

TCA Mission: To develop an appreciation of and to preserve an important segment of history – Tinplate Toy Trains –through research, education, community outreach, fellowship, establishment of collecting standards, and to promote the growth and enjoyment of collecting and operating toy, model and scale trains.



Desert Division *DISPATCH*



ARIZONA • NEW MEXICO • WEST TEXAS

VISIT OUR WEBSITE: www.tcadd.org
Click on the link to our e-Bay offerings.

Volume 36, No. 7

September, 2007

A MEET IS A MEET IS A MEET – BUT “BEAT THE HEAT” IS AN ADVENTURE

Once again this August, the Desert Division headed north to the cooler climes of Prescott for the “Beat the Heat” Meet. Some members traveled on their own; others took the Grand Canyon Division bus. The meet itself is a half-day affair, opening at 9 AM and closing at 1 PM. The rest of the day is what makes this meet so special.

This year there were six venues at which train lovers could view operating layouts. Three of these will also be included on one of the tours during the 2009 TCA National Convention. Peter Atonna’s layout will afford the longest visit, as it is here that we will enjoy a catered lunch. But not to be outdone, there are others which will peak our interest. First is Ray Dextrase, whose assortment of pre-war goodies extends to three areas of his home. Second is Marlin Benson, whose collection and layout fill three levels. The scenes below only skim the surface.



A small segment of Ray Dextrase’s pre-war collection, which includes 16 stoves, a dozen sewing machines, Mickey Mouse items, ships, a carousel, horse drawn carriages, as well as trains.



Marlin Benson has converted an auto shop into three levels of trains and train memorabilia. You have to see it to believe it!

COMING UP . . .

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| September 8 | Regular Division Meet - Jaycees Hall, Scottsdale, AZ – 9 AM |
| September 29 | Rio Grande Chapter Meet - Albuquerque, NM – 10 AM |
| October 13 | Regular Division Meet - Jaycees Hall, Scottsdale, AZ – 9 AM |
| October 13-14 | Railfair - McCormick Stillman Railroad Park, Scottsdale |
| October 18-20 | Eastern Division Meet – York, PA |
| November 3 | “Pumpkin Meet” – Albuquerque, NM – 9 AM |
| November 10 | Desert Division Golf Tourney – Green Valley, AZ – Noon |
| November 24-25 | Turkey Meet and Auction - Mesa, AZ |

IN MEMORIAM

Recently the TCA has lost two very influential and important members. George Yohe was a past President of TCA, as well as serving as its secretary for several years. He and his family were instrumental in building the York Meet into the huge success it is today. George passed away in July, after a long bout with Alzheimer's. He will be missed throughout TCA.



Lenny Dean also passed away in July. A little man with a big imagination, he is probably best known for his ties with Lionel, where he was a moving force for over 60 years. A strong spokesman for toy train collecting, Lenny attended York meets as a Lionel representative right up to the end. The picture at right shows him with Chris Allen and Gordon Wilson during the Pittsburgh Convention in 2006.



Our own Cole Gibbs continues to be an inspiration to all of us. Most recently Dan Palaschak sent a picture of a cherished train set which he acquired from Cole at a Great American Train Show in 1986. Cole's price was too high, so he and Dan negotiated a deal which included dinner and a hotel room at Dan's place of business at the time. That picture appears at the right.

THE BLUE COMET

By Werner Hennig TCA 95-42155

I am sure that some of you have the Blue Comet toy train, but what do you know about the history of that famous REAL train?

The Blue Comet belonged to the Central Railroad of New Jersey, better known as the Jersey Central. When I was very young, my father worked for the Jersey Central. While the primary business of the Jersey Central was hauling coal from the Pennsylvania coalmines to the power plants in the New York and Philadelphia areas, they also operated commuter trains primarily in the New Jersey areas.



One Saturday, my father took my brother and me to the Newark, NJ train yard where the Blue Comet was stored, and we walked the length of the Blue Comet. What a beautiful train. The seats were a dark blue mohair and all the interior metal work was a rich cream color. After we walked the length of the train, my father boosted us up into the engine compartment, which was all blue as was the exterior of the engine.

The Blue Comet saw very limited service. It was primarily a summer commuter train for the wealthy between New York City and the New Jersey seashore.

Since steam engines were not permitted in the Pennsylvania Railroad tunnel that went under the Hudson River, a yard diesel was used to push the cars through the tunnel and into Pennsylvania Station in New York City. At a given departure time, the yard diesel would again pull the cars from Penn Station, under the Hudson River through the Penn Tunnel into New Jersey, where the Blue Comet steam engine would connect to the cars, make one stop in Newark, then proceed on an express run to Southern New Jersey, to make the return trip the next morning.

What are now large tracts of homes, were in those days vast private domains. When the heirs could no longer afford the cost of maintaining these large domains, they were sold off to developers. Some of the homes became summer hotels. The Blue Comet operated primarily between Memorial Day and Labor Day, when the estates closed down for the winter. As more and more people purchased homes in Southern New Jersey, regular commuter service took over and the Blue Comet disappeared from the scene.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings!

Almost September, hard to believe, but since the "Beat the Heat" Meet has come and gone (August 18) I guess it is true. Especially since the Fall York meet brochure has arrived, which is also a sign of the times!

The Prescott "Beat the Heat" Meet was an event not missed by many of the Desert Division members. I saw many of our members selling, buying and browsing! It was a great opportunity to renew many friendships that this event is famous for! Even got to see some terrific layouts along the way!

This fall has a lot of train events packed into it. Our September meet is on the 8th. The October meeting is on October 13th, which is the same weekend as Rail Fair at the Scottsdale Railroad Park. York is October 18th, 19th and 20th. The Turkey Meet is November 24th and 25th. The Tucson TTOM is having a meet December 8th and our Holiday Party is December 9th. Whew! A lot of opportunities for you to get together with friends with a common interest! As well as a chance to buy/sell trains!

This year you will elect Division Officers again. If you are interested in serving on the Desert Division Board please let our election chairperson know. You may also be receiving a call from the committee as well. Please give it some thought. Remember, all offices are for a 2-year term.

Chris and Laurel Allen have headed up the coffee club for the Division meetings this year. However, we are looking for someone else to take over the activity starting with the January meeting.

The Convention Committee continues to meet and work on the 2009 National Convention. Don't forget to order the Apache Beer Car, which is the 2nd of the Division fund-raiser cars.

Share the hobby with a friend or co-worker. Invite someone to the next meeting!

Happy Trains,



AFTER MEET VISITATIONS

This month we are fortunate to have two after-meet visitations. Both are very close to the Scottsdale Jaycees Hall, so plan to have lunch at Randy's (on Chaparral) and visit these two unique layouts on Saturday afternoon, September 8.

RIO GRANDE CHAPTER NEWS

by Gregory Palmer TCA#94-39039

Summer is winding to a close, and the fall Train Season is just around the corner. I hope you all had a great summer. Some very important news for all Rio Grande Chapter members: due to some schedule problems I have had to change the September Chapter Meet date from September 15th to SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 29TH AT 10:00 AM. The location will be the same as always, the Sombra Del Monte Church at 2528 Utah N.E., in Albuquerque. The September 29th Chapter Meet will feature a presentation by Mike Shea. He will give a talk on the differences between MTH, Lionel, Weaver, K-Line, and Williams locomotives. This should be very interesting for the Chapter members who operate modern equipment. I am also working on having the plastics expert from the Sandia National Labs give a talk on plastics, both old and new, and how to repair them. Please bring old plastic locos, transformers, or other toy train plastic items. He will try to go over the type and repair of old plastics. Also please bring show and tell items. It has been very interesting, observing the different types of toy trains we all collect. It is this difference that makes our Chapter great. As always, we will have a discussion of any new news items from the TCA Standards Committee.

At this Meet we will need to elect a person to serve as a Board Member at Large, to fill Scott Eckstein's term. Scott is going to fill Brenna Leigh Bosch's term. This election will take place at this Meet. We will take nominations for the full slate of officers for the election on January 19th, 2008. These will be the officers and Board members for the 2008 and 2009 term. Please feel free to contact Scott or myself about any position for the coming term. Due to the late date of the September 29th Chapter Meet we will not have a chance to have the Rio Grande Chapter Meet photos from the September Meet in the October Dispatch. However we will have the photos in the November Division Newsletter. Please do not forget the November 3rd TCA Rio Grande Chapter Pumpkin Meet. This public swap meet will be bigger and better than last year. The flyer and table request is included in this issue of the Newsletter. Please sign up early, as we have already started to sell tables.

Please do not forget the date change of the September Chapter Meet. It is now SEPTEMBER 29TH AT 10:00AM AT THE SOMBEA DEL MONTE CHURCH, 2528 UTAH N.E., ALBUQUERQUE, NM. See all of you at the September 29th Meet.

TRAIN COLLECTORS ASSOCIATION RIO GRANDE CHAPTER



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PUMPKIN MEET



TOY TRAIN SWAP MEET

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 3rd

9:00AM TO 3:00PM

SOMBRA DEL MONTE CHRISTIAN CHURCH
2528 UTAH N.E., ALBUQUERQUE, NM

ADULTS \$1.00 UNDER 12 FREE WITH ADULT
TCA MEMBERS FREE WITH CURRENT TCA CARD
TCA MEMBERS CAN SHOP EARLY FROM

9:00 AM-10:00 AM

OPEN FOR THE PUBLIC FROM 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM



TABLE RESERVATIONS FOR TCA MEMBERS ONLY
AT \$10.00 PER TABLE - LIMIT 3 TABLES



DEALER SETUP FROM 8:00 AM - 9:00 AM - TCA RULES WILL APPLY

FOR INFORMATION CALL: Greg Palmer 505-898-3840 or Bill Spofford at 505-821-4051

NAME _____ TCA# _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____

NUMBER OF TABLES _____ @ \$10.00 EA _____

**SEND A CHECK PAYABLE TO TCA-RIO GRANDE CHAPTER. MAIL TO:
GREGORY PALMER 9633 2nd St. N.W., Albuquerque, NM 87114**

I agree to comply with all of the rules and regulations of Train Collectors Association (TCA) and its Divisions and Chapters in effect from time to time, specifically including all rules and regulations of all TCA committees and any actions and rulings of TCA committees. I also agree that all items sold by me to any TCA member at any TCA sponsored meet shall be sold on the basis that I represent that all such items are authentic and in the manufacturers original condition unless I have caused any such item to be appropriately marked as a restoration or reproduction.

Signature

Date

YOUR VOTE COUNTS

The 2007 TCA National Convention is over, fall is around the corner, and it's time to vote for the TCA National officers for next year. Your next TCA National Headquarters News will contain an informational booklet and a ballot. Be sure to read the bios to help you decide where to place your vote. The officers you select will help Chris Allen, the Desert Division's fifth TCA National President, to run the organization next year. Running uncontested for Treasurer is incumbent Bill Kotek, of the NETCA Division. For Secretary, there are two candidates: Hope Danielson, representing Eastern Division, and incumbent Sarah Reed Lavinus, nominated by Southeastern Division. For Vice-President, Ron Stowell, President of Rocky Mountain Division, and Paul Edgar, President of Keystone Division, are vying for your vote. President-Elect will be between Bill Miles of Atlantic Division, and incumbent Clem Clement, of Eastern Division.

This is your organization, and you can determine its direction. All ballots must be postmarked by the end of September, so vote as soon as you get your ballot.

WE NEED YOUR HELP

Is anyone driving to York this fall? If so, please contact Gordon Wilson (480-837-5344). He will need portage for several boxes of paper which must go back to TCA Headquarters.

ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER

You may opt to receive your monthly Desert Division Dispatch online instead of in the mail. The savings in printing costs and postage will be used to help defray the costs of the TCA National Convention being hosted by the Desert Division in 2009. This program relates to newsletters only; all members will still receive ballots, rosters, and membership cards via the US Post Office.

If you wish to receive the newsletter online, send an e-mail to christielwilson@aol.com. Be sure to include your name, TCA number, and e-mail address to which the newsletter should be sent.

Thank you for your support of the Desert Division and the electronic newsletter program.

BOARD MEETING

The next meeting of the Desert Division Board of Directors will be held on Wednesday, September 5, beginning at 7:30 PM at the home of Gordon and Christie Wilson. Members are welcome to attend. Please call 480-837-5344 to be sure there are enough chairs.

CELEBRATE ARIZONA!

The second in a series of cars by the Desert Division

Buy this Atlas 40' woodside reefer with authentic graphics and share the spirit of the beer that Arizona drank in the '30s following prohibition

Order deadline: Nov. 15, 2007
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Desert Division members, pick up your car at a meet and pay only \$66 with no sales tax! _____ Address _____

Total Enclosed: Make check/money order to: Desert Division \$ _____

Mail to: Desert Division 25375 N. Feather Mtn. Rd. Paulden, AZ 86334

You may also order from our website: www.tcadd.org

THE END OF THE QUEST OR CHECK MY PULSE - AM I STILL ALIVE?

by Paul Wassermann TCA 73-5169

I couldn't believe it! There in my hand, almost trembling with excitement, lay the end of a 27-year search. It was one of those moments that leave you dumbstruck. It just couldn't be true. To fully understand why I was shaken, let me take you back to 1980, specifically March 1980, when I received an urgent letter from Dick Corser indicating that I was tied for first place in his mail auction of a Lionel 703 locomotive with three passenger cars. At that time I was on a mission to complete the Lionel 700 series locomotives, and I was only missing a 703 to have an example of each one. For those of you unfamiliar with Lionel O gauge production, the 700 series of locomotives were offered in 1915 and 1916 and represent the first two years of cataloged Lionel O gauge trains.

Mr. Corser had a 703 and three cars listed as a "by mail auction item." With the news, from Mr. Corser, that I was tied with another unknown bidder, I vowed to win the auction; and rather than rebid by mail, I simply sent him a check for a higher amount than I had bid. He then subsequently acknowledged that I was indeed the high bidder and the set was mine! Great! Now a 703 can join my 700, 701, and 706 locomotives.

However when I received the package in the mail, the set inside forever changed my train collecting life. Many of you are familiar with this story, which has been recounted before, but suffice it to say that the train set I received turned out to be the prototype set for the Lionel 703 locomotive, the 611 baggage car (never produced), 610 Pullman, and 612 Observation cars with five (not six) windows! The set was exactly as depicted in the Lionel 1915 catalog; in fact, it was the catalog illustration that convinced me that my 703 set represented the very beginning of Lionel O gauge production.

What good is having a prototype if you don't have the items actually produced? One can only try to explain how the production model differs from the prototype; to really be effective in sharing this history, one has to have a model as made. So with that idea in mind, I spent the next 27 years looking for a regular production 703! Think about that for a moment...27 years! Looking for one single toy train item! All the large toy train dealers and advanced collectors knew I had been looking for this model; if I could manage to get one, I could display it next to the prototype and complete a truly amazing historic exhibit of early Lionel O gauge. Well, I didn't even come close to finding a 703. I had attended about 40 Yorks, as many Cal Stewart and Nor-Cal Meets, and nearly two dozen national conventions without a single sighting of a 703. Last year, finally, a glorious 703 set was offered to me but the price tag left it out of my reach. After that, I mentally resigned myself to the fact that one was not to be had.

And that brings us to Denver and the TCA National Convention held in Westminster this past June. I had brought a few items to sell and some fund raising materials for the Desert Division hosted Star-Spangled Convention to be held in 2009, so I didn't get to make the rounds of the hall until at least an hour into the meet. On my first pass I noted a table filled with early Lionel O gauge trains. Included in the offerings were perhaps eight or more 156-style locos in green, brown, and maroon, arranged diagonally and upright in such a fashion that each one had to be examined to determine the number. I casually looked at the first dark green 156, the next brown 156X, then another 156, then a 156X, and almost decided to move on before looking at one more dark green 156 wannabe. This couldn't possibly be a 703, no pony trucks and it was almost two hours into the meet.

And that is when lightning struck. For there, in beautifully preserved bold gold gilt rubber stamping was the number "703"! It was the first time in my life I had actually held one in my hand, and only the third I had actually seen. I was absolutely stunned!!

I have told you before that one of the great benefits of this hobby is the wonderful friends you make. And no exception here. The seller, William Harrison, is the son of the collector who amassed these beautiful trains, Glen H. Harrison, known as "Doc" Harrison, and an early charter member of the TCA. William appeared just as happy as I that I had realized my quest, that the journey was over.



Prototype 703 and Denver 703 acquisition.

RAILROAD -CHANGE



ANTIQUÉ TRAINS - #1 Lantern Lane, Turnersville, NJ 08012 (Phone: 856-589-6224) Rich Bimmer, Proprietor. Lionel Value-Added Dealer/Authorized Service Center. MTH, American Flyer. New, used, trade-ins welcome. Lionel and Flyer parts back to 1915. Repairs guaranteed for one year.

ARIZONA TRAIN DEPOT! – The fall train season is here right now. Selection changes weekly and we have limited quantities on choice engines and rolling stock that are too numerous to list. Latest Lionel and K-Line by Lionel is here, so stop in and ask for your copy. Remember we are now carrying ATLAS Trainman O gauge freight cars! Look for the RED DOT specials and SAVE BIG! – Always ask for your TCA club member discount! - AZ TRAIN DEPOT 755 E. McKellips Road, Mesa - 480-833-9486 open late Wed.

BURLING'S TON OF TRAINS – Authorized Lionel, MTH, K-LINE & Mantua Dealer. Pat Eiff has joined our staff to better serve our customers in sales and service of both new and pre-owned trains. With the largest selection of Post-War through new Lionel in Arizona, we invite you to see our different “Set of the Month” each month. We also buy trains. Hours are 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM Monday through Friday and by appointment. 16924 E. Colony Dr., Fountain Hills, AZ 85268 Phone: 480-816-6501

GERRY'S TRAINS – Complete parts & repair service for Lionel, American Flyer, standard gauge pre & post war and Marklin HO trains. I buy old trains and toys, one piece or entire collections. Gerry Klei, 8608 E. Cheryl Drive, Scottsdale, AZ Phone (480) 991-2536.

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MESA MODELS/MESA TRAINS – Valley's largest selection of building and structure kits, layout details and accessories at everyday discount prices. Atlas O (2 and 3 rail) and Weaver rolling stock plus a full line of Atlas O track and accessories. Scales include O, On3/On30, HO and G. The store has just been expanded and has newly extended hours – 9 AM to 5:30 PM Tu-Fri; 9-5 Saturday and 11-3 Sundays. Visit our website at <https://www.mesamodels.net> 6032 E. McKellips Road, Mesa (NE corner of McKellips and Recker Road) 480-357-8800.

REPAIRS - Pat Eiff, 28 years of toy train repair experience, does train repairs in his home. Also trains for sale. Call him at 480-816-9624 or visit his website <http://www.toysthruetime.com>.

FOR SALE – Out of print Greenberg books: Lionel, American Flyer, Marx, etc. Please call Bruce Greenberg at 703-461-6991 (9-5 Eastern Daylight) or visit my web site, sykesvillehistory.us, for a current list.

FOR SALE - Do you want quality, good-looking, versatile shelving to display your trains? RAIL RAX is the way to go! Contact Bill Mack, 480-391-3336 for an incredibly low price quotation.

FOR SALE – 1150 LASER SET/OB. No rocket. G/8 \$180. Prewar 129E Steam Freight Set, 260E/260T 2-4-2 “O” Gauge Tinsplate Outfit, B7/B8/OB \$1795. Lots of Good Stuff at Right Price or will trade for Comparable Std. Gauge Stuff – Buyer pays Shipping & Handling by UPS Ground. Bill Mischen – 915-598-8566 anytime or e-mail: dzedo2@earthlink.net.

WANTED – Standard Gauge preferred, or Gauge 1: Rich-Art McKeen motor cars, Rich-Art Cascade Bipolar Electric, MTH Ives black diamond set, MTH Flyer President's Special, Roberts Lines Burlington Zephyr, Lyle Cain's Toonerville Depot with figures, Delton Santa Fe railtruck with tools and garage set. Condition: C-7 or better. Donald Neely, 7 Allen St. – STE 300, Hanover, NJ 03755-2065. E-mail donaldjneely@earthlink.net Phone 603-643-1200 or FAX 603-643-9269.

FOR SALE – Post War Lionel ZW Transformers in Ex Condition: 250 Watt - \$195; 275 Watt - \$245. Buyer pays shipping costs via UPS Ground. Call Marty Nickerson at 928-778-4294 or e-mail 4aztrains@earthlink.net.

WANTED – Motor for 616 Flying Yankee power car or 636 City of Denver power car. Will buy complete power car if reasonable. Call Marty Nickerson at 928-778-4294.

FOR SALE – Lionel 390E Freight Set – 5 cars restored - \$750.00. Santa Fe with 15 cars, Mint - \$650. 400 E Reproduction Engine – Mint - \$800. Contact Sam Testa, 17541 Camino Confianza, Sahuarita, AZ 85629, or call 520-625-8303.

This page is provided as a service to our members for trading among themselves.
Please contact them for items you may have, want, or need.

**TRAIN COLLECTORS ASSOCIATION
DESERT DIVISION**

Gordon Wilson, Editor
Desert Division Dispatch
16231 E. Ocotillo Drive
Fountain Hills, AZ 85268

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COMING EVENTS

- September 8 Regular Division Meet, Jaycees Hall, Scottsdale, AZ – 9 AM
8102 E. Jackrabbit Road, between Chaparral and McDonald
- September 29 Rio Grande Chapter Meet – Albuquerque, NM – 10 AM
Sombra Del Monte Church, 2528 Utah NE
- October 13 Regular Division Meet, Jaycees Hall, Scottsdale, AZ – 9 AM
- October 13-14 Railfair, McCormick-Stillman Railroad Park, Scottsdale, AZ
- October 17-20 Eastern Division Meet, York, PA
- November 3 2nd Annual Rio Grande Chapter “Pumpkin Meet” – 9 AM
Sombra Del Monte Church, 2528 Utah NE, Albuquerque, NM
Contact: Bill Spofford (505-821-4051) or Greg Palmer (505-898-3840)
- November 10 Desert Division Golf Tourney – GreenValley, AZ
Contact: Dannie Martin (520-648-5055) or Gordon Wilson (480-837-5344)
- November 24-25 Turkey Meet and Auction – Mesa Convention Center, 263 N. Center St., Mesa, AZ
Sign up now. Use the Registration Form in this issue of the newsletter.
Contact: Ed Georgevich, Chairman, or Bob Herman, Registration

DESERT DIVISION - TCA BOARD OF DIRECTORS - 2006

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