

METCA

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EDITORIAL COMMENT

It thoroughly amazes me as to how the return to cooler weather stimulates our ranks to regenerated interest in our train collecting endeavors. The cooler weather, the changing natural scene, the long evenings, all seem to lend themselves most effectively in triggering the adrenaline to flow through our arteries. The advent of Spring itself seems only second best in stimulating our interest toward new horizons.

The long summer layoff precipitated by the hot sunshine, beach activities and vacation fun, gradually yet magically fade away. Our thoughts return to indoor activities and the continued pursuit of Train Collecting to which we've all dedicated ourselves.

With rampant inflation and increasing scarcity, it becomes increasingly difficult to find those long sought after items that we somehow have resolved to eventually include in our cherished collections.

Yesterday's prices are truly a fast-fleeting dream. I suppose it behooves us all to resolve ourselves to these realities and arrange our thoughts, judgements and aspirations accordingly.

Your Editor and the Administrative Cabinet of METCA warmly invite you to our November Christmas Meet with the hope that your day at Kenilworth will be well spent and thoroughly enjoyed. We've ordered a great day weatherwise and we trust our meet will be as well attended and enjoyed as our desires and hard work have led us to continue in METCA'S behalf.

Plan now to come and bring a friend. Don't forget the fact that we have accomodation for plenty of table space including provision for a light supper and a bar for those who are so inclined.

See you there!

Richard J. Denes
Editor

PHONY METCA CABS

There are phony METCA Cabs being reproduced with new mold and no louvers on nose of the cab.

BEWARE: Contact Joe Francis if you see any for sale or someone who was selling the above mentioned cabs.

SOME THOUGHTS ON TRAINS AND TRAIN COLLECTING

I am quite sure that each of us can look back in time to that incident or set of circumstances which first stirred our interest in trains, though the idea of collecting them may have come upon us much later. Perhaps it was our first set of trains usually bought by our father for our (his?) pleasure.

Whether they were electric and meant to run around the Christmas tree or were metal or wooden pull trains purchased at the local "5 and 10" when it was indeed a "5 and 10."

For me it was living adjacent to the JCL main line when its four track mainline carried a variety of trains from Camelback powered commuter trains, double ended

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Baldwin diesels, Reading Mikados hauling strings of empty coal cars back to the Pennsy mines, a Baltimore & Ohio President Pacific with a string of blue and gray coaches listed in the public timetable as the National Limited. My interest was stimulated by live breathing steam. I spent many happy moments perched on our garage watching this parade of steam.

What better way to create happiness or achieve satisfaction than to recreate that favorite scene and now find yourself in the engineer's seat, if only behind a ZW transformer. Imagine the fun of building your favorite scene in miniature. Hours of pleasure and satisfaction.

Moving onto bigger and better things with more satisfaction sprang the urge to enlarge the operation from a simple loop to a larger one with possibly a switch track or two. Next Christmas or on your birthday you got another car or accessory. As this process continued you outgrew the Christmas tree or living-room floor.

Before you knew it, you had 4 by 8 board in the cellar or attic. Eventually the 4 X 8 grew too small. Another, maybe 2, 4 X 8's were added. Next came the display shelves! Nothing elaborate at the start, but now?

While collecting today has become wide spread and very business like, we must never forget the greatest gift from any pleasure yielding experience is to share it with someone else.

D. M. LANDADIO

POSTWAR LIONEL QUAD HOPPERS

Continued from last issue of METCA

Identical except for the addition of the 12-hatch cover, the covered Lehigh Valley hopper was offered on pages 16 & 17. Though the illustration depicted the number "6446-60" quite clearly, and the boxes in which these cars were packed did indeed carry this

number, the only number on the actual car was the same "6436" number employed on the open 1963 version. This is probably the second rarest of this series.

The last car in this series to be catalogued by Lionel prior to its takeover by MPC made its appearance in 1964. This was the open red Lehigh Valley, catalogued and boxed as number "6436-110", but bearing only the number "6436" on the car itself. It was identical to the 1963 version in this color except that the notation "New 3-55" was eliminated from the center panel. Unfortunately, the catalog for 1964 portrayed the 1963 version, and this notification was much in evidence in the illustrations of this car on pages 7, 9, & 13. This is the most COMMON of the postwar quad hoppers, and only a built date away from the rarest.

How many additional production runs of this car had to be made is indeterminate; but it was offered again in 1965 (pictured once correctly without the "New 3-55" notation on pages 8 & 9, and three additional times incorrectly with this notation on pages 9, 11, & 14;) in 1966 (pictured twice correctly on page 9, and again on pages 11 & 14;) and 1968 (pictured correctly on what should be page 5 of the folder offered as a catalog that year.)

No quad hopper was catalogued in 1969; but, for the T.C.A. convention in Clearwater that year, a final model was produced. Again red, with white printing, this car bore the number "6436-1969."

While technically part of an entirely new era, the first car produced by MPC should perhaps be mentioned in this article. Also aquad hopper, and reportedly a test-run in a royal blue mold for the 9130 catalogued and produced in 1970, this car bore in white print the Norfolk & Western and "644625" number formats previously employed. Something under 500 were made, and sold only to one distributor, open and with center braces. A later complaint to MPC that this

number was supposed to be issued only with covers and hatches produced a run thereof; and the majority of these cars were sold, all to train collectors, complete with roofs and hatches.

As with any series, rarities are sometimes encountered that may indicate special runs, errors, or experiments. In the former category, the only special run with which I am familiar is one made for the Norfolk & Western itself, so I am told. This is supposed to have consisted of thirty open quad hoppers with centerbraces, all bearing the number "644625" but painted silver, gold, lilac, or pink. I have owned a pink one and a lilac one, and passed them on to Alan Stewart; and seen a silver one in the collection of Joe Ryan. The pink and the lilac shades are those used on the gondola and the hopper in the girl's train.

Bill Eddins also owns an unusual pink quad hopper. It bears the printing usually found on the "634656," but shows no evidence of ever having had the "Alcoa" sticker decals, which leaves it a bit nameless, of course. I have already mentioned the first 64361's without the centerbrace holes; I have not seen it that I recall, but Jerry Tulga notes in his article in the April, 1973 quarterly that the 643657 is also found like this. Another real rarity is the maroon Lehigh Valley open quad hopper bearing the "643657" number assigned to the lilac hopper in the girl's set. Doubtless other collectors have encountered other oddities; I for one, would certainly enjoy hearing about them.

by Ernest B. Davis,
with special thanks to Jerry Tulga

TRAIN WATCHING IN CENTRAL PENNSYLV.

Taking every opportunity to incorporate train watching and trackside observations with whatever activity takes me into a new locale, recently while attending Reserve Summer Camp in central Pennsylvania, I had a chance of visiting the Harrisburg Penn Central Station and watch

the arrival of the Washington and NY sections of the westbound Broadway Limited and their merger into a single Chicago bound train. Shortly after the arrival of the NY section, the NY-Harrisburg local which has relieved the Broadway of a good deal of its local traffic pulled in on an adjoining track. It was a typical P.C. train GGI and 10 fluted stainless steel coaches still marked for Penn Central.

Before getting on with a description of the switching let's spend a few moments and discuss the Harrisburg Penn Central Station. For years Harrisburg has been and still is the point where west bound trains change their electric power for diesel today (for steam-yesterday) and in reverse order for eastbound trains. The station is a through-type and once contained over a dozen passenger tracks, most which have now been ripped up. The station building shared with Greyhound and the station shed are literally falling apart. A large part of the train shed is missing as if blown away by a hurricane. While trackage has been removed, most of the catenary is still in place. The station track layout reflects the change over from diesel to electric with engine waiting tracks (short siding on either end of each platform.)

The Broadway Limited-Washington section of 4 cars (1 sealed mail car (former ATSF) destined for Los Angeles via Amtrak's Southwest Limited, a coach, a sleeper, and a diner lounge) hauled by a GGI arrived shortly before 8 o'clock. After its engine had been cutoff and a few people detrained, a P.C. diesel switcher which had already been spotted south of the train approached its rear. As this was going on, a P.C. train man hung an electric marker lamp on the last car and a carman uncoupled the mail car on the head end. The switcher coupled to the three passenger cars and backed out of the station so that he would be in a position to place them on the rear of the New York section.

About 15 minutes later a twinkling head light appeared down the main line harkening the arrival of the Broadway Limited-NY section. This section could have been the entire Broadway in itself. Headed by a GGI decked out in Amtrak colors there followed 15 cars all of which were well filled. Obviously, train travel of the Broadway has increased. The station personnel who were on the scene also attested to this fact. Further proof was forth coming as a crowd of 75-100 scurried on board.

The NY section seemed to have hardly stopped, before station carmen had uncoupled the GGI. She ran ahead to a siding where she was to be serviced and made ready to handle the eastbound NY section of the Broadway early on the following morning. By now the Washington section with its diesel switcher had moved over to the NY section track and coupled the last three cars.

During the switching operations passengers boarded, other stretched their legs, some were walking their dogs while the carmen inspected the train. The baggage section of one of the mail cars was loaded.

To the west of the station over the highway bridge a smoke trail appeared down the main line. I half expected to see a pair of K-4 Pacifics steaming up. Instead 4-E8 A Units all former P.C. and smoking like hell approached the mail car from the Washington section which standing alone on an adjacent track. After their couplers had locked and brake and signal lines secured and checked, the 8's moved forward slowly, halted and switched over to the Broadway's track. Again couplers and lines were secured and last minute checks were made.

Shortly thereafter the combined 18 car Broadway headed by 4 "smoking" E-8 accelerated rapidly out of the station into the setting sun.

From the variety of switching movements and of the train consist

this operation is well suited for modelling purposes. Obviously we would have a reduced station, we would need a GGI, some passenger cars, (I prefer the smaller 027 streamlined version mixed with some of the new Pennsylvania standard coaches,) a pair of the new MPC Amtrak diesels, or if you like steam, a 675 or 2035 steamer would be perfect; and a diesel switcher, the new Pennsylvania switcher is suited. This routine could be reversed if your train is running in the opposite direction. You could modify the operation by introducing more "head end" activity.

D. M. LANDADIO

PAT SCUORZO

I've heard people say that too much of anything is no good for you. This most certainly is not the case relative to outgoing President Pat Scuzorzo.

Your editor has known Pat for some years. In all those years he has impressed me as being a most sincere and ambitious person. We've been especially fortunate at METCA to have had such a fine President following in the footsteps of Charlie Feyh and others who have provided keen and inspiring presidencies.

I'm personally aware of Pat's qualifications and his aspirations relative to providing METCA with prestige and innovation.

I'm sure you all are looking forward to coming to our November Christmas Meet and expressing your appreciation to him personally for a job most exceedingly well done.

RICHARD J. DENES
EDITOR

ANOTHER JOB WELL DONE

METCA readers are, of course, well acquainted with Dennis Landadio and his authorship of consistently fine articles. Your editor compliments him thankfully and solicits others to follow in his most capable footsteps! Thanks again Dennis!!!

Metropolitan Division
TRAIN COLLECTORS' ASSOCIATION, INC.



October 8, 1975

RE: OPEN LETTER TO THE METROPOLITAN DIVISION MEMBERSHIP

Dear Members,

This has been a very important year for the Train Collectors Association. It was highlighted by the approval by the National Board of Directors, voting 13 to 5 to proceed with the Museum and National Headquarters. There is much concern and controversy as to the way in which it was presented to the membership, especially the lack of a comprehensive financial report.

I, as President of METCA, and other division Presidents, have been pooling our resources to bring our members up-to-date on the progress of the TCA Museum and National Headquarters. The progress report just sent to you by the executive committee is what we have been fighting for from the start. Nevertheless, with all the information furnished so far there still is quite a bit more to be revealed on the financial aspects of this project. For example, the market survey was taken on Memorial Day weekend, May 24-25, 1975. Tourist influx was naturally at a peak so that it has not been established that these people were also interested in a toy train museum, as much as they are interested in the prototype train ride at the Strasburg Railroad Center.

The executive committee, by polling the membership in the inquiry ballot just sent to you seems to be trying to find out how much of an obstacle they are facing in barreling through their project. Remember this inquiry ballot is not to be confused with the petition and referendum that has been circulating at division meets. The actual petition ballot has not been mailed to the membership at this writing. From all indications, it will be sent very soon. A 5% of the total membership's signatures was needed to have the petition and referendum put on a ballot. We now have more than enough signatures to guarantee a ballot vote by all the membership.

All of us have a right to be heard, not just a few. I feel confident that the membership will, on this most important decision, mandate that we always act for the good and welfare of our association. When you get the voting ballot don't sit on it, vote and mail it out promptly, so that your vote can be counted. To build, or not to build, that is the question.

This past year has been very memorable to me as your President and as a member of the TCA. I would like to give my personal thanks to the METCA division Board of Directors for the untiring and constant interest in our division affairs. They have been of great assistance to me in the most crucial year that TCA and METCA have ever faced. Thank you gentlemen of the Board.

Finally, as my term of office comes to an end, it saddens me that I do not have more time to serve you. At this most crucial stage in time since the existence of METCA, I will be turning my office and files over to your next President. He will physically be indoctrinated with all the past data necessary to assist him in his term of office. I will also be on hand to help in any way possible in the future. I can never forget the honored position I have held as your President, and thank you one and all for your confidence.

PAT SCUORZO 62-651