

NOVEMBER 18 MEET AT HARRISON - 1st ANNIVERSARY**METROPOLITAN DIVISION**

TRAIN COLLECTORS ASSOCIATION, INC.

President Joseph Levy
 Secretary-Treasurer Harold H. Carstens
 Directors: Joseph Ranker, John Marron, G. Robinson

METCA DUES ARE NOW PAYABLE FOR 1963. 1962 memberships expire Dec. 31, 1962. 1963 renewal memberships are \$1 each. New METCA members signing up after Nov. 1 will automatically be signed up through 1963. METCA memberships are valid only if you maintain TCA national membership.

HERSHEY OCT 12-14 MEET A REAL WING DING AFFAIR!

Eastern Division's last Hershey meet lays claim to being the largest TCA meet held thus far. 135 paid admissions and 15 quests, plus family members made this meet even larger than the Pittsburg National, according to Joe Ranker. METCA members present included Joe Reid and his wife, Phil Rosen, Joe Levy, Joe Ranker, Doc Robinson, Al Bennett, Willie Vvan Roosbroeck, Al Bennett, Bill Vagell, Earl Doney, Warren Schuch, Frank Leslie, Fred Weber, Les Morris, Harold Sachs, Ted Geng, George Miller, Ben Smith, and others... Ranker picked up a gorgeous Ives set with an 1132 steam loco, plus Ives-AF gon., Ives-AF tanker, and other rarities... Les Morris got his long desired Blue Comet. Freddie Weber acquired a Lionel #303 8-wheel open trolley... New Eastern Division officers for 1963 include pres. Jim McKircher, Veep George Yohe, and secy/treas. George Buckley.

The idea of a Metropolitan Division started at the Pittsburg National TCA meet held at Pittsburg, in June 1961, when Hal Carstens, Joe Levy, Doc Robinson, and Joe Ranker began tossing the idea around. These four TCAers felt that a need existed inasmuch as the New York area was on a fringe between the Eastern Division usually meeting at Hershey and the New England Division, most of whose meets were held in upper Connecticut or north. TCAers in this area, numbering about 55, had to travel 100 miles or more to attend a Divisional meet.

Area TCAers were mailed a questionnaire on July 16, 1961. Results were sufficiently encouraging to warrant going ahead. When our first meet at Englewood, N. J., was over on Nov. 25, Metropolitan Division Charter Membership closed with 53 members. 25 members were needed to receive official TCA sanction.

From the start, METCA has received gracious cooperation from our two sister Divisions: Eastern and New England. 45 collectors registered at our first meet. There were 73 registered at our second meet also held in Englewood. 84 collectors registered at our 3rd meet held last May at Harrison. A somewhat larger crowd registered at the joint METCA-NETCA meet at Norwalk last September.

The first 3 newsletters were mimeographed after which we switched to photo offset. Meet notices which must go to all TCA members in METCA territory continue to be mimeographed.

NEW METCA MEMBERS - Thru Oct. 25, 1962:

89 Bill Kelishek

METCA'S ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING AND FALL TRAIN MEET will be held at the Tom Cabatto Club, Purdy Ave., Harrison, N. Y., on Sunday, November 18, 1962. This is the same location as our May 1962 meet.

The nominating committee has selected a slate of officers, increasing the present 5 man Board of Directors to a 7 man board, adding a separate Treasurer in place of the present secretary-Treasurer plus one additional director. Other business will also be on the agenda, including a recommendation that METCA put in a bid for the 1964 TCA National Convention, thus permitting West Coasters to tie in their vacation and TCA meet at the same time the New York World Fair will be open. Meet flyer is being mailed all TCA members in METCA area.

JOINT NETCA - METCA MEET BIGGEST YET IN METCA!

Although official figures haven't yet been received from our New England Division Secretary, the Norwalk Joint NETCA-METCA Meet was one of the finest social affairs yet staged. There was plenty of parking at the Ponus Ridge Junior High and for most METCA members, the trip was a short one of one hour. A loading dock made it easy to unload the cars. Tables were plentiful and NETCA-METCA made free coffee available to all. 75 delicious lunches were also served by the school.

Carl and Emily Pieper had put in long hours on the advance preparations. Following the meet, most of the collectors dropped in at Carl's slightly fabulous Std. Gauge C&E Lines (See photo METCA Newsletter #6) which covers the entire basement. Here TCAers saw 381s and 402s and Spastas and Mayflowers and even a homebuilt gas electric strut their stuff over specially drawn brass T rail spiked to individual wood ties. (And did a battered old Lionel 402 ever outpull a doubleheaded 381!). The walls of the C&E are lined with one of the finest American Flyer wide gauge collections we have yet seen, along with Ives, Lionel, and other gems.

Following the open house, better than fifty collectors were served an excellent dinner by Emily Pieper, a tradition with our New England Division which is slowly starting in METCA territory. After dinner it was still more operation although some stalwarts gave up trains in favor of color TV. It can be reported that electric trains give delightful full color interference lines on color TV.

Out of towners included Prexy Bill Clapper from Cincinnati, Mr & Mrs Rey Galbraith on their honeymoon, and Lou Redman.

NEW MAILING LIST TO BE MADE UP-

A new mailing list for 1963 will shortly be made up. If the stencil for your name and address is incorrect, notify the secretary by post card or at the Harrison meet. METCA members should receive both the METCA NEWSLETTER and the mimeographed meet notices. TCA members living in METCA territory receive only the meet notice unless they also pay their \$1 yearly METCA dues. 1963 METCA dues are due now.

CHANGE IN APPLICATION OF TCA MEMBERS-

National headquarters has advised that a new membership application form is being prepared, making the old form obsolete. Applicants must now submit the form PLUS the initiation fee and dues for the current year PLUS \$1 additional for METCA membership if desired. Applicants enter on probationary membership for a one year period.

Now, the feature car which was shown in living color in several yearly catalogs, the fabulous observation car "Army-Navy". This car was most unique in that it incorporates most every feature of the other three cars except the baggage doors, plus several unique onto itself. The unobstructed, beautifully styled rear observation platform with its rear canopy platform with its white canopy and colored marker lights, its clever placement of bulbs illuminating the platform as well as the "President's Special" tail sign was realism personified. The lighting was accomplished by means of a bulb on the platform floor shielded by a cover similar to a headlight hood, one bulb in the ceiling under the canopy, and two bulbs in the interior; four in all on a single passenger car. The windows were of both the types incorporated on the other cars. The forward 18, 9 on each side, were the narrow single litetype while the rear 8, 4 on each side, were the wide 2-lite design with brass framed opening. This car was alive with color and glitter. The brass and nickel were beautifully harmonized by the white, red, and two-toned blue colors. A fine 3/4 rear view picture of the car standing alone was one of the best detailed and colorful single car illustrations of standard gauge elegance.

This set of four superlative cars and engine which has just been described was the set generally known as the true "President's Special". It was first pictured and featured in the 1928 catalog and was captioned as the "Advanced President's Special". This set was produced thru 1934.

But this was not the first of the American Flyer wide gauge "President's Special". It was the 3rd train to bear this magic name, magic in that no other name in tinsplate history is or was as well known. (How about "Blue Comet"? Ed.)

The first President's Special appeared in 1926, the second year of wide gauge production for American Flyer. This was a light brown train which consisted of #4039 O-4-O loco and three cars. The lithographed cars were the 4080 mail and baggage combination, #4081 coach, and the #4082 observation. The #4080 had 2 interior lights, the #4081 had 3, and the #4082 had 4, so even at its inception the President's Special lighting was unusual. Interestingly enough, this same set was cataloged in 1927 as "The Chief" but the loco was changed to the #4677 which had a slightly longer frame but the same cab.

1927 was the 20th Anniversary of the American Flyer Company and they went all out to improve their variety of trains. They made a special point of rich coloring and in fact, dubbed their line the "rainbow line" because its colors were rivaled only by the rainbow.

In keeping with this, the 2nd train of the series was introduced as the "Improved President's Special". This version had the 3 dark blue lithographed cars with orange window frames and white lettering. The lettering was "West Point" on the observation, "Annapolis" on the coach, and "U. S. Mail" on the 4-door full baggage. The dark blue engine cab had only 4 plates and was numbered #4687. It had nickel headlight hoods, pantographs, and plates. Its frame, truck, sand domes, pilot castings, and wheels were black. No American Eagle graced its leading truck and nowhere did the magic name appear on the train itself. The louvers on the engine cab were stamped and cut directly in the sides of the loco and were sometimes painted gold. Also below the center window of the cab sides there sometimes appeared a hole for lubrication purposes.

These were the American Flyer "President's Specials" but American Flyer either recognized a fine design or the public made them realize it as they used its components in other sets such as the "Mayflower" and the "Flying Colonel".

This article was intended to give you some of the highlights and details of these famous trains. The other sets in this series were mentioned for continuity and interest. We hope that if you do not now own and cherish one of these beautiful examples of the

Golden Era of Tinsplate, that you may someday have your dream come true.

TCA DIVISIONS INCLUDING METCA have agreed that the TCA QUARTERLY shall have reprint rights on all articles of historic interest. That means that any further articles of this type will have to come from METCA members. And of course, anything special should always be sent to the TCA QUARTERLY.

AROUND THE DIVISION-

Bill Vagell's new No. 2 train parts catalog out with a \$1 price tag. Much bigger than his first edition. Friday night usually a bull session at Treasure House with collectors dropping in from far afield... Warren Shuch better after several days in the hospital following an eye accident... Hal Carstens picked up a tiny 8" long cast iron loco with tender and separate coach at Peacham, Vermont; had lain for years in an old country store until an antique dealer picked up the last 4. Hal got the last one and it is mint.

Who needs it less dept.: Bill Krames picked up a nice Ives 1694 which replaces one he had sold some time back. Bills new train room progresses... Frank Leslie specializes in loco builder plates and has a room full... Missing at the Norwalk meet were John and Mae Wrona who had to cancel out because their son broke his leg... Have you heard the one told by Maury Romer of A. C. Gilbert, one of the old American Flyer Mfg. Co. men, of how AF used to dump std. ga. remainders into the Chicago River so they wouldn't have to be listed on the yearly inventory? Its true... Hertz's "Collecting Model Trains" now priced at \$8.95...



FRANK LESLIE (METCA #85), 123 Lake Avenue, Fair Haven, N. J. (Phone SHadyside 1-1999) specializes in locomotive number and builder plates and also has a nice old toy train collection under way, including a 318/318 he has butted together into a 6-4-4-6. Also a 381, 9E in 2-tone green, Shasta, Bunker Hill, Blue Comet, etc.

METCA TO SEEK 1964 NATIONAL CONVENTION

At a special meeting of the METCA Board of Directors, it was recommended that METCA put in a bid for the 1964 TCA National Convention. TCA regulations provide that any bids for a national meet must provide for ample hall and hotel space. METCA's Board recommends METCA for the 1964 National because it will coincide with the New York World Fair, making a combination Fair-TCA vacation attractive to TCA members living west of Pittsburgh. There will be further discussion at the Nov. METCA business meeting.

IVES NO. 4 SET UNEARTHED BY CARSTENS

A very clean Ives O gauge No. 4 clockwork set has been acquired by Hal Carstens, consisting of the cast iron No. 1 O-4-O loco (1923 date on motor), with No. 11 4-whl tender, plus the Nos. 50-51-52 cars in orange. The 52 car has a green roof while the 50 and 51 have an orange roof. Yup, the set also includes a wind up key, shiny track, and the original box.