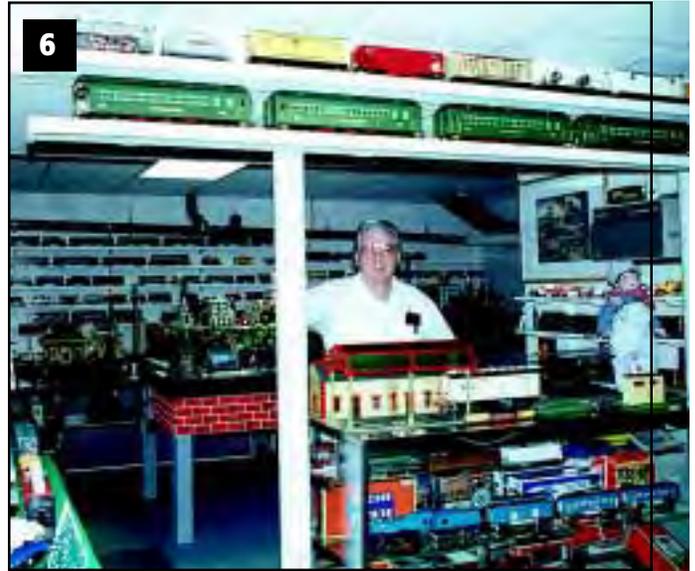


Young Christian Richter, son of *TLR's* Ed Richter, seems entranced by the trains running on the layout at home — also known as "Richter's RR Realm." The sleek Genesis locomotive rounds the curve while Chris also controls other trains in operation on this very 50s-looking classic pike.

Photos 3 and 4 by Mike Mottler, RM 12394



Fifteen years ago, Nick Bishop parted with his train collection as he moved to a new home. Since then he's rebuilt his collection of trains and accessories, moved to his present home, and created this basement layout with O gauge and Standard Gauge trains on display and in operation. He can run seven trains with power from ZW, KW, Z, and Z4000 transformers.



Now Nick is contemplating moving to another house with a 1600 sq. ft. basement that would accommodate his ever-growing train collection. With Lionel, MTH, and American Flyer trains, he uses conventional control for some trains and Lionel's Command Control for others. He affectionately calls his wiring system the "Spaghetti Jungle."



Nick's layout is reminiscent of a classic 50s-style toy train layout with trimmings of Department 56 ceramic buildings, Lionel and MTH buildings and accessories, and art prints by Angela Trotta Thomas on the walls. Accessory buttons are placed at the perimeter of the layout — handy for visiting children (of all ages). The Bishops entertain over 100 visitors during the Christmas holiday season, and one can imagine their response as "Gee Whiz!"

Photos 5, 6, & 7 provided by Nick Bishop, RM 23141

The Fourth Layout Is For Me

by Charles J. Mindel

RM 9722

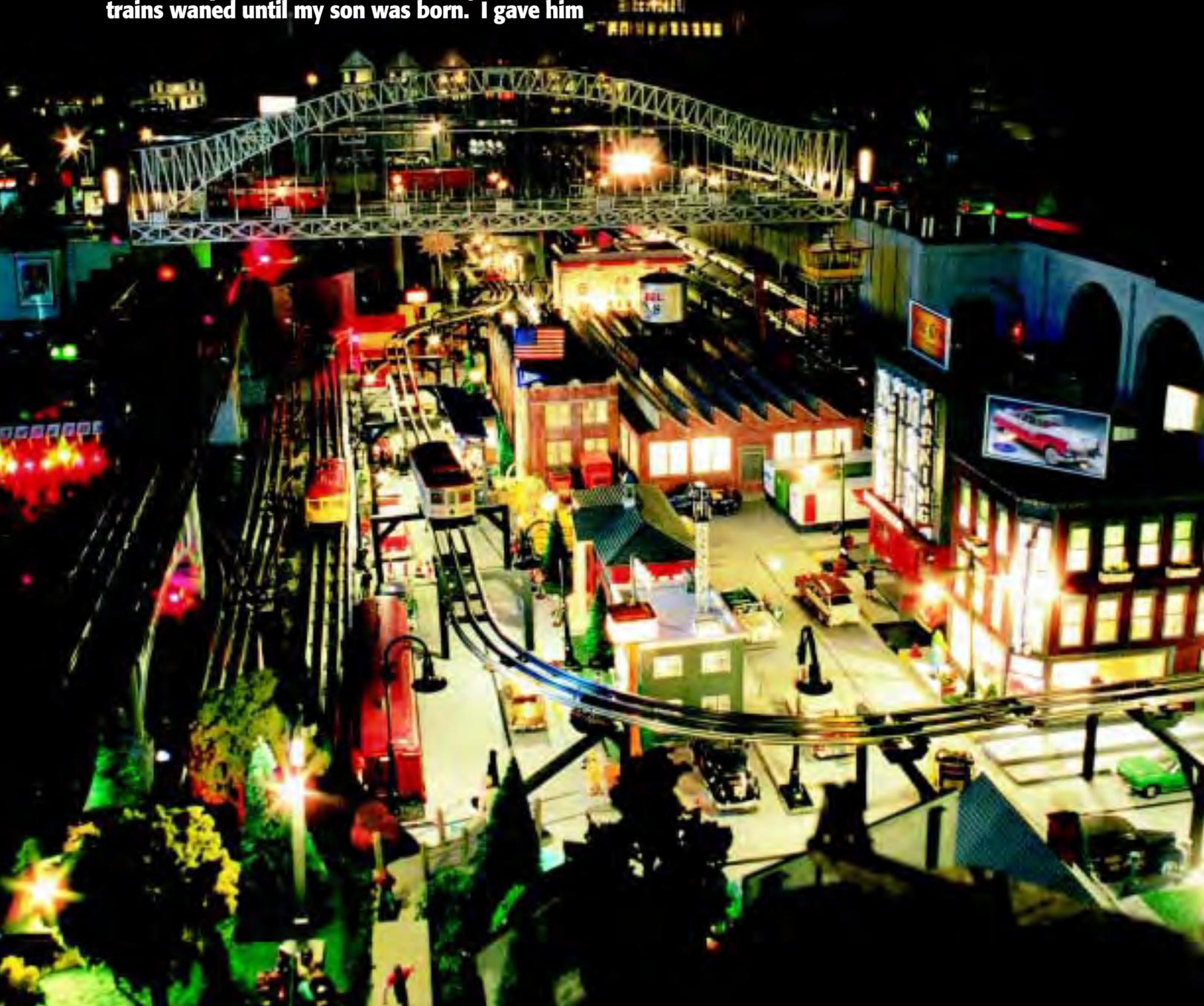
My interest in toy trains was formed when I was seven years old – that was the time my brother and I received a 752E for Christmas. We added to that a Hellgate Bridge, a Power Station, and the Depot with Terrace. Then along came WWII and toy trains were no longer available.

After the war, my family moved to California and these possessions were sold. My interest in trains waned until my son was born. I gave him

trains and accessories for Christmas and his birthdays. When he married and left home, he took his trains with him; so I started over again.

When grandsons arrived, my interest was revived. At this time I acquired three of everything, one for me and two others for each grandson. Both maintain their interest in trains to this day.

The layout shown here is the fourth one I have built, but it is the first one I designed and constructed for me.



I purchased trains before retirement, but didn't start building my layout until I retired in 1986 from work as a long haul truck driver.

My layout has a 072 loop and a 054 loop with a double reversing loop on the upper level. With this setup I can run three trains simultaneously. I can also run three trolleys at the same time as the regular rolling stock. Power comes from two 275-watt Lionel ZWs, a MTH Z4000, plus several constant voltage transformers for power for the lights and accessories.

The large Hellgate Bridge was scratch built from self-prepared plans based on the drawing published in *The Lion Roars* for basic reference. The bridge is constructed with basswood for the main structure. The suspension cables are steel rope. The walkway lights and the lights on the facades are Model Power modified HO scale lamps. The interior lighting is standard 16-volt light bulbs in sockets. The lights on top of the facades and at the top of the bridge are LEDs.

The elevated train stations were designed from scratch and custom built as were other structures — the refinery, trackside buildings, watch tower, auto dealership, street lighting, parking meters, billboards, illuminated



signs, etc. Accessories such as crossing gates, operating watch tower, lumber mill, operating gateman, and block signals are Lionel.

MTH structures on my layout include two residential houses, the Train Store, and the Powerhouse. The Lionel factory was constructed from a kit. The corner auto dealership was scratch-built from self-drawn plans. The interior of this building includes desks, chairs, a brochure rack, and pictures on the wall. There are also assorted Plasticville structures that I received as Christmas presents from my grandchildren, including the farm.

The benchwork is in reality eight tables bolted together with removable sections in each in case of emergency. There are ten remote controlled switches on the layout — two 072 and eight 031 switches.

My collecting started exclusively with Lionel trains. I purchased them in a variety of ways; such as train shows, toy sales, hobby shops, and in some cases just plain luck. An example of the latter was when a co-worker found a box of trains in a home he had purchased. He gave me the box, and I took it home. My wife, Marianne, wouldn't let me bring it into the house because it was infested with spiders and had an unopened cocoon. I sprayed it with bug killer and removed the cocoon. I found an assortment of broken control buttons and rusty track that couldn't be salvaged, but there was a pre-war 238E and tender and five tinplate freight cars with pre-war latch-type couplers.

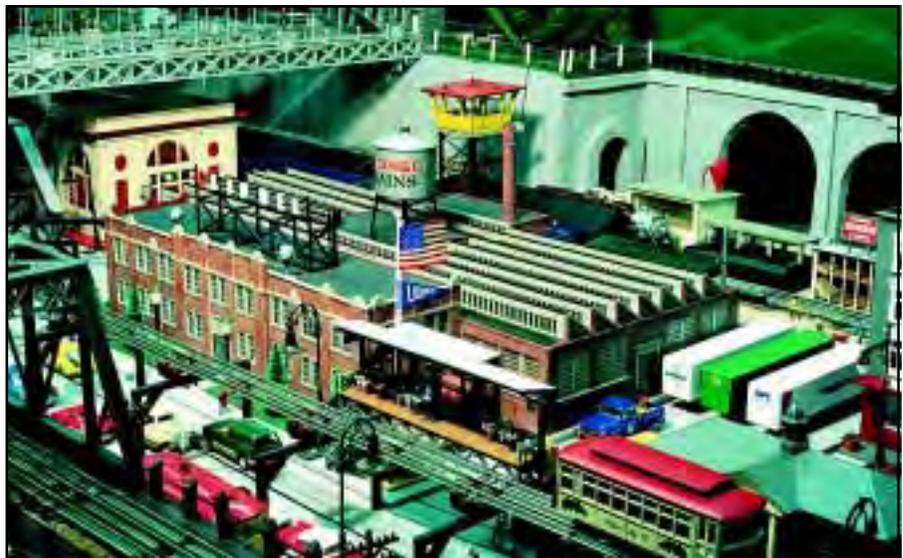


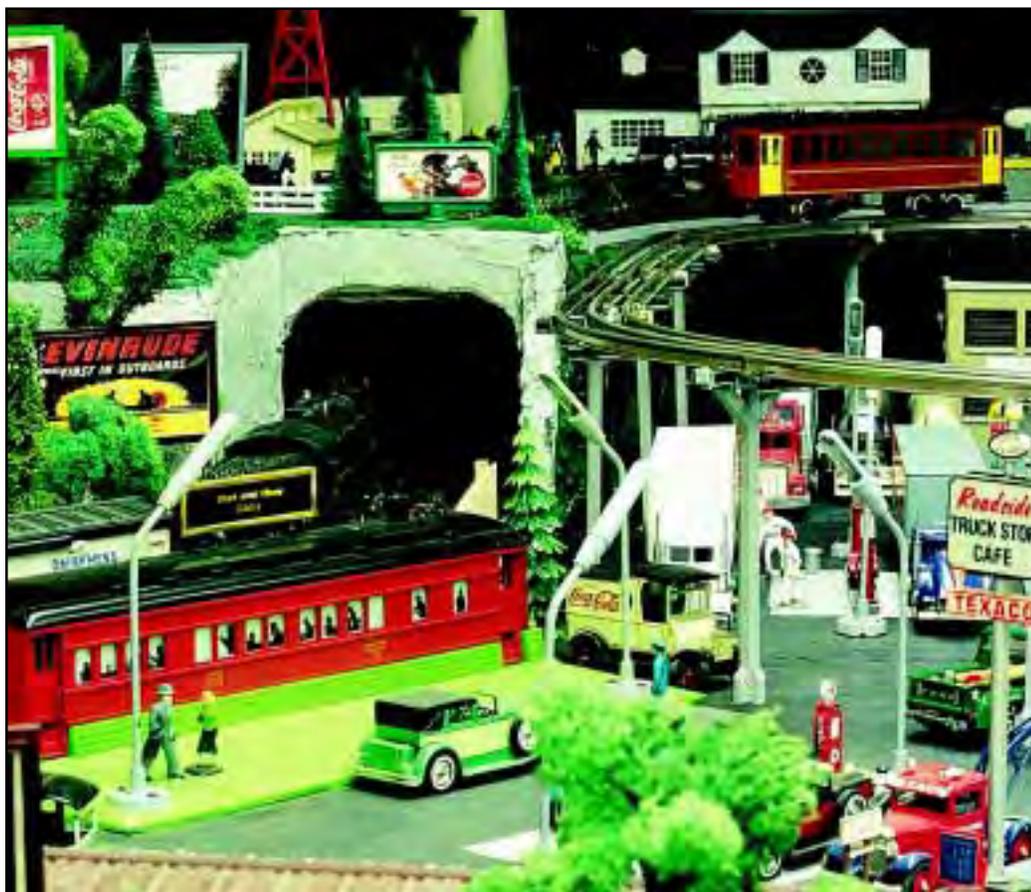
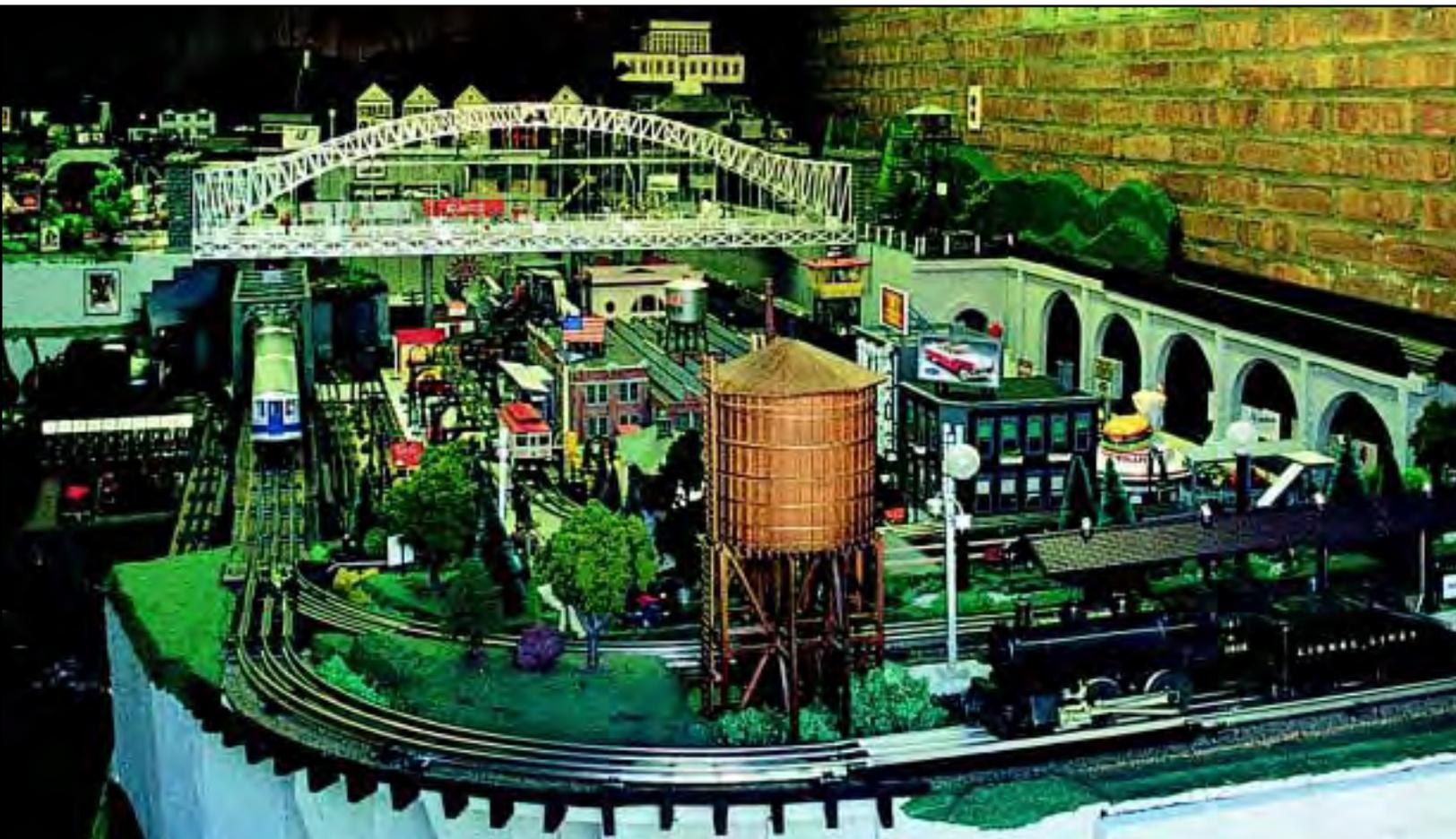


Editors note: Neither “layout” nor “pike” nor “train room” seems a big enough word to describe Charles’ train project. Perhaps “empire” comes close.

I couldn't wait to see if it would run, but I set first things first. I took it apart, cleaned it up, greased the gears, oiled the bearings and rods, and got it looking good as new. I placed it on the track and — lo and behold — it ran great!

Next, I did the same thing with the tender; its whistle worked beautifully. The five cars that came with it were undamaged — no rust or dents — so I had a flat car, box car, tank car, hopper car, and caboose. This fine vintage 1940 train is still running reliably today.





When I first started purchasing and collecting toy trains, I was exclusively a Lionel enthusiast.

I wanted to “replace” my 752E Union Pacific, and I was successful at that. I now have the Lionel Classics reproduction Hiawatha and all five Famous American Railroad sets — Santa Fe, Union Pacific, Great Northern, Southern, and Pennsylvania Turbine — compete with all the cars.

I also have the Norfolk and Western “J” (#612) with six Powhattan streamlined cars and a Reading T1 —

which I consider the high points of my Lionel collection. I never missed purchasing Service Station Sets. Although these locos were not “high end,” I believe they are highly collectible and are a fine value in toy train collecting.

When Lionel formed the Century Club, I joined in order to be eligible to buy these special products. However, my interest in Lionel waned. After much soul searching, I purchased my first MTH product — a Rail King Union Pacific Hudson. It turned out to be a fine engine. I was pleased with its ProtoSounds, pulling power, and smoke. The workmanship was as good or better than any I had seen on a “low end” product. I became interested in the Rail King line and MTH’s large steam engines. I subsequently purchased the Big Boy, the Challenger, and an Allegheny. These articulated locos will run on 031 curves and all have ProtoSound. I also have

an El Capitan F3 ABA with four streamlined passenger cars and a Centennial set from the MTH Premier Line.

I can’t take all the credit — or blame, if that’s the case — for the layout and train empire at “Mindel Station.” Marianne created the landscaping, trees, bushes, etc, and painted the roadways, lawns, and walkways. My brother assisted in designing and constructing the scratch-built structures and lights and assisted in wiring the layout.

I am limited by the space available to me, so I rotate operation of trains based on the layout with the trains on display in the glass cases in the recreation room. So, until my wife agrees to sell off some of her furniture, this is as big as The Fourth Layout is likely to get.

Photographs by Charles J. Mindel



Standard Gauge

by Grandpa Nelson G. Williams

RM 14062

Broad Gauge Work Trains

Author's note: This column is a revised version of "Wide Gauge Freight Trains, Part II" first published in the Train Collectors Quarterly, July, 1991.

For men and boys to get the most fun out of working on their railroads, Lionel and a few other manufacturers offered broad gauge work trains. Maybe the very first Lionel should be called a work train. Built 1901-06, it included a B&O tunnel locomotive, a gondola, a crane, and a "Metropolitan Express" car to carry supplies or a work crew. It ran on two thin strips of metal set 2-7/8 inches apart in wooden ties.

As the heaviest car, the crane with its own DC motor could pull a gondola as a trailer. However, the arm of the derrick is too short to reach into another car on the same track. It is a one-piece casting about 9 inches tall, with three dummy pulley wheels to guide its brass chain. One end of the chain is attached to a drum, which is turned by hand and locked at any setting with a ratchet wheel and pawl. A cast ball and hook on the other end of the chain lifts loads. The derrick is centered on the car frame by a

half-inch pin in a round base that lets it rotate. It will swivel while running on the rails, but weighs enough to stay upright in place.

Lionel introduced "Standard Gauge" three-rail track after 1906, with outside running rails 2-1/8 inches apart. Both Early Series of freight cars included one "work" car. The small 116 ballast car was the first Lionel hopper, with two doors under the frame that could be opened to discharge gravel. The larger 16 is a dump car, not a hopper. Two handles at one end of the car open its side doors at the bottom, letting the load fall out beside the track. The car body itself is fixed to the I-beam frame and does not pivot.

The Lionel 1929 Work Train

Two new series of Lionel standard gauge freight cars were offered in the Classic Era, 1926-42. The larger 200 series included all of the smaller 500 freight cars, plus several special cars that were made up as a work train.

The 1929 Lionel catalog shows the work train consist as a gray 212 gondola with a 208 tool box and tools, a mojavé brown 218 dump car, a green 219 derrick, and an orange 217 caboose with a brown roof and no window inserts. A 220 floodlight car was added in 1931. Despite the longer frame of the 220, Lionel used the same base and lights for the smaller 520 and for their tinplate



On lower track: A pair of work cars from the first Lionel 2-7/8 gauge train. The working crane with its own DC motor is a reproduction by James J. Cohen, and the gondola trailer is by Bob McCoy, Sr. These cars are now being made from the same dies and molds by Joseph Mania of Freehold, N. J. On upper track: Early Lionel standard gauge work cars made before 1926. The small 116 hopper is a ballast car (left). The larger 16 dump car is mounted on an I-beam frame, and its side doors open from the bottom.



The original Lionel standard gauge work train of 1929 with the large 400E steam locomotive. Tools from the tool kit are shown in the foreground.

O gauge floodlight cars. These cars have green bases with nickel lights and trim, or brown bases with brass lights and trim.

It takes a big, heavy engine to pull the work train with all its cars. The only single motor electric equal to the task is the 381E. The twin motor 402E and its sister, the 408E, have enough power and weight. The best Lionel steam locomotive for the job is a 400E, in black rather than blue or gray passenger colors. These are the largest engines that Lionel sold.

The 218 dump car is bigger and heavier than the 170 which it replaced. Its body moves on pivots in the end frames, one of which has a worm gear turned by a brass knob. At first there were two knobs on the ends of the same shaft — not on opposite ends of the car as shown in the 1929 catalog drawing. To reduce cost, one knob was eliminated and later the brass end frames were replaced

with painted tinplate. When the car body tilts, the door on the lower side opens from the top to dump the load of ballast.

The 219 derrick is the largest freight car that Lionel ever built. It sold well at the original price of \$9, since no smaller 519 was offered. The common green ones can still be found at meets under \$200, with a small premium for factory errors that reversed the cab door and window. The spring and clamp under the frame, to secure it to the rails while working, are often missing. The cab and derrick rest on a large gear, centered on a standard 200 frame one foot long. They can be turned completely around by means of a worm gear. It takes 50 turns of the knob at one end of the frame to do that, but it rotates quickly.

There are two more knobs on the back of the cab itself. The one to the right requires only five turns to raise



Three Lionel tinplate floodlight cars. The 220 floodlight car (left) was added to the work train in 1931. It shares the standard gauge track with the smaller 520 in the background. The 2820 in the foreground is an O gauge tinplate car that is just big enough to hold the same base and lights as the standard gauge cars.

or lower the 15-inch boom from horizontal to a 60-degree angle. The left knob turns the drum, from which a cord runs through two pulleys to the ball and hook. Each turn of this knob moves the hook only 1/4 inch, slowly moving the load up or down. It can be fun to work with the derrick once in a while, but it will try your patience. When I first used a pair of 219s to re-rail a small Lionel passenger train, it took me half an hour to do the job and take 35mm slides of it. By hand, it takes only a few minutes and is not worth a picture.

The long boom is a problem when the derrick car runs in a train. With the boom down, it extends nine inches beyond its own car and a flat car or gondola must be run under it. On curves the lowered boom may sideswipe nearby structures or cars on an adjacent track. If the boom were over a 218 dump car, it will not go

car is really a Lionel derrick mounted on Ives trucks after Lionel took over that competitor. Dorfan did make a beautiful derrick as an off-track accessory, not on wheels. They are extremely rare, partly due to the decay of the fragile metal alloy gears.

Buddy L made a huge work train that rides on track 3-1/4 inches wide. It is 12 feet long “from the stack to the shack.” As built by T-Reproductions, it includes a gondola or ballast car with four doors that open on each side, a flat car, a four-wheel construction car with levers and hinges to raise and dump the bin on either side of the track, a crane, and a work caboose designed by Norman Thomas.

Buddy L offered four variations of its biggest work car — it came as the locomotive wrecking crane, a steam



A pair of 219 derricks lift a Lionel 337 Pullman car back on the tracks. Note that the earliest 219 on the left does not have red paint on its window frames; the later one does.

lower than 30 degrees. At that height, it cannot run through the portals of the Hell Gate Bridge nor tunnels even on a tangent. The boom should always be run backwards, toward the caboose, so it may lower itself on impact. A Nickel Plate crew neglected to do that when their “real” derrick jammed into a U.S. highway 25 overpass near my hometown in Ohio years ago.

Other Broad Gauge Work Trains

No other manufacturer made a standard gauge work train in the Classic Era. American Flyer, Boucher, and Dorfan built gondolas and cabooses, but those were simply freight cars; although Flyer called its gondola a “sand car.” Ives made no gondola, and the “Ives” crane

shovel, a clamshell dredge, and a pile driver. They share the same cab, boiler, and 7x35-inch frame. When both I-beam outriggers are fully extended to stabilize the car while working, its width is 13-1/2 inches. The movements of the cab and boom can be controlled by gears, crank handles, ratchet wheels and pawls. The wrecking crane has a double hook where the boom bends, and a single hook at the apex. It can lift standard gauge rolling stock single-handedly.

The opposite extreme for size is the standard gauge Black Diamond work train designed by Bob McCoy, Jr., in 1985. Each car is less than six inches long, and rides on a single four-wheel truck. The consist is a pipe car, a dump car, a log car, a tool car (with no tools nor tool



*T-Rep*roduction of the huge 3-1/4-inch-gauge Buddy L locomotive wrecking crane, and its work caboose designed by Norman Thomas. An outside fourth rail has been added to the standard gauge tracks at the front of my layout to accommodate the Buddy L rolling stock.



The Black Diamond standard gauge work train designed and built by Bob McCoy, Jr. The extra red pipe car was a souvenir of our visit to McCoy Manufacturing during the 1985 national convention of the Train Collectors Association. In the foreground are two very small standard gauge work cars made for the Toy Train Operating Society — a crane by Charles Wood of Classic Model Trains and a dump car by Dick Mayer of Rich Art.

box), a working crane, and a bobber caboose. The crane has neither gears nor knobs. Its cab rotates manually, and the 6-1/2-inch boom can be raised or lowered about an inch by a wire handle that sticks out through a slot in the cab roof.

A little train like the McCoy Black Diamond is obviously meant for fun, not work. To get more pleasure from mine, I installed the optional light and music box in the caboose. When it is wound-up, it will play “I’ve Been Working on the Railroad” as the Little Chief locomotive pulls the train around the layout. Many casual visitors enjoy this when they see my work trains at home or presented on display in old train depots in nearby Florida towns.



A retired professor and attorney, Nelson enjoys his collection of standard gauge and offers helpful information on Classic Era trains to LCCA members.

Photos by Grandpa Williams

Bill's Special 100th Anniversary



by Dennis Leon Clad RM 10430

A talented writer can gain the readers' friendship through the written word. Long before I ever corresponded with "Lionel News and Views" author/columnist, William Schmeelk, the basis for a future friendship began when I first read his column in our great magazine. This edition of *The Lion Roars* marks the 100th consecutive appearance of Bill's column — a Herculean achievement!

When I joined LCCA in the mid-1980s, Bill was the only writer focused on modern era Lionel trains. To me, Bill was the glue that held *The Lion Roars* together. In my view, he still is. Bill knew instinctively that LCCA members wanted to read about what Lionel was currently producing, would it be collectible, and how many were made. His great photos of dismantled thousand-dollar steam locomotives are legendary.

"Thank you for all your years of dedicated reporting for The Lion Roars and for the "Lionel News and Views" column. I've enjoyed reading your articles; they are always well-written and informative. Your candor, professionalism, and overall Lionel train knowledge is an asset to the magazine. Thanks for helping to make this a fun hobby."

Mike Braga
Director of Consumer Services
Lionel LLC

Long before I had my first press kit or knew what Toy Fair was all about, Bill's column in the *TLR* Toy Fair edition was a sure bet to beat the winter blues. In the constant battle our governing fathers fight to keep our club dues low, his Toy Fair edition became an early casualty.

Luckily for us, Bill still braves the elements every winter and photographs the complete line at the Lionel headquarters so that readers of *TLR* can view the new Lionel offerings long before other club publications — sometimes even ahead of the newsstand dustcatchers.

While I personally feel that service to our club through writing for its flagship magazine, hosting train meets, and chairing conventions are the highest callings a member can aspire to, Bill has in addition thrown his engineer's cap into the LCCA political ring. From Director to club President, Bill has brought the same honesty and integrity to each office held and to appointive service as a previous Editor of this magazine.

"Bill is a wonderful ally of Lionel. In his own quiet way, Bill is always willing to pitch in at York and Toy Fair with his talent and knowledge."

Bob Ryder
Vice President of Sales
Lionel LLC

No tribute to our "Lionel News and Views" author would be complete without telling you about Bill's personal life (as hard as it may be to imagine that he has time for one, with all he does for LCCA.) Did you know that Bill is not only a professional magician, but he founded in 1976 what the pros call an illusion development and support company. Fans of illusion like to call it what it really is — a magic factory. In its long 23-year history, Wellington Enterprises has built illusions for David Copperfield, Doug Henning,



The workshop at Wellington Enterprises — where Bill and his associates make the magic.



and the great Harry Blackstone. But magicians aren't the sole users of services.

Major corporations who want to stage illusions know that, from development to take-down, there's only one company to turn to — Wellington Enterprises. For General Motors Corporation, Bill's company transformed a 1952 Cadillac into a 1992 Cadillac. Bill, can you do that with a 1985 Ford pickup?

"Bill Schmeelk was a Lionel Ambassador long before we started the program."

J. Don Reece
Regional Sales Manager
Lionel LLC

Wellington has created illusion support for Mickey Mouse. For Nissan Motors, Bill traveled to the International Car Shows in Paris and England.

Best of all, our beloved Lionel has taken advantage of Wellington's skill during both the LTI and LLC eras. For Lionel Trains, Inc., Bill's company staged a magical sales meeting in 1990 (and received a one-of-a-kind award recognition plaque), and also built two displays that rival anything done in the postwar era. After many years of traveling show to show and exposure to the loving touch of millions of Lionel fans, the displays needed repair. Lionel LLC knew that Bill possessed the skill to refurbish their displays to like-new condition.

In a recent ad for a toy train publishing company, I was surprised by their boldness in crowning one of their own the leading authority on modern era Lionel. Although I'm a person who dislikes titles, please permit me (with a paper trail 16 years long as evidence) to be so bold as to nominate my candidate for "leading authority on modern era Lionel" — William J. Schmeelk.

Bill, congratulations, and thank you for all you've done for our club and hobby!

Lionel News and Views

by Bill Schmeelk

RM 6643

Editor's Note: This article is the 100th consecutive presentation authored by Bill and published in this magazine — no small accomplishment! Bill is currently a LCCA Director, and he has served the club as a Past President and former Editor of The Lion Roars.

1956 - An Exciting Lionel Year

The year was 1956 — and what an exciting year it was for Lionel enthusiasts. The 1956 catalog was the first to feature a cover where the artwork wrapped around onto the back cover. When you opened the catalog you met Lionel's newest employee. Yes, this was the year "Happy," the Lionel Lion, joined the team. New locos in this catalog included what Lionel billed as, "The most colorful O gauge loco in Lionel's History." Can you guess which loco this was? Time's up! It was the 2350 New Haven electric. Other brand new locos included the inexpensive 520, the 44-ton diesels, and the Budd RDC car. Other locos appeared in some of their most memorable and collectible road names including the Jersey Central FM and the B&O F3s. Completely new operating cars included the Operating Horse Car, the Searchlight Extension Car, the GM Generator car, and the Brakeman Car.

Among the new accessories were two which operated on an inexpensive motor

designed by Lionel. It operated with an AC coil that vibrated. The vibrating motion was cleverly transformed to a rotating motion through the use of a thread that pulled a pulley in one direction and slipped around the pulley in the other. This action happened sixty times a second and provided a smooth, if somewhat noisy, rotational motion. Increasing the voltage to the motor did not increase the number of vibrations, but did increase the throw of the vibrating member, thus increasing the pull on the thread, therefore speeding up the rotational motion. In 1957 this motor was named a "Vibrotor." In those days a DC motor would have been too expensive. Lionel's clever solution served them well. Today, DC motors are extremely efficient, inexpensive and much quieter. Lionel has wisely replaced the Vibrotor in most of its new accessories. The Vibrotor remains in only one accessory — the Lumber Mill — where its buzzing noise is touted as the sound of the saw cutting the lumber. Prices were not included in the 1956 and 57 catalogs. The Culvert Unloader appeared the following year in the 1957 catalog. Both the loader and

the unloader appeared in the 1958 catalog and were priced at \$14.95 and \$18.95 respectively. This was also the last year they appeared. For such a great set of accessories, why did they disappear so quickly? Were they unpopular or didn't they work well?



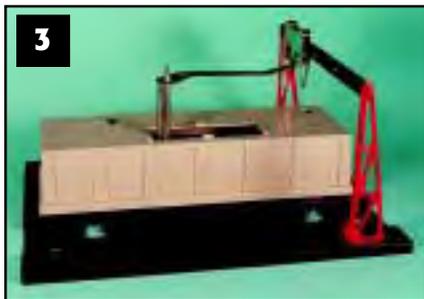
The Culvert Loader Returns

I was born in 1950 and received my first Lionel train at Christmas, 1957. I didn't really leave the hobby, but by 1964 Lionel left the hobby. No longer were new operating cars and accessories offered each year. The exciting color catalogs were gone. Years later in 1979, I happened to

come across a new copy of *Model Railroader*. Scanning the ads, I saw one from World of Trains in Queens, New York. They were advertising a mint and still-sealed Culvert Loader and Culvert Unloader. Suddenly this brought back the excitement of Lionel trains and I was again hooked. The culvert accessories became the first of nearly all of the postwar accessories I purchased in a long and friendly relationship with Bill and Leon, the proprietors. Of course, I went on to collect more than accessories, but it was the accessories that rekindled my interest in Lionel. For years, collectors have asked Lionel to remake the Culvert Loader and Unloader. Lionel responded and said the original tooling was gone. After continuing requests from fans, Lionel has completely retooled and redesigned the Culvert Loader. The Unloader is promised later this year.

Photo 1 shows the original Culvert Loader and **Photo 2** shows the new version. As best as I can tell, only the gray ramp is made from original tooling and still bears the original no. 342 on its underside. Notice the roofs on the sheds. The catalog illustrations in 1956 and 1957 show the roof with a red chimney on the left side. The original version never had a red chimney. It came with a gray chimney that was molded as part of the roof. It was correctly shown in the 1958 catalog. The new version has a separately molded red chimney on the roof, and as shipped it is on the right side. If you would prefer to mimic the original 1956 illustration, you can easily reinstall it in the opposite direction. None of the plastic parts on either the old or the new version are painted.

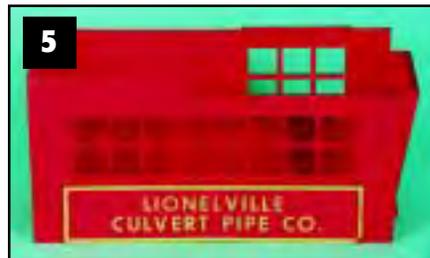
Notice the tan platform in both versions. The new one has added a set of steps for the little operator to have



easier access to the top. Notice also in the new version the small light and sensor at the right end of the tan platform. More on that later. To remove the shed and roof on the original version, you must remove one nut from inside the chimney. Removing that

nut allows the roof to come off and also allows the shed to lift off. Once the shed is lifted off, the ramp can be pushed towards the right and lifted off. One nut holds all three items in place. **Photo 3** shows the original with these three pieces removed.

The new version has a completely new mechanism, and as seen in **Photo 4** there is almost nothing inside the shed. To remove the shed, you must first remove a screw from each end of the shed; it's just under the roof. This allows the roof to be lifted off. You can reinstall it with



the chimney on either side. Once off, you can lift out the white plastic window liner and remove two more screws that will allow the shed to be removed. The new version features lighting which the original did not have.

Photo 5 shows the original shed and **Photo 6** shows the new one. The original had part of the front wall and the entire right wall lowered to allow an arm from inside to operate the crane. The new version does not need this and the walls all come up to meet the roof. The styling is very close to the original.

The tan platform on the original hooks under the metal base on the left and one screw secures it on the right. The new version has eliminated the screw tab on the left and uses two screws from underneath. Although there are four holes and lugs, only two are used. Once the platform is



separated from the base, two wires keep it attached. On the new version many wires keep it attached. **Photo 7** shows the original with the platform removed. The mechanism for moving the crane back and forth is shown. It's clear that the design of the shed and platform was designed around this mechanism. On the new version in **Photo 8**, the shed and platform have nothing to do with the mechanism for moving the crane. The platform hides an electronic circuit board. This new Culvert Loader is also available in a Command Control version, and I assume it has another circuit board inside. More on



Command Control of this accessory later.

Photo 9 shows the wire connections on the original version and **Photo 10** shows the new version with more desirable terminals replacing the clips.



Photo 11 shows the underside of the base of the original and **Photo 12** shows the new version. The "Made in China" stamp on the new version is covered on the opposite side with a nameplate.

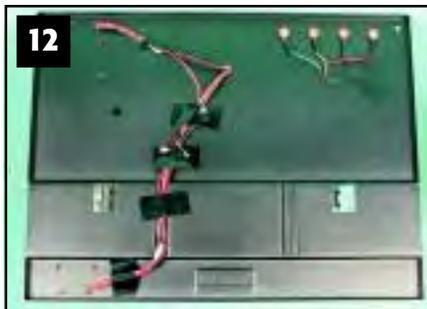
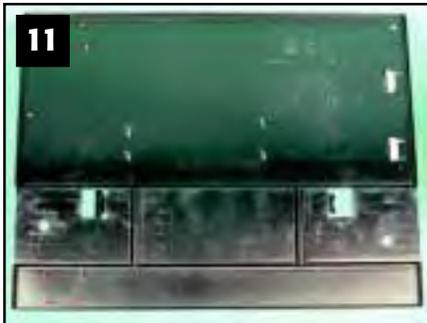
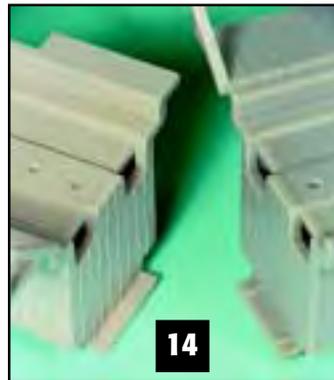


Photo 13 shows the ramps from each of the loaders. Although both appear to have been made with the same tool, the new one has an added hole at the low end. The ramp is held in place with a tab on the opposite end. Once the shed is in place, you cannot slide it, so the screw on one end, apparently planned to secure



it, is not necessary and is not used. Another small difference in the pieces is at the tab end. **Photo 14** shows that two small bumps have been added to the tab to make it a tighter fit. The original fits loosely into the platform while the new version is snug.

In **Photo 15** we see the original crane attached to the arm protruding from the shed. Lionel designers were always clever and achieved a lot of action out of one movement. Here, Lionel first converted the back-and-

forth vibrating motion to a circular motion using a crank arm. The back-and-forth motion of the arm also opens and closes the fingers on the crane. The crane operates

by changing the size of its opening, depending upon which direction it is being pulled. When it is pulled toward the car, the movable finger of the crane is brought closer to the stationary finger. This allows it to hold onto the culvert section. As the crane is pulled back away from the car, the distance between the two fingers increases, and this causes the culvert section to be released and dropped into the car.



Photo 16 shows the same view on the new version. The new version differs greatly from the original in that the motor driving the crane is mounted to it and travels with it. Power to the motor is carried through wires and a new Lionelville employee is in charge of holding these wires. The wires travel through him into the platform.

He's especially well dressed with bow tie, buttons, shoes, flesh, mustache and cap in different colors. The new crane has also been tweaked a bit, and the fingers have been modified slightly for better performance.

Photo 17 shows the new crane from the other side. Here you see a completely new addition. This is not just



a motor, but a gear motor that operates smoothly at speed. What Lionel once accomplished with clever mechanical

action, the new version performs with electronics. To change the direction of the crane at each end of the stroke, the moving crane closes a small switch at each end of the stroke. These switches are very small, about the size of a pinky nail. Amazingly, the metal beam they are mounted in was not made any higher to accommodate them. The beam is slightly wider though, providing a wider surface for the crane to travel on. Wires run from the switches through a small tube in the metal structure at each end.

Photo 18 shows the switch on one end and the tab of the crane that strikes it. The beam on the new version is slightly higher due to the gray pads on which the red supporting structure is mounted. This can be seen in **Photo 2**.

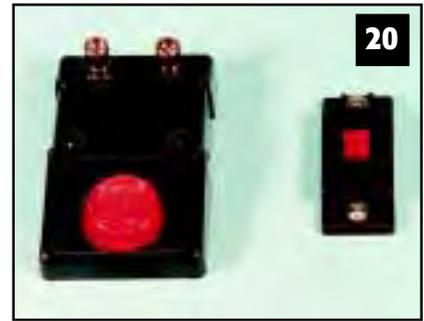


The culvert sections shown in **Photo 19** are also different in each version. The original culverts were rolled from steel and plated. The seam was tight but visible.



The new ones are slightly heavier and the seam has been welded and is not visible from the outside. The plating is also smoother and shinier.

Photo 20 shows the switches supplied with each version. Can you guess which one came with the original? Lionel's original no. 90 switch has the large red button with the Lionel "L" in it. This is a momentary switch, meaning that it only operates while you hold it down. The switch in the new version is small and is not momentary. It must therefore be switched on and then switch off when operation is complete. I prefer the original switch.



The original version was supplied with the special New York Central gondola required to operate the accessory. The gondola has a built date of 1949.

Obviously, Lionel didn't change this date as gondola production continued. The original car is unpainted red plastic with no brake wheel, and it has a black metal ramp riveted through the bottom to another metal plate underneath. **Photos 21 and 22** show the original car.



The new car is shown in **Photos 23 and 24**. This car is painted and looks much sharper as a result. The graphics are slightly different. The new car also has a metal brake wheel attached. The bottom reflects the newer gondola style. Metal bottoms on gondolas were abandoned during the postwar period. The black ramp is identical to the original but instead of being riveted, it is



secured with a screw. The new car is not included with the accessory and must be purchased separately — a bad

idea, it seems to me. Anyone purchasing the accessory has to have the car to use it. Original ones are certainly not readily available. What has happened of course is that the cars have sold out and are now hard to get. Lionel would have been better off supplying the car and also offering one with a different road name for separate sale. I'm sure Lionel will make another car, but when that will happen — I don't know.

So How Do They Work?

I wired both accessories and compared the operation. First the original. I found that the speed at which it operates is critical. If you operate it too slowly, the crane will often drop a culvert on the platform before it reaches the car. Once that happens, none of the remaining culverts can be loaded. Only by carefully experimenting with the speed could I come close to getting all seven culverts loaded. Sometimes, the culverts didn't land exactly right in the gondola. The original version can best be operated with a variable voltage supply. The other problem was that the vibrations from the Vibrotor tended to cause the bottom culvert on the ramp to move off the ramp on its own. Most of the time the crane returned in time to catch it. The noise factor, it goes without saying, is — noisy.

The new version has a feature that prevents the crane from being started unless there is a car in position. When a car is alongside the platform, it breaks a light beam and causes two yellow lights atop the red metal structures to blink and turns on the light inside the shed. When the switch is turned on, the crane begins to move toward the car. It then reverses and picks up a culvert. The new version operates much more smoothly and quietly and of course without vibration, so the culverts on the ramp are unaffected. The small changes made to the fingers on the crane provide much more dependable pick-up of the culverts. They also release reliably at the other end. There is no doubt that the new version works more dependably.

Comments and Suggestions

Both versions require the track to be accurately positioned. The accessory certainly does not perform 100% — few of the many loading and unloading accessories do. Despite careful positioning of the track, an occasional culvert fell into the car and was not squarely in the car ramp. Since this ramp has holes in it, the edge of the culvert would then fall into one of them. It might help to eliminate these holes by placing a strip along the ramp to cover them. In that way if a culvert does hit incorrectly, it won't hamper the rest of the culverts.

Although there was an occasional mishap, the new version unquestionably outperformed the original.

Some complaints about this accessory were mentioned in the last issue. The exact spot where the crane releases the culvert can be adjusted slightly by bending the tab shown in **Photo 18**. There is also some play where the track section fits in the base. I suggest both the accessory and the track be secured with screws to help maintain the alignment. I would certainly not locate this accessory in the center of a layout where it can't be reached. That goes double for the original version. Remember too that the speed of operation affects the alignment; especially of the original version.

The new feature preventing operation without a gondola car in position seems to solve a problem that really didn't exist. I do like the automatic activation of the flashing lights and the shed illumination because it adds more life to the accessory. The problem is that the sensors are just close enough together to prevent some large locos from passing by without scraping against them. If this feature is used on the Culvert Unloader, the light and sensor should be positioned further apart to eliminate this problem. Frankly, I'd rather see the money put into bringing back the No. 90 switch.

With that said, I like this accessory. If it's one you've always wanted, rest assured that this new version works more reliably than the original one. I look forward to seeing the Culvert Unloader later this year.

See Them Work - Volume 2

The second volume of the Toy Train Accessories video series from TM Books and Videos is out. Here you can see more of Lionel's accessories in action. You'll see lots of Lionel's accessories, including the original Culvert Loader and Unloader. After playing with the Culvert Loader, I was interested in Tom McComas' narration. He says that the loader and the unloader are "rather temperamental."

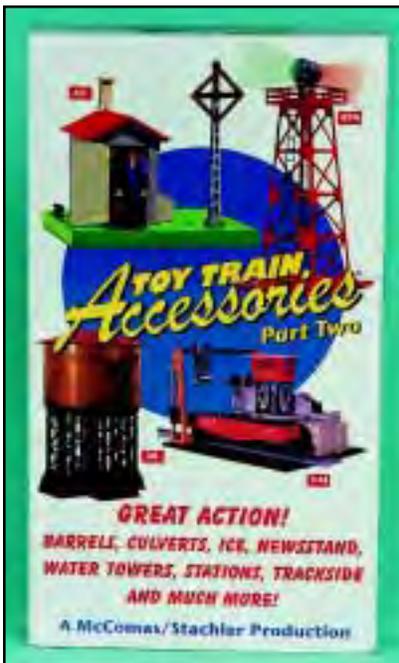
The videotape opens with one of Lionel's rarest accessories, the 38 Water Tower. This is the one that actually pumped water. On the tape you'll see it operate with liquid several times. Also shown is the filling and set-up. Other classic accessories presented on the tape include the 334 Dispatching Station, the 128 Newsstand and its later variations, the Ice Depot, Barrel Loader, and the 465 Dispatch Station. Lionel's signals, crossing signals, light and water towers are all covered. In each case, variations and improvements are discussed. This

was also the first time I saw the Mail Bag Pick-up accessory operated. This new video is the perfect supplement to Part One — discussed here in the last issue.

I'd like to see a Part 3 that demos all the American Flyer accessories. The price of either video is \$19.95 plus \$3.95 per order for shipping and handling. You can order direct from TM Books and Videos at 1-800-892-2822.

I'd Also Like To See ...

While working with the new Culvert Loader and noticing how nicely dressed the man is, I thought of



Courtesy of TM Books and Videos

something I'd like to see Lionel do for their centennial. How about a deluxe Automatic Gateman? This item is probably one of Lionel's all-time, largest-selling accessories. I'd like the man to be given a new and more colorful paint job. How about restoring the light in the base that lit the lantern when he comes out for "work?" He could also be given a gold watch for his many years of service in Lionelville. This is an accessory that many of us had as kids and even though this giant is out of scale, we still enjoy watching him perform.

Photos by Bill Schmeelk

Upcoming LCCA Events

July 3, 1999

**Chattanooga, Tennessee
East Ridge Retirement Centre**

Bill Stitt (423) 894-1284 is Hosting this event with Co-hosts George Baltz (423) 842-6094 and Ron Herman (423) 344-5799. Tables \$10. LCCA Members and family admitted free; guests \$5, with family, \$7. Registration and setup 9-10 a.m., LCCA trading 10-11 a.m., and guest trading 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. The Retirement Centre (formerly the Days Inn) is at 1400 N. Mack Smith Road off I-75, exit 1. Phone number is: (423) 899-6370.

August 7, 1999

**Avondale Estates, Georgia (Atlanta area)
First Baptist Recreation Center**

Weyman Barber (770) 493-0037 and Ken Switay are Co-Hosts. Tables are \$6 each.. Contact Ken Switay (770) 860-1148 for table reservations. LCCA Members and their families admitted free. Guests admission \$3 with youth 12 years and under free with an adult. For a family, it's \$5. Registration and setup 8 a.m., LCCA trading 9-10 a.m., and open trading for guests 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. The Recreation Center is located at 47 Covington Road, west of I-285.

August 10-15, 1999

**LCCA 29th Annual Convention
Fort Worth, Texas**

Gather up the posse and hit the trail to the southwest and enjoy trains and great family fun at this year's Convention deep in the heart of Texas. Host Dr. Glenn Kroh (817) 926-6757 and

his committee has prepared a Texas-large-scale event with Lone Star State tour attractions, flavorful outings, and "Cowtown" entertainment. See the "Convention Supplement" in this edition of TLR.

October 30, 1999

**Winterville, North Carolina (Greenville area)
First Presbyterian Church**

Jesse Moye (919) 752-7965 is your Host for this Train Meet. Registration and setup 7:30-9 a.m. with LCCA trading 9-10 a.m. Guest trading 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Tables are \$10 each. LCCA Members and their families admitted free. Guests \$2 each with children under the age of 15 at \$1. The First Presbyterian Church is located at the corner of Highway 11 and Firetower Road.

July 24-30, 2000

**LCCA 30th Annual Convention
Dearborn, Michigan**

Celebrate the club's third decade and the 100th anniversary of our favorite train company near the Lionel factory. Additional details will be forthcoming in future Club publications.

**Train Meet Hosts Wanted!
Contact Don Carlson at:
(734) 462-4265**

A Kid-proof yet Kid-friendly Train Layout



James Herron and his son, Andrew.

**by Jim Herron
RM 24025**

What do you do when you have a young child who loves to play with your toy trains? One way to avoid unhappy confrontations — and probably many trips to the repair shop — is to design and build a kid-proof yet kid-friendly portable layout.

Here's my approach to "training" a 4-1/2 year old — dad-approved by me and kid-tested by my son, Andrew.

Begin with a 4x6-foot sheet of 3/4-inch particle board.

The extra depth will help with soundproofing. The perimeter should be reinforced with 2x4s. Two additional 2x4s are attached to the center of the particle board as cross beams for strength. A 4x6-foot piece of cork is nailed onto the top of the particle board. Dark green indoor/outdoor carpeting can be used to cover the top and the sides of the board. It can be screwed or stapled down. As an alternative, the indoor/outdoor carpeting could be cut to the exact size of the top of the board and then screwed or stapled down. The exposed

sides of the board can be painted Lionel blue and/or orange. Heavy-duty casters are mounted onto the 2x4s at each corner. This allows the board to be moveable; it can be placed under the bed when not in use.

For track, I recommend buying new Lionel O gauge because of the clearance of engines and passenger cars on the O22 switches. For this board, I used four 3-1/2 inch straight sections (less clickety-clack and better conductivity), two straight half-sections, 11 curved sections (O31 radius), three switches (two right-hand and one left-hand), and a #260 red bumper. The resulting layout design will have an outer oval, an inside loop/passing track and a spur off the inside loop. Parallel to the inner loop, another long section of O gauge track may

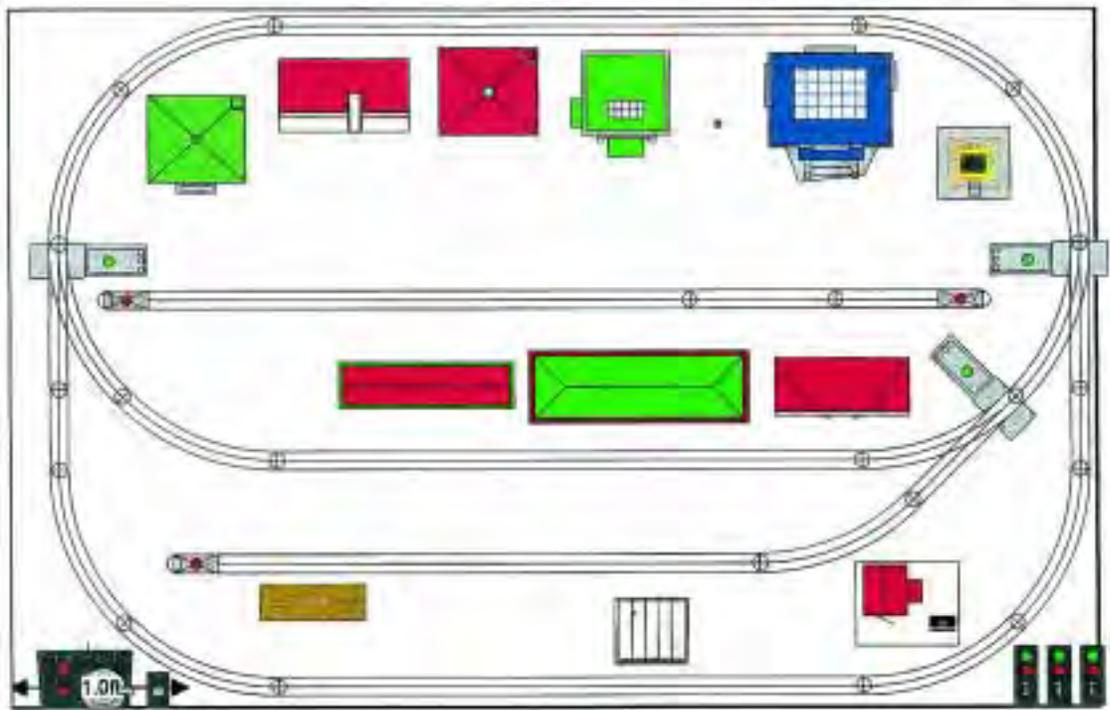


Andrew has been playing with this layout since he was 2-1/2 years old.

be added for a trolley line with two #260 red bumpers. Fiber pins should be installed for non-derailing at the switches and the spur. All of the tracks need to be screwed down.

Power for the layout comes from a 125-watt Lionel LW transformer. The track should be wired with a lock-on (I like the illuminated type with green light) and with a separate switch for control of track power to the spur.

For modest landscaping, Moondog roadbed can be used. For Andrew's layout, I placed a train station and Plasticville post office, fire house, church, ice cream stand and a #394 beacon on one side of the inner loop road. On the other side of the street are Plasticville gas station, bank, police station, and 3 crossing gates. Lionel #410 billboards are used as fillers.



A cityscape background, six feet long by 18 inches high was added later for depth and effect. It took about 12 hours to complete this layout at a cost of about \$600, including the rolling stock and engine, but excluding the background cityscape. This price was the result of shopping at many train shows. If you buy in a store at retail, the cost will be greater.

Photographs provided by Jim Herron

Shopping List

Layout board and supplies

3/4-inch particle board, 4x6 feet

Sheet cork, 4x6 feet

Two 6-foot and two 4-foot 2x4s for the perimeter of the particle board

Two 44-inch long 2x4s for interior bracing

Box of #6 1-inch black flathead screws (electric screwdriver is essential) or heavy duty staple gun and staples

Green indoor/outdoor carpeting to cover the particle board with enough left over to wrap around edges. These can be purchased at a home supply store. If the sides are left exposed, Lionel blue and orange paints may be found in the Ralph Lauren paint line.

Four heavy-duty caster wheels

Small box of 1-inch nails

Track and materials

Four 3-1/2 foot straight sections of Lionel O gauge track

Two straight half-sections

11 curved sections (031 radius)

Three switches — two right-handed, one left-handed

One #260 red bumper

Fiber pins

No. 6 1-inch black flathead screws

125-watt Lionel LW transformer

LTC lock-on with green light

#290C on/off switch

Optional trolley line

One 4-foot section of O track

Two #260 red bumpers

Lionel's Animated Gondolas

by Bill Rieken

RM 18847

Why in the world would anybody want to write an article about Lionel's animated gondolas?

Well, the production runs span four decades, and there have been a total of 11 cars made during that timeframe. Although these cars may not be as glamorous as the 6464 boxcars or the annual Christmas cars, the bottom line is — these cars are FUN! It's part of the reason we became train collectors and operators. Most layouts would be rather boring if all rolling stock was boxcars, tankers and cabooses. We'll leave that for the HO guys. Every once in a while we need to pull out the Giraffe cars and run them just for the fun of it.



So where and when did it all begin? The first car was introduced in the 1957 catalog as number 3444; see **Photo 1**. This car used the same type mechanism as the 128 Animated Newsstand and the later 3435 Traveling Aquarium car. A small vibrator pulled a string back and forth turning a cylinder located inside the crates. The cylinder in turn pulled a continuous loop of 16mm filmstrip to which the cop and hobo were attached. When the car was turned on, the cop continually chased the hobo but never caught up with him. A switch on the top of the crates turned the vibrator motor on or off. The 3444 was produced for three years and remained the same during those years. A red plastic body with white lettering was used. "ERIE" in large white letters was placed in the fifth through the eighth panels on the gondola side. The crates were tan and contained black writing. The cop and hobo were made of different colors of rubber with the face and

hobo bag painted. Bar end trucks were used with operating couplers at both ends. In the *TM Postwar Guide*, this car has a rarity rating of "2" with a like new price of \$100.



The next time we heard from the cop and hobo was in 1980. The ERIE 9307 was cataloged from 1980 through 1984; see **Photo 2**. This was almost identical to the 3444 in color and mechanism. A red plastic car body with white lettering with an on/off switch on top of the tan crates was most common. Variations of crate color, cop and hobo painting and crate lettering made this car somewhat unusual. Probably the most unusual aspect of this car was the metal passenger car trucks. In the *TM Guide*, the 9307 has a rarity rating of a "4" with a boxed price of \$80.



During the time when 9307 was being produced, a cheaper version was made for the Traditional Series of trains. In 1982-83 a yellow 6201 animated gondola was produced, see **Photo 3**. This gondola featured dual rubber band drive mechanisms with plastic wheels and trucks. The blue and gray rubber figures are unpainted and move around the unlettered tan crates erratically at best. The rubber band was wound around both axles on each truck and onto a spool at the center of the truck. The spools

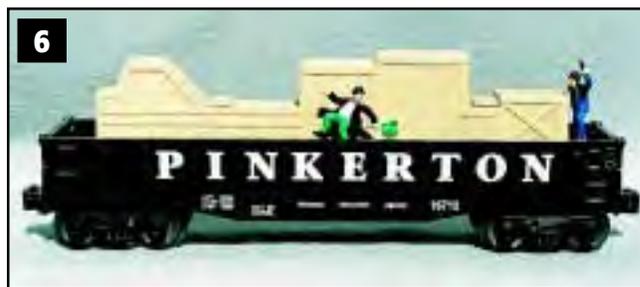
drove the continuous film loop similar to the other cars. The lettering on the 201 was red and featured the Union Pacific road name. This car has a rarity rating of a “3” with a boxed price of \$30.



In 1990, Lionel produced the only animated gondola contained in a set. The “Laughter Gondola” or 16628 was made for the 11716 Lionelville Circus set, see **Photo 4**. This car was quite colorful and had clown-painted cop and hobo figures. Another type of mechanism was made for this car. This time a worm gear on one axle was used to turn a geared shaft that rotates the continuous film loop. This film loop is consistent with all animated gondolas to date. A weight was also added under the crate load for better operation of the mechanism. This blue plastic car has yellow lettering with the word “Laughter” written out in the center of the car. The 16628 animated gondola had ASF strong-arm trucks and was cataloged for two years. All of the animated gondolas produced after this also had the ASF strong-arm trucks. The car is rated at a “3” for rarity with a boxed price of \$50.



A few years passed before another animated gondola made its way to market. This time the car was red plastic with “Pinkerton” as the car name; see **Photo 5**. The lettering was white and the unlettered crates were tan. This car was cataloged for one year and was announced in the 1993/94 Stocking Stuffer/Spring Release catalog. Number 16674 appeared on the car as well as a build date of 1-94. The blue rubber figures were painted sparingly with their hands and faces receiving flesh color. This car has a rarity rating of “3” and a boxed unused price of \$45.



1995 saw the return of the Pinkerton animated gondola but this time in black plastic with white lettering; see **Photo 6**. Apparently not enough of the red versions were made and Lionel decided to make another one but this time in black. According to the rarity factor, this car is more common with a rating of “2” and a mint price of \$40. There was another subtle change with this number 16712 gondola; the men were fully painted. The catalog does not show this improvement. The previous Pinkerton car came with a gray hobo and a blue cop. The crates were again unlettered with a tan color.



The Coyote and Road Runner car was introduced to Lionel fans as the 16737 animated gondola in 1996; see **Photo 7**. This yellow plastic car had red and black lettering and “Acme Train Parts” printed in the fourth through seventh panels. The Coyote and Road Runner were painted like the characters from the cartoon and ran around an unlettered brown crate load in the center of the car. The mechanism on this car was the same worm gear on the axle like the most recent releases. Value for this nice car is rising to \$45 mint in the box. The rarity rating is a “3.”

The Coyote and Road Runner car was followed a year later by a painted blue car with Pluto and cats chasing each other. The cat was chasing Pluto by the way. There was also an innocent cat watching the chase. All three figures were painted nicely. The number on the car was 3444 but the catalog number is 16760. The blue car had white/blue lettering and the word “Pluto” was in the center of the car. Since this was made only one year, it will also be a desirable car in the future.



TM Books rates this car a “3” with a price of \$50 and going up. The crates are unlettered and dark, brown in color; see **Photo 8**.

In 1997, we also saw the most desirable car in this series; see **Photo 9**. The TCA Desert Division sponsored



a gold painted car numbered 52105. The car features a fully painted miner chasing his burro around the yellow painted crates. These crates are lettered. The lettering on the car is blue and contains “The Superstition Mountain Line” across the length of the car. The number on the car is 61997. This car has a rarity rating of “4” and a value of \$85.

In 1998, two more animated gondolas were produced. The first was 19967 produced for the Lionel Kids Club;



see **Photo 10**. This bright yellow painted car had purple crates with purple and blue lettering on the car.

“Kids Club” appeared in the center of the car as well as Kids Station in the right corner. The hobo figure was painted like a clown while the cop is in normal colors — an attractive car for kids.

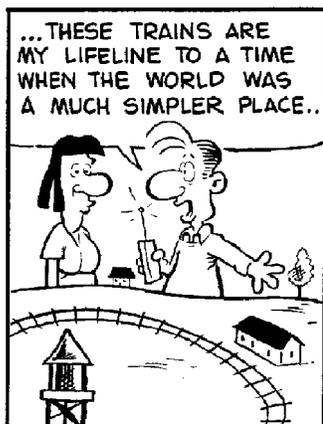


Next up in 1998 was a cataloged car with “Pony Express” lettering in brown and white; see **Photo 11**. The orange painted car was cataloged as number 26972, which also appeared on the car. This number also appeared in the center of the car. The crate load was tan colored with no lettering. Both figures were painted exactly like the black Pinkerton car. There is no rarity rating on this car as of yet. The retail price is \$44.95.

Photos by Bill Rieken

Toy Trunk Railroad

by Erik Sansom



LAST CALL TO COME ABOARD!



Your LCCA Annual Convention team has planned a Texas-style event you'll want to mosey on down to the southwest to enjoy.

Glenn and Karen Kroh, local hosts, and their associates — Mike, Renee, and David Walter, and Murray Hill, Jr. — have captured the essence of the Lone Star State in this Convention.

The Board of Directors has visited Fort Worth, checked out the Radisson Plaza Hotel (the Convention hotel) and downtown area, and looked over the nearby Convention Center. "Cowtown" is a great town for a train convention!

In previous editions of *The Lion Roars*, we presented the Convention program (February, '99) and described the railroad history of the area (April, '99). The best part of the Convention can't be adequately described — just confidently predicted: renewing friendships, enjoying Texas ambiance at unique (and flavorful!) local sites, visiting the Lionel exhibit and

participating in the company seminar, and cruising the Trading Hall for trains.

Convention Committee Chairman, John Fisher, has developed this event based on the successful model of previous Conventions, so it'll have the features we love and the logistical support for a "goof proof" good time.

In this special Convention Supplement, look at the Houston Train Operators Society modular layout. It will be on display and in operation during the Convention — quite a three-rail empire!

For convenience, the LCCA Registration Form is printed on the inside front page of the protective "ghost" cover of this edition, and the Radisson Plaza Hotel Registration Form is printed on the inside back "ghost" cover. Last call — all aboard who are going aboard!

See you in Fort Worth.

Ft. Worth Highlights

by Glenn Kroh, Chairman, LCCA Annual Convention

I'm delighted to be your local host for the 1999 LCCA Annual Convention in Fort Worth, Texas. I know your stay in our city will be both a pleasant and memorable experience.

Fort Worth can best be described as a friendly town with big city advantages. We have the Science and History



Museum, Bass Music Hall, the Amon Carter Museum of Western Art, and the Kimball Art Museum with its world class collection of pre-Columbian art.

Our western cowboy heritage can be seen and

felt throughout the city, the best place to experience it is in the Stockyards district on the northside of town. Here one

can meet the Tarantula steam passenger train as it rolls into the unique Stockyards Station and is turned on a freshly restored turntable.



At the stockyards one can eat in one of many restaurants, have a beer at the White Elephant

Saloon (site of some scenes in the Walker Texas Ranger series), and ride a robotic bull at Billy Bob's (the largest honky tonk in the country). In one of the many shops in the area one can purchase gifts including a real Stetson

cowboy hat or a real set of longhorns. You can also be photographed next to or on a Texas Longhorn Steer.



About four blocks from the Stockyards Station is Joe T. Garcias,

a Mexican restaurant frequented by the late actor James Stewart and other notables and, in my estimation, the best Mexican restaurant in the whole world.

The Stockyards area is about 10-15 minutes from the Radisson Plaza Hotel Fort Worth, the LCCA Annual



Convention headquarters. One of the best features of Fort Worth is its colorful and exciting downtown area. Unlike the downtown areas of many U.S. cities, it is well lit, safe, and family friendly. Every evening people flow into the downtown area to enjoy the restaurants, cafes, theaters,



performance halls, bookstores, gift shops and horse and carriage rides. These are all within two to four blocks of our headquarters hotel. Restaurant options includes: Cajun, Mexican, French, Greek, Italian, Western Ranch Barbecue, New York Deli, Chinese, and classic American fast food.

Two nearby movie theaters offer fourteen different screens each night. The AMC theater complex next to the Barnes and Noble bookstore has stadium seating and curved screens. There are also ice cream stores, candy stores, and expresso sidewalk cafes. In August, Fort Worth evenings are usually very pleasant with warm, dry, and gentle breezes.



Next to the Radisson Plaza Hotel Fort Worth is the Convention Center where the trading hall will be located. It is a secure and efficient facility.

Travel to and from Fort Worth is convenient. Major highways enter the city from all points of the compass. Air travelers can take advantage of the Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport which has airport shuttle service to all hotels in downtown Fort Worth. Those traveling on Amtrak can come directly to Fort Worth on the Texas Eagle



from Chicago through St. Louis, Memphis, and Little Rock or from Los Angeles through Tucson and San Antonio. The Fort Worth Amtrak station celebrates its 100th birthday in 1999.

It is the former Santa Fe station on Jones Street, and it will be featured on the 1999 Amtrak calendar. It is only four blocks from our hotel. Those traveling by bus will be glad to know the Greyhound station is only one block from the hotel. Other attractions in the area include the Texas Speedway (15 minutes north of Fort Worth), the Fort Worth Zoo, the Fort Worth Water Gardens, the Fort Worth Botanical Gardens, the Vintage Air Museum at Fort Worth's Meacham Field, the Ballpark in Arlington (Home of the Texas Rangers), Six Flags over Texas, the Age of Steam Museum in Dallas, the John F. Kennedy Memorial in Dallas.

See you in August at Fort Worth!

Registration, Hotel, Trading Hall, Banquet & Other Information

Convention Registration

Pre-registrations received after June 1, 1999 or at the door will be \$54. Pre-registrants will receive confirmation.

Each registrant will receive a registration packet containing tickets for all events ordered and a special convention souvenir. Pre-registered members may pick up their packet at the registration desk by showing their current LCCA membership card. Members who register but do not attend will get their souvenir by mail after the convention. Guests are not allowed under LCCA Convention rules — only your immediate family (spouse and children under the age of 21) is admitted under your registration. Tickets will be provided in your packet and are **required** for all tours, the Get Acquainted Party, and the Banquet. Your convention badge should be worn at all times during the Convention events and will be required for admission to the Trading Hall. Register early to be sure you get the tours, events, and tables you want.

Accommodations

First class lodging has been reserved at the Radisson Plaza Hotel Fort Worth, which is located downtown at 815 Main Street, just a few steps away from the Fort Worth Convention Center. This historic hotel (JFK spent the evening of November 21, 1963 here before his morning trip to Dallas) has been beautifully restored and is a full service convention hotel. Make your hotel reservation on the special form in this *Convention Supplement* and deal directly with the Radisson Plaza Hotel.

Trading Hall & Tables

The Fort Worth Convention Center has 25,000 square feet reserved for us; plenty of room for hundreds of 6'x30" tables. Tables are \$20 each with no limit on number. If you want your table(s) next to another member, please indicate in the area provided on the registration form and **send both forms** with separate checks in the same envelope. Tables that require an electrical outlet are available for an additional \$25. No flashing lights, sirens, blowing horns, etc. are allowed in the hall.

Unloading and set-up will be on Friday, August 13th from 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.; Saturday, August 14th from 7:30 a.m. to 8:45 a.m.; and on Sunday, August 15th from 7:30 a.m. to 8:45 a.m. In response to member/dealer requests and for the **first time** at a LCCA Convention, the Trading Hall will be **open to the public on Sunday**, August 15th from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. close. Only table holders will be allowed in the hall during set-up times and no trading is allowed. Security will be provided during set-up and non-trading hours. Reserved tables will be held only until noon on Saturday and then sold at the door. All items offered for sale must be trains or train-related items and clearly marked and priced. All restored and refinished items must be identified with LCCA labels available at the Trading Hall stage during set-up and show times.

Transportation to Fort Worth

Air – Dallas Fort Worth International Airport is served by all major airlines with hundreds of direct flights daily arriving from over 240 cities. The Radisson Plaza Hotel Fort Worth is just 30 minutes from the airport. Several shuttle services are available.

Rail – Fort Worth is an Amtrak city. The historic Amtrak station is just four short blocks from the Radisson Plaza Hotel Fort Worth.

Auto – Fort Worth is located on I-30 in central Texas. A detailed map of downtown Fort Worth is included in this *Convention Supplement*.

Get Acquainted Party

This great LCCA tradition captures the flavor and taste of our host city. This year's party will have a southwestern flair with lots of great food. Plan to join us on Thursday, August 12th at 6:30 p.m. to renew old friendships and make some new ones. The party is just \$12 for convention registrants staying at the Radisson Plaza Hotel and \$17 for non-Radisson guests; it's a great price for a priceless experience. Children's tickets are available for \$6. This year's party will be held at the Radisson Plaza Hotel – our Convention headquarters.

Banquet

"All Aboard" is the theme for this year's fun-filled, gift-packed banquet on Saturday evening, August 14th. The fun will begin with the traditional Reception at 6:00 p.m. followed by dinner served at 7:00 p.m. in the beautiful Grand Ballroom of the Radisson Plaza Hotel. For your dining pleasure we will have a chef's choice between wood-grilled chicken breast glazed with hickory smoked barbecue sauce or pasta primavera with ratatouille. Texas pecan pie will be a special treat for dessert! Children's meals will also be available. After dinner you will enjoy special entertainment and great table favors. This will be a very special evening, and fewer than 500 seats will be available for this event that always sells-out. Please register early to reserve your tickets for this great finale to the LCCA Convention.

LCCA Business Meeting

Want to learn more about your club? Join us for the Annual Business Meeting with your Officers and Directors on Friday, August 13th at 3:00 p.m. The location in the Radisson Plaza Hotel will be announced.

Lionel Seminar

This informative meeting with Lionel representatives will be held immediately following the business meeting in the same location at the hotel on Friday, August 13th. This is your chance to have your questions answered and get the inside scoop on new products.

Public Displays

There will be operating layouts outside the Trading Hall at the Fort Worth Convention Center Friday through Sunday. See the latest in technology and product demonstrations by Lionel on their layout.

Contacts and Directions For LCCA Convention Travelers



PEOPLE TO CONTACT:

LCCA Annual Convention Committee
Glenn Kroh, Chair, 817-926-6757

THE HOTEL:

The Radisson Plaza Fort Worth Hotel is located in the heart of the city at Sundance Square area.

GENERAL DIRECTIONS:

Fort Worth is located on I-30 in central Texas. The city is served by major airlines at nearby Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport, by Amtrak, and by Greyhound-Trailways Bus Lines. Bus, limo, or taxi service is available from the airport to the hotel.

Tour #1 or #4 – Tarantula Steam Train/ Fort Worth Stockyards Historic District

Your adventure into the Wild West begins with an early morning motorcoach ride to Grapevine, Texas where you will board the historic Tarantula Excursion Train. Steam Locomotive No. 2248, the primary engine for the train, is



a product of the Cooke Locomotive Works of Paterson, New Jersey. Built in 1896, No. 2248 was considered a heavy mountain-class locomotive. The engine was acquired by the Tarantula Project in 1990, and has undergone extensive restoration work. She now pulls six cars (circa 1920's) — four passenger coaches and two open patio coaches. The Tarantula Train traverses twenty-one miles of the original Cotton Belt Route known officially as the St. Louis Southwestern Railway which was extended to Fort Worth in the late 1880s. Your train trip of one hour and fifteen minutes will end in the Fort Worth Stockyards Historic District, a stopping point along the legendary Chisholm Trail. There you will have time for browsing in the diverse shops in Stockyards Station – hog and sheep barns converted to a western shopping mall. You will enjoy a wonderful Mexican lunch which includes beef and chicken fajitas, build your own tacos, beans, rice, guacamole, pica de gallo, chips and hot sauce, iced tea and a praline during your visit. After lunch, you will be met by a guide and will continue your adventure with a walking tour. It will include the Livestock Exchange Building, once the heartbeat of the livestock business; panoramic views of auction areas and cattle pens on Cattlemen's Catwalk; Cowtown Coliseum, home to the world's first indoor rodeo; and historic Exchange Street. Your tour will end with a behind the scenes tour of Billy Bob's, the world's largest honky-tonk, where the motorcoach will meet you for the return trip to the hotel. Cost includes motorcoach and train transportation, lunch and all admissions.

Tour #1 Wednesday, August 11th
8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Tour # 4 Thursday, August 12th
8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Cost: \$56 per person



Tour #2 or #10 – The Ballpark in Arlington/ Legends of the Game Museum

Take me out to The Ballpark! The Ballpark in Arlington, home of the Texas Rangers, is one of the premier stadiums in Major League Baseball. The stadium, which opened in 1994 at a cost of 189 million dollars, seats almost 50,000 fans and has a natural grass field. Your tour begins with a visit to the Ranger's clubhouse. After seeing the dugout and the batting cages, you will continue on to the press box and the owner's suite. Located in the stadium is an important collection of baseball artifacts and memorabilia on exhibit for the first time outside of the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum at Cooperstown. You will see the jerseys, bats, equipment, trophies and other items belonging to baseball's legends such as Babe Ruth, Hank Aaron, Willie Mays, and Lou Gehrig. The museum also includes The Learning Center – interactive exhibits featuring math, science and history with a baseball spin – it will delight young and old. Come see how baseball is played – Texas style! Cost includes motorcoach transportation and admissions.

Tour #2 Wednesday, August 11th,
9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon*

Tour # 10 Friday, August 13th,
1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.*

Cost: \$27 per person

*approximately

Tour #3 or #6 or #9 – Age of Steam Railroad Museum & JFK: November 22-24, 1963

Relive the golden age of the passenger train at the Age of Steam Railroad Museum, home of the world's largest diesel/electric locomotive. Several rare and unique examples of early diesel/electric locomotives are represented in this superlative exhibit of over twenty-eight historic pieces of equipment and Dallas' oldest surviving



depot. Personally explore the luxurious Pullman sleeping cars, plush lounge cars and mighty steam locomotives. Then, return to the November 22, 1963 and examine the historical events at the actual locations where the assassination and subsequent events took place. This presentation takes the form of an investigation with your search for clues beginning with a walking tour through Dealy Plaza. You will learn about the Kennedy family, presidency and legacy, as they are chronicled in the Texas Book Depository Building, and view the crime scene areas. Lee Harvey Oswald's role will be examined and you will follow his movements up to his capture as you visit the historic Texas Theatre. You will trace Dallas nightclub owner Jack Ruby's moves from his Carousel Club to the basement of the Dallas Police Station. At the end of the tour you may draw your own conclusions to one of the mysteries of the twentieth century. The bus will make a one hour stop in the historic West End of Dallas where you will be able to choose your lunch spot from over twenty restaurants. Cost includes motorcoach transportation and admissions. Lunch is on your own.



Tour #3 Wednesday, August 11th
9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Tour #6 Thursday, August 12th
9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Tour #9 Friday, August 13th
9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Cost: \$50 per person



Tour #5 – The Fort Worth Stockyards National Historic District

This district offers a glimpse into Fort Worth's past. Turn back the clock as you tour the Livestock Exchange Building, once the heartbeat of the livestock business; Cowtown Coliseum, home to the world's first indoor rodeo; Cattlemen's Catwalk, with panoramic views of the pens below; and Mule Alley, built in 1911. Fast forward to Billy Bob's and look behind the scenes at the world's largest honky-tonk. You'll have time to souvenir shop at Stockyards Station – an historic hog & sheep

barn converted to a western shopping mall which includes antiques, art galleries, western clothing, jewelry, wines and Texas foods. This is the Texas you came to see! Cost includes all motorcoach transportation and admissions.

Tour #5 Thursday, August 12th,
9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon
Cost: \$24 per person

Tour #7 – The Vintage Flying Museum & The Texas Motor Speedway

Don't miss your chance to see this museum which houses antique aircraft in a B-29 hangar located at Fort Worth's Meacham Field. The centerpiece of this extensive collection is a rare 1944 B-17G Flying Fortress, the actual plane used in the filming of *The Memphis Belle*. Other aircraft include a Stearman 1920s bi-plane and a Texas Air Command 1950s fighter jet. There is a large collection of aviation artifacts, with a strong focus on World War II memorabilia. Veteran tour guides share their knowledge of rare engines, vehicles, equipment and models. The Vintage Flying Museum is nationally known as an antique aircraft restoration facility, and is a must for aviation and history buffs. Cost includes all motorcoach transportation and all admissions.

Tour #7 Thursday, August 12th, 12:30 - 5:30 p.m.
Cost: \$30 per person

This tour will be in combination with the Texas Motor Speedway (see description following page).

Tour #8 – The Texas Motor Speedway

Visit one of Fort Worth's newest attractions. Covering 950 acres, with a seating capacity of 203,061, this is a NASCAR facility not to be missed. Your tour begins in a luxury suite above the starting line, giving you a bird's eye view of the track below. You will proceed to track level where a van awaits you for a lap around the mile-and-one-half track banked at 24 degrees. A visit to the garage area will provide the opportunity for a close inspection of any parked race cars. The gift shop offers the chance to purchase NASCAR souvenirs and memorabilia. Cost includes motorcoach transportation and admission.

Tour #8 Friday, August 13th, 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 noon
Cost: \$23 per person



Note: stock photo – not the Dude Ranch

Tour #11 – A Taste of Texas Dude Ranch Experience

Saddle up, cowpokes and live a little ... Texas style! You'll travel 30 minutes outside of Fort Worth for an evening of dinner, dancing and fun on a sprawling ranch situated on the banks of a picturesque lake. Kids of all ages will enjoy 4-1/2 hours of activities ranging from hay wagon rides to simulated calf roping, from wild west gun shows to pitching horseshoes; from a craft table for the kids to singing cowboys, saloon girls, and western musicians; from sack races to stick horse races. You'll work up an appetite for the best of Texas barbecue with all the fixins' – even hot peach cobbler! Unlimited soft drinks, iced tea and coffee will quench your thirst after boot scootin' to the sounds of country and western D.J., Mr. Excitement. In no time flat instructors will have you city slickers line dancing and two-



Note: stock photo – not Bistro Louise

stepping. You'll leave with wonderful memories and Texas souvenirs including a picture of you on a real Texas longhorn. Cost includes activities listed above, food, non-alcoholic beverages, souvenirs and motorcoach transportation.

Tour # 11 Friday, August 13th,
5: 30 p.m. - 11 :00 p.m.
Cost: \$67 per person

Tour #12 – Bistro Louise Cooking School Brunch

Gourmet magazine and its readers named Bistro Louise one of Dallas-Fort Worth's top restaurants. The respected *Zagat Survey* tapped the bistro as Tarrant County's top Mediterranean restaurant. Fort Worth Weekly calls Bistro Louise *a jewel of a restaurant* and *D Magazine* used such words as *stellar* and *inspired* when describing the food. To quote a Dallas food critic who fell in love with Louise Lamensdorf's tea smoked duck: "A mere 40 miles to Fort Worth for the tea smoked duck, you say? I'll walk if I have to."

Owner Louise Lamensdorf has developed a loyal following who flock to her charming restaurant. She has studied under some of Europe's most highly respected chefs, and has taught courses at an internationally recognized cooking school. Her expertise and charm will be in evidence as she shares her knowledge in the preparation of one of her specialties. You will then get a chance to find out for yourself just how good her food is as you brunch or lunch on what she and her staff have prepared. You will leave with instructions so you can recreate a Bistro Louise specialty to impress your friends and family. Cost for Tour #14 includes motorcoach transportation, instruction and brunch.

Tour #12 Saturday, August 14th
9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon Cost: \$43 per person

All other tour photos courtesy of
Fort Worth Convention and Visitors Bureau

1999 LCCA Annual Convention

Tuesday, August 10th

3:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Registration Desk open for early registrants

Wednesday, August 11th

7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Registration Desk open

8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Tour #1: Tarantula Steam Train & Stockyards Historic District

9:00 a.m. to noon*

Tour #2: The Ballpark & Legends of the Game Museum

9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Tour #3: Age of Steam Museum & JFK

Thursday, August 12th

8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Registration Desk open

8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Old/New Board of Directors Meetings

8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Tour #4: Tarantula Steam Train & Stockyards Historic District

9:00 a.m. to noon

Tour #5: Fort Worth Stockyards Historic District

9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Tour #6: Age of Steam Museum & JFK

12:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Tour #7: Vintage Flying Museum & Texas Motor Speedway

6:30 p.m. to ??

Get Acquainted Party

Friday, August 13th

8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Registration Desk open

8:30 a.m. to noon

Tour #8: Texas Motor Speedway

9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Tour #9: Age of Steam Museum & JFK

1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.*

Tour #10: The Ballpark & Legends of the Game Museum

5:30 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.

Tour #11: "Taste of Texas" at Dude Ranch

10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Trading Hall available for unloading & set-up

3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Annual Membership Meeting

4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Lionel Factory Seminar

Saturday, August 14th

7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Registration Desk open

7:30 a.m. to 8:45 a.m.

Trading Hall available for unloading & set-up

9:00 a.m. to 5:00 a.m.

Trading Hall open

9:00 a.m. to noon

Tour #12: Bistro Louise cooking & brunch

6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Cocktail reception – cash bar

7:00 p.m. to 10:30 p.m.

Banquet, convention closes afterward

Sunday, August 15th

7:30 a.m. to 8:45 a.m.

Trading Hall available for unloading & set-up

9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Registration Desk open

9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Trading Hall open – with public participation

3:00 p.m.

Trading Hall closes – safe travels home

See you in 2000 at Dearborn, Michigan!

* = approximately



The HTOS Layout

A LCCA Convention Highlight

Editor's note: TLR thanks the HTOS for providing information for this article from its web site and photos from its photo file.

Every LCCA Annual Convention is a full-immersion train experience, and the upcoming event in August at Fort Worth will extend and enrich the phenomenon. In the February, April, and June editions of *TLR* we've described the planned activities and tours.

Promoting the Hobby

One of the highlights of the convention will be a wonderful operating train layout designed and built by the Houston Tinplate Operators Society (HTOS). The members of this club are from all over the greater Houston, Texas area. Members like to run and operate O gauge, three-rail Lionel compatible trains, and their interests range from true tinplate (prewar and postwar eras) to near-scale 3-railing. Club facilities are located in west Houston at the Town & Country Mall.

HTOS President, Jim Herron, is also an LCCA member, and he and other members are preparing the



HTOS members with their layout at second base in the Astrodome.

layout for a grand “show and tell” session in Fort Worth for the benefit of LCCAers, visitors, and guests in mid-August.

The portable layout was set up near second base of the baseball diamond in the Astrodome in January, 1999, as an attraction during Astrofest '99. In the midst of this baseball mania, the HTOSers presented toy trains to about 10,000 participants. It was a PR coup. Youngsters and oldsters alike took time out from their baseball endeavors

to watch the trains. No doubt many never had an opportunity to get close to an operating layout such as this. One of the more humorous moments was watching Carl Olson showing Orbit, the Astro's mascot, how to command the trains at the control panel.

HTOS member Mark Whetzel unveiled a new scenery module for Astrofest '99 — a nicely designed ballpark (sorry, not a domed stadium). This



Orbit, the Astros mascot, powers up a train with one of the ZWs.



Youngers seem as engaged with the trains as with the baseball theme of the Astrofest '99 event. That's good news for the future of the train hobby.

1:48 scale "Ballpark by the Tracks" drew many compliments during the day.

Drayton McClain, the owner of the Astros, stopped by the layout on two occasions. With a little coaching from HTOS member Wayne Norman, he ran a train using Command Control. To show appreciation for the opportunity to be there, HTOS President Herron presented McClain with a Houston Astros boxcar. Jim received a nice thank you note from McClain regarding the boxcar and the club's efforts in helping to make Astrofest '99 a success.



Houston Astros owner, Drayton McClain (in red sweater), accepts a Lionel Houston Astros boxcar presented to him by HTOS.

Working on the Railroad

The HTOS portable layout is now receiving much needed repair work so it will be in tip-top shape for the LCCA Annual Convention. John Grisham, Mark Whetzel, and Tom Lytle are involved in an ambitious rewiring project designed to make setting-up the layout considerably easier and operating it more reliable.

Topside, other members are busily redoing the "grass" — scraping and vacuuming off the old grass, applying new paint and sprinkling new turf on the surface.

At Fort Worth as at Le Mans, we'll likely hear the command to begin the fun as Herron calls out, "Gentlemen, start your engines!"

Your LCCA Annual Convention Team

Glenn & Karen Kroh

Glenn is the host for the Fort Worth LCCA Annual Convention. He was born and raised in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and his father was a GG1 locomotive engineer. For the past 22 years Glenn has been a professor at Texas Christian University. He collects both pre- and postwar trains, but he is most interested in prewar tinplate.



Karen is a commercial designer associated with Quorum Architects, a local firm. Glenn and Karen have been married for 31 years and have collected antiques and advertising art. They have two sons, Scott and Brett, and a large golden retriever named Winston. They are both very excited that

the LCCA will be coming to Fort Worth in '99.

Mike, Renee, and David Walter

Mike has collected standard gauge, but now focuses primarily on pre- and postwar Lionel which represent the roots of O scale. Currently he's designing a layout containing both O scale and tinplate sharing the same scenery at different levels. When not dealing with important problems in the train room, Mike is a urologist in private practice in Fort Worth.



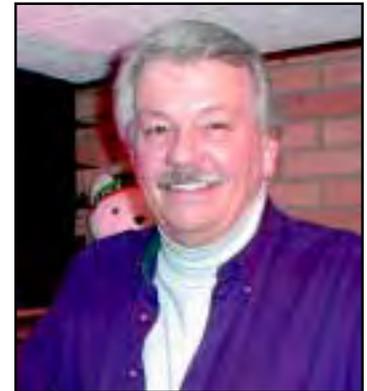
Renee provides considerable encouragement and tolerance, and a tremendous background in event planning through her past involvement with CampFire and current involvement with the YWCA. Her knowledge of the town and its facilities has been invaluable in planning this convention.

She has also become a collector of Department 56 cottages and has been active in the local D56 club, Cowtown Villagers. This, of course, dovetails very nicely into tinplate trains.

David, their son, is in the seventh grade. He has also been exposed to trains since the very beginning. He was carted to his first TCA meet at the ripe old age of one month. His interests lie partly in Lionel and partly in AristoCraft G gauge, as long as the trains are Santa Fe. However, he has entered the age where computer games and girls are ever so much more important than trains (possible, but hard to conceive).

John Fisher

John is a lifelong Lionel operator/collector who has served LCCA as Convention Consultant since 1993. In this volunteer role, he directs the process of selecting and preparing each LCCA Annual Convention, including the upcoming event in Fort Worth. He is the retired President/CEO of the Saint Paul Convention and Visitors Bureau and prior to that served as President of American Security Corporation, the largest private security firm in Minnesota. John has been active in civic and community affairs throughout his career. John and his wife of 32 years, Jan, have two grown daughters. John is currently a member of the LCCA Board.



Murray Hill, Jr.

Murray was born and raised in Fort Worth. His first Lionel train was given to him by his dad in the 1950s along with a layout built by his dad. Murray still has that train and the layout board. He began collecting trains about 10 years ago. For the last nine years Murray has built and operated large layouts in shopping malls to raise money for charities, including the Ronald McDonald House.

His latest train empire — a magnificent 30x50-foot layout — had to be dismantled when the mall changed ownership. Murray collects Postwar Lionel, toys from the 50s and 60s, Plasticville USA, vintage Christmas decorations, and lots of other neat 1950s stuff. Murray runs a sound equipment rental business and also offers event planning services.

Mainline to Chesterfield

by Gary Moreau

Looks Do Count

While looks may not say much about a person's character, they say a lot about model trains and the companies that build them. At Lionel, we go to great lengths and great expense to make sure our products are decorated to the highest possible standard. While the real trains that run by my office are often discolored and worn looking, no train leaves our factory until it's as pristine as we imagine it should be.

A critical part of the decorating process is the creation of paint masks. These are used when the decoration requires long, broad stripes and/or one section of the piece is to be painted a different color. Let me give you an overview of what's involved.

The process of building paint masks can't start until the body-molding tool is complete. The tolerances we aspire to are just too tight to trust to an academic projection. The downside, however, is that it takes us longer to create a new item than it would if we weren't so fussy about tolerances and could build the paint mask while we're building the molding tool.

We start the process by running 150 pieces of the body we want to decorate. The decorating engineers then take the 150 pieces to the lab and measure them on a sizing gauge. They average all of these dimensional measurements and all production pieces must subsequently be molded to within plus or minus .003 of an inch of the standard.

They then create a wax form of that standard part and paint the surface they want to mask with a conductive paint. After drying for 24 hours, the form is placed in a nickel-electroplating tank for another 72 hours. When it's done, we have what we call an electroform — a thin sheet of nickel that is an exact negative image of the standard piece.

By hand, a craftsman then cuts away the part of the form where we want the paint to be applied. Where the form remains, the part is "masked" and no paint is applied. The electroform is then soldered to a formed steel sheet that creates a box around the electroform. This gives the mask strength and rigidity. The steel frame is built in two halves that are clamped together around the production piece being decorated. This combination is attached to a rotary base or fixture so that the operator

can apply the paint at the optimal angle.

Now here's our secret. We pump air through the rotary base and between the mask and the production piece. It's just the right amount to create an invisible "curtain" at the edge of the mask that gives us a crisp, clean line, much sharper than could ever be achieved without it. Remember that even though we mold to very tight tolerances, there will always be a slight variation in the dimensions of each molded piece. The pressurized air will blow out of any gap between the mask and the piece, preventing paint from blowing up under the mask — providing the perfectly crisp line we're trying to achieve. If you've ever done any painting around the house, you'll appreciate the genius of the guy who came up with this idea.

But we're still not done. We always build two sets of paint masks. Why? Because we clean the paint mask in a special cleaning machine after every six pieces of production. Having a second set allows the operator to alternate between them and maintain production.

When the decorating engineers are finished, the two sets of paint masks go back to the production department for a 30-piece sample run. Those are checked and, if approved, the product and the tools are ready to be scheduled for production.

It's a painstaking process. It takes time, investment, and very experienced and skilled people. A complicated deco scheme can require up to \$75,000 in paint masks and take several months of time. But we think it's worth it. It's that kind of investment and commitment that allows us to say, "It's not just a model train, it's a Lionel."

THE PATCH



TLR authors receive a memento of their published work in this magazine — a LCCA embroidered patch.

As a "Thank you" from LCCA, authors also receive by first class mail an advance copy of the magazine containing their work.

New authors are welcome on the *TLR* Editorial Team. Submit text to the Editor by e-mail or by computer-generated or typewritten text sent by U.S. Mail. Good quality color photos in 4x6 inch size are preferred for illustrating the article. Photos will be returned after publication.

Authors who are also Lionel Ambassadors receive credit for their work published in *The Lion Roars*.

Mike Mottler, #12394
Editor, *The Lion Roars*
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Operating Layouts • LCCA Banquet • Trading Hall • LCCA Membership Meeting • Lionel Factory Seminar • Tarrantula Steam Train • Stockyards District • Tours • Age of Steam Museum •

LCCA

29th ANNUAL CONVENTION



FORT WORTH, TEXAS
AUGUST 10 THRU 15, 1999