

THE TAMR HOTBOX

136

September - October 1975

November - December



Cover drawing by Mark Morgan
from a photograph by Gary Tempeo

From the cab

NUMBER 1 OF A SERIES

EDITOR



THE HOTBOX IS DEDICATED, DEAR FRIEND, TO YOU, OUR PLAIN ORDINARY MEMBER AND EVERYDAY MODELER AND RAILFAN. FOR THIS, THE EDITOR KEEPS HIMSELF BUSY ANSWERING LETTERS, GOING TO CONVENTIONS, TAKING TRIPS TO VARIOUS PARTS OF THE COUNTRY, AND TRYING TO PARTICIPATE IN THESE ACTIVITIES HIMSELF. SO IN THIS SERIES, WE'LL GIVE YOU A GLIMPSE OF THIS STRANGE PERSON. WE'LL TRAVEL TO EXOTIC PLACES LIKE BELLEVILLE, NEW JERSEY, AND CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, IN SEARCH OF MEMBERS AND THEIR STORIES. IT IS THIS FAR-FLUNG TRAVELING AND INTEREST WHICH GIVES US THE AUDACITY TO CALL THE HOTBOX THE MAGAZINE OF THE TAMR.

*We solicit
YOUR*

attention—
HAS IT BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE YOU SAW A DIESEL IN A RAILROAD MAGAZINE? OR PERHAPS A PROJECT YOU CAN AFFORD FOR YOUR PIKE? YOU'LL FIND IT ALL IN THE HOTBOX, THE MAGAZINE OF THE TAMR.

I have little to say this time. I'm just going to stop pleading for articles, but I will remind you that you'd better write an article before you complain that there aren't any.

I suppose the pressures of school account for the decreased flow of material. But do the best you can. I have a lot of material, but it's mainly prototype histories and layout stories.

This issue welcomes Joe Tarquini on as advertising manager. I hope you'll read his presentation and put an ad in the next issue. Your ad money will provide for photos and larger issues.

This issue is larger than the previous ones, and I'm hopeful it will continue--but we'll need articles and money.

Work on the Directory is proceeding. It will probably come out shortly after the next issue. It's going to include a TAMR history and regional histories, and reviews of the past year, along with the membership listing.

All of us still need help. If you have a little time, you can help. A number of positions are now being worked out, so I can't say specifically what, but your help is needed.

Also, I'd like to clear up a little confusion. I do not have certain people who write articles on certain areas or draw covers. All such contributions are gratefully welcomed, although it may be a little before I can use them all. I do ask that you not submit something too similar to a recently published article.

Once again, I hope you enjoy this issue, and solicit your comments, good, bad, or otherwise.

Third Quarter Report of the TAMR Treasury Art Mulligan

INCOME:

\$58.80, memberships

EXPENSES:

\$64.99, Hotbox

\$21.50, administrative

Total, \$86.49

Previous balance \$301.18

Income +\$ 58.80

Expenses -\$ 86.49

Present balance \$273.49

dale madison

VP REPORT

The period of July marked the resumption of our campaign for new members. It had been suspended last winter when the organization fell into disrepair; but it is felt that we can now absorb new members since we are on the road to recovery.

From 1 July to 31 August, 190 inquiries were answered with prospectus and application blank. Half of these inquiries arrived during the period before July and the other half were the result of recruitment at the NMRA national convention in Dayton in August.

Arrangements were made with Kalmbach Publications so that our advertisement would once again be inserted in Model Rail-roader on a space-available basis. Kalmbach has shown a splendid amount of cooperation with us over the years and we are happy to continue this. If past experience holds true, each insertion is worth about 30 inquiries which will yield 10-18 new members.

Because of the large number of inquiries, additional copies of the membership prospectus were printed as were membership applications and renewal forms. The membership prospectus is now undergoing revision to more accurately reflect the activities of the TAMR.

1976 CONVENTION NOTICE

In order to avoid the fiasco that was our fate this year, we are planning for next summer's confab now. Any individual or group who is interested in hosting the convention next summer should submit their bids within the next three weeks to the Vice President Dale Madison.

Your bid should contain the following information: dates; location; hotel/motel; daily rate/estimated cost for meals, local travel, etc; activities; possible alternates; potential difficulties; travel arrangements--to the location and individual events; the names and addresses of all to be involved in the planning and implementing of the convention.

The VicePresident will review all bids and make a recommendation to the Executive Board who will accept the recommendation or award the convention to another. Send the bid to Dale Madison, address in the listing on page 12.

TYPIST AND ETC. NEEDED

Help is desperately needed in the production of the Hotbox if the schedule is to be maintained and improvements in features made. A typist, preferably with an electric typewriter, is most urgently needed if the next and following issues are to appear. If you can help, even if only a few pages, contact the Editor. Assistance is also needed in publishing and mailing the Hotbox. If you could publish or assemble and mail each issue, contact the Publisher.

FAMILY OF LINES

CHRIS BUCKLEY, DAIT MANTON, PAUL J. MANTON AND JOE TARQUINI

As many of you know, there is a group of railroads that go under the title of "The Family Lines", Seaboard Coast Line, L&N, and Clinchfield. We model railroaders thought that to be a good idea, and so we have applied the same principle to our respective pikes.

The HO scale "Family of Lines" consists of the Reading Company, owned by P. J. Manton, the subsidiary Springfield Valley Railroad, owned and operated by his brother Dait, the Sunburst Railway of Joe Tarquini, and the latest entry, the Old Bridge and Englishtown Connecting of Chris Buckley.

The Reading came into existence about four years ago when Paul Manton built a layout that was larger than he could handle and the name was applied to set some form of prototype to his modeling. Since its original conception in 1971, it has undergone three rebuildings to its present size of 5x18 feet (3 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ meters), thus making it the largest of the Family. The Reading is the only of the Family that is modeled after a specific prototype. It is a 350-mile bridge route in eastern Pennsylvania whose major commodity is coal. That Pennsylvania anthracite which powers the generators in your local power plant to produce power to run your model railroad is probably from a Reading hopper. Paul is basically a purist, so he tried to duplicate the prototype exactly in his models. But he has been known to vary a little from time to time, for he operates such non-Reading locomotives as GP20 and FM's C-Liner. The pike also features 30-car freight drags pulled by FA's, RDC's, and a huge engine terminal and roundhouse which is under construction. There is a four-track main with two yards, along with a town that features an operating SEPTA trolley route. There are over 35 locomotives, mostly diesel, 8 trolley cars, and 200 freight cars on the roster.

The Springfield Valley Railroad is a direct subsidiary of the Reading Company, under the control of Dait Manton. The Springfield is designed so it shares trackage with the Reading, thus eliminating the need to build two separate pikes. The Springfield was created in the past year when Dait got rid of all his N scale equipment and switched to HO (good move!). It is a fictitious line, a "large shortline" handling freight in the areas the Reading doesn't. Springfield locomotives, with their blue and gold livery, are often seen running pooled with the Reading freight units. Since Paul and Dait more or less work together, there has not been any trackage set aside specifically for the SV, so the SV road units are seen scattered about different locations, occasionally running fast freights along with Reading units. One thing about the Springfield Valley is their AA set of Baldwin Sharknose units. A fun thing about fictitious model roads is that one can operate anything he chooses and nobody can tell him he's wrong to do so.

Joe Tarquini's Sunburst Railways was the third addition to the Family of Lines, and Joe's first model railroad. It was only about four months ago that Joe "bit the bug" and decided to join the TAMR, and he wasted no time getting started on his pike. Being new to model railroading, he decided to become a part of the Family, because he figured that three heads would be better than one; he would have the help of other modelers in coming up with something decent. Although the majority of his pike is

(the Family of Lines, continued)

still in the planning stages, he has managed to lay down a system of track on a 4x8 foot piece of wallboard to give him something to break in his equipment. The paint scheme for the Sunburst Railways resembled a bright-orange starburst. The idea of the Sunburst railways is a light-freight branchline in the Philadelphia area. Since Joe is just getting started he hasn't accumulated much rolling stock yet, but he has managed to get together enough equipment to be operating. However, rumor has it that Joe has pondered the possibility of abandoning the Sunburst Railways and becoming part of the Reading Company.

Our latest addition to the Family of Lines is the Old Bridge and Englishtown Connecting of Chris Buckley. Chris decided to join the Family after hearing of our newly-installed interchange system, where all members of the Family are able to send out equipment and locomotives to run on each other's pikes. The OB&E has been in existence for well over a year and it is designed as a bridge route connecting Philadelphia with the New York City area. Chris's pike is still under construction, after much delay in getting started. When finished, it will be a large pike with a classification terminal. A standard paint scheme hasn't been invented yet, but it is not uncommon to see OB&E units running in tandem with Reading and Springfield Valley.

We of the Family of Lines feel that this is a most revolutionary idea in model railroading. In the not too distant future, we plan to construct one large pike, located in Joe's basement since his is the largest, featuring all four railroads of the Family. With four people footing the bill we will be able to keep model railroading costs at a minimum and construct a worthwhile pike. Anyone who is interested in joining the Family of Lines is welcome to do so, and all you have to do is get in touch with any of the Family of Lines presidents. We welcome any scale, but prefer HO so you can take advantage of our interchange system. If anyone is ever in the area, feel free to stop in and visit any of us.

RUMOR HAS IT THAT A CERTAIN HOTBOX EDITOR IN INDIANA IS STARTING AN ORGANIZATION SIMILAR TO THE FAMILY OF LINES, TO BE CALLED THE MID - EASTERN SHORTLINE SYSTEM (MESS). WRITE HIM ABOUT IT.

TROLLEY NOTE.

Mark Morgan

Concerning Paul Manton's series on the Philadelphia trolleys in the first issue he mentioned other lines, including El Paso/Juarez in Texas. This line went out of service late last year, and is currently in complete disrepair, the car barn in El Paso is boarded up, and several vandalized cars are behind it.

The line had been in service for a number of years, the green and yellow cars running from the SP yards into Juarez. The El Paso city government and the line's owners wanted to maintain service, but Mexican officials were opposed and the line couldn't support itself on only the American side. I believe buses still run into Juarez.

~~Fairbanks-Morse power-ski specials--in 1975!~~ Yes, in New Mexico, in the history of BSP/TM by Mark Morgan---

SYSTEM HISTORY: the Black Sheep Pacific and Taos Mountain RR:

An anticipated increase in the need for lumber was the reason for the founding of the Black Sheep and Pacific RR, at Roswell, NM in late 1938. As originally planned, the BS&P was to connect with the Sacramento Mountain Ry. in Cloudcroft NM, and descend through the Capitan Mountains, heading east to the main yards at Black Sheep, near Roswell.

The war did provide the traffic as expected, and the roster of the Black Sheep slowly grew from a number of 2-6-2's and 2-4-0's.

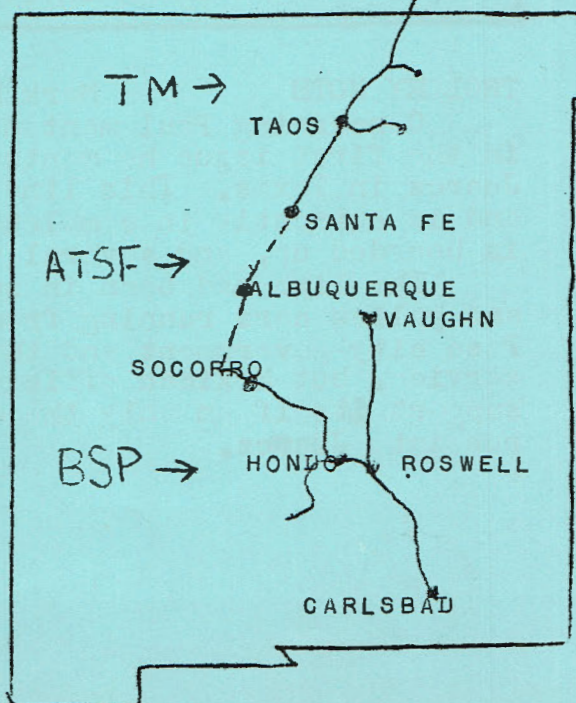
The war's end and recession following brought a need for new revenue, and a major building program was planned; lines to be constructed from Vaughn, connecting with the Southern Pacific and Santa Fe; to Roswell, for working interchange traffic. Although construction was delayed, and then proceeded at a slow pace, the lines were completed by the middle of 1952. The period also saw the introduction of diesels to the line.

By 1956, all steam had disappeared from the BS&P, and another line had been completed to Carlsbad, taking advantage of the boom in potash production.

In 1957, the BS&P acquired the Taos Mountain RR, a lumber line in the northern part of the state. All FM power was sent to the TM, and its services were expanded to include coal-hauling between Santa Fe and northern points.

The Seventies opened with the newest addition, the line between Hondo and Socorro, allowing fast bridge traffic to the west. In 1971, the BS&P was officially named the Black Sheep Pacific, signifying the move into a new decade; and the old cherry and silver colors gave way to turquoise, white, and red. The year also saw the purchase of the BSP's newest engine, a GE U30B, for use on the fast new mountain division.

The line on the Taos Mountain from Taos to Walsenberg, CO, was completed in 1972, linking the BSP to the D&RGW, completing fast service links to points north, east, and west. This year find the BSP/TM in excellent shape, the Black Sheep Pacific providing bridge service for potash and oil, along with lumber. The Taos Mountain hauls coal and lumber, and in the winter runs its famous ski specials thruout the Land of Enchantment, behind well-maintained FM power.



prototype:bart ziegler

Bethlehem Branch

The Reading Company owns about 1128 miles of track, most of it in eastern Pennsylvania and New Jersey. A map of the Reading looks like a spider web, with branch lines jutting out in all directions from the Philadelphia-Harrisburg main line.

One of these branches is the Bethlehem Branch, which is 57 miles long, connecting the cities of Philadelphia and Bethlehem, PA. The line runs about one block from where I live, so I am in contact with it every day.

The Bethlehem Branch hardly resembles the mental image of a single-track, poorly kept, once a week line that most people associate with the word "branch." The branch is two-track with 130lb rail and is well maintained. Some of the Penn Central's tank car loads of red ink may have spilled into Reading territory, but Reading doesn't follow PC's example in track maintenance.

Unlike most railroads, Reading still operates many passenger trains, although most of them are commuter. SEPTA (Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority) reimburses Reading for part of the losses from these runs.

The Bethlehem Branch sees many passenger trains each day. From Reading Terminal in Philadelphia to Lansdale, a distance of 25 miles (40 km), the line is electrified. MU cars from the 1930's serve most of the passengers on this segment, although new Silverliners are beginning to replace the heavyweight MU's. Budd RDC's serve the rest of the line from Lansdale to Bethlehem, making seven round trips daily between Philadelphia and Bethlehem. Some of these runs are scheduled for 70mph.

The branch also sees a fair amount of freight service, most of it iron ore going to Bethlehem Steel. 100-car ore trains pulled by five growling hoods are almost daily. The power is mostly GP35's and U-boats in the old yellow and green, but the new GP39's in solid green with yellow tiger stripes are often seen. Most nights at about 12:30AM my house vibrates and the windows rattle as a long merchandise freight thunders by. During the day an SW1001 often rolls by on its way back to the yard after local work.

Unfortunately, the future of the line is uncertain. Reading is a bankrupt railroad and is to be a part of ConRail, but Chessie System has been eyeing this part of the Reading among others. Recently Chessie offered to buy the Philadelphia to Harrisburg line, the branch, and EL's main for 115 million dollars.

I believe I'd enjoy seeing Chessie's vibrant yellow, blue, and vermilion colors chugging up the Bethlehem Branch. Chessie has money and probably would make improvements such as welded rail and microwave communications that they're beginning to install on their other lines. Anyway, at least it would be better than ConRail!

SUBWAY-SURFACE LINES

PROTOTYPE: PAUL MANTON

One of the most unusual trolley operations in the city of Philadelphia are the five SEPTA lines that operate in the subway-tunnel connecting center city Philadelphia to West Philadelphia. These five lines, routes 10, 11, 13, 34, and 36, make up the subway-surface system and are the only routes in the city to operate off the street.

The trolley tunnel is about 3 miles long, and since it is shared by five trolley lines there's always quite a bit of trolley congestion inside the tube. It is here, in the subway where one can see Philadelphia trolleys are their best. This is the place where our vintage PCC's attain their highest speeds, some as high as 50mph (80kph), not bad for an old trolley!

Starting at the City Hall station at Broad and Market Sts., we'll proceed westward thru the tunnel. At this point the five lines share the same tube used by the Market Street Subway, and often when you're in the tunnel on board a trolley you can see one of the most unusual sights in traction: a trolley car racing a subway train! That's right, many times the trolley and the subway train are nose to nose battling it out.

The subway tunnel goes under the Schuylkill River just before rolling under the Amtrak 30th Street Station at 30th and Market, at 32nd the trolley tunnel branches off and follows its own course under Ludlow St. At 36th and Ludlow the route 10 trolleys leave the tunnel at Lancaster Ave., while the remaining four lines turn southward, under 36th St. After a few blocks the tunnel turns right under Woodland Ave., shooting to the portal at 40th St and Woodland. If you're a trolley nut, this is the place to watch trolleys, for you can see a perpetual stream of trolleys (ask Tim Vermendo). Since four lines converge at this point, the action is just incredible about anytime.

The four lines that emerge from this portal are all operated out of the car barn at 49th and Woodland. This is the largest car barn in Philadelphia, since it feeds not only the four trolley lines but several bus lines. The route 10 trolleys are fed from the Callowhill Street Depot at 58th and Callowhill in West Philadelphia.

There are two types of PCC's used on the subway-surface lines. Most are the larger models used on route 23, discussed last issue, along with smaller models. These cars the best-maintained in the city, for they see the heaviest use. A total of about 200 trolleys is set aside for use on these lines, and many of them have undergone rebuilding and sport the new orange, white, and blue paint scheme.

We'll now attempt to break down each of the lines, following their routes. Route 10 emerges from the tunnel at 36th and Ludlow, and the proceeds northwesternly along Lancaster Ave., traversing typical West Philadelphia neighborhoods. (if you thought North Philadelphia was bad, you should see this!). It makes a left onto Lansdowne Av. after a few miles, then a right onto 63rd St., leading to the line's terminus at 63rd and Malvern. →

(Philadelphia Trolleys, contd)

Route 11 cars leave the tunnel at 40th and Woodland and travel west along Woodland Av for its entire length to the city line. Woodland passes right in front of the carbarn and one can see many trolleys inside the barn from the window. Upon reaching the city line Woodland becomes Main St in Darby. This line continues for about another mile to 9th and Main St in Darby.

Route 13 cars traverse the curviest trackage in the city, as the line operates on several streets. After the tunnel, the cars work their way to Chester Av, where they continue for another couple of miles. At this point they begin twisting and turning thru a different West Philadelphia neighborhood, somewhat nicer than route 10: left onto 60th, right onto Kingessing, past Mt. Moriah turnaround loop, right onto 65th, left back to Chester Av heading to the loop in Yeadon, terminus of the line. During rush hour, route 13 travels an extended route to Darby along the right of way of route 62. Route 62 was at one time perhaps the shortest trolley route in the nation, using one PCC car for 1.5 mile round trip. The line has since been discontinued and made a part of 13.

The route 34 is simple, emerge for the tunnel and working its way westward along Baltimore Av to the terminus at 61st and Baltimore on the city line, going thru some undesirable areas.

Finally there are the route 36 cars. This line is unique, for it's the only Philadelphia trolley line to operate on a stretch of high-rail trackage. It too leaves from the 40th and Woodland portal and proceeds west along Woodland to the carbarn at 49th and Woodland. Here it turns south onto 49th street and proceeds down Elmwood Av. We're now heading west again along Elmwood for several miles until we reach Island Av., where the line heads south again. It is at this point that the line operates on a high-rail down the middle of the road, with the highway lanes on either side of the track. This keeps up for about a mile or so, then the cars make a right onto Eastwick Av and terminate at the loop at 80th and Eastwick. The line once continued up to 88th St., but construction of Interstate 95 last year forced abandonment of this part, about a mile long.

If you're ever in Philadelphia be sure to make it a point to take a trip on a couple of the subway-surface lines.

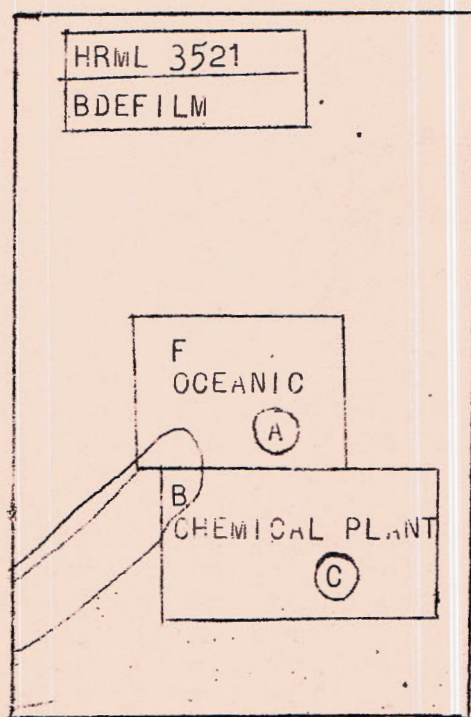
The SEPTA street and transit maps of Philadelphia are now 50¢, not 25¢ as stated before, because of the printing of a new edition. They're still available from me at 29 Grove Av., Flourtown, PA 19031.

AD RATES

UNTIL JANUARY 1, 1976, CLOSING DATE FOR ADS FOR THE NEXT ISSUE, A SPECIAL INTRODUCTORY RATE HAS BEEN SET OF 10 CENTS PER LINE FOR PIKE OR CLASSIFIED ADS. ADD 50¢ TO HAVE YOUR HERALD OR OTHER DRAWING INCLUDED. ADS HELP PAY FOR EXTRAS LIKE PHOTO PAGES, SO SEND YOURS TO JOE TARQUINI TODAY. 1322 WENTZ DR., FT. WASHINGTON, PA 19034. MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO THE TAMR.

layout operation: John McGreevy

OPERATION SYSTEM



The best way to describe my system is to show it. The item on the left is a typical playing card.

Dymo or similar labelling tape is used to mark the card. "HRML 3521" are the car's reporting marks, the "BDEFILM" are industry code letters. Attached with a paper clip are cut up index cards which are location cards for the industries.

A playing card and paper clip are needed for each card. A code, such as the reporting marks, is needed for each car.

The letters correspond to industries, e.g., B=chemical plant, D=freight house, F=Oceanic, etc. These letters show what industries the car may be dropped off at.

On my layout, A is a lumber mill, and HRML3521 is a reefers, so A does not appear on this card, as the mill has no use for it.

The paper clips hold the location cards. Location cards are made for each place a car may be spotted on the layout. The circled letters on the card correspond to specific freight loading doors or docks at the building. The upper location card shows where the car now is; the bottom shows where it will go during the operating session.

For operation, select six or ten cards, or whatever, depending on your layout. They should already have one location card on them, next select another location card, checking the industry code, so you find a place for the car to go now. I find it helpful to keep a list of industries and their code letters so I know what the code letters mean.

Editor's note: Possibly a way of selecting cars at random could be worked up to add to things. This system seems easily adaptable to other media, such as ink on index cards instead of playing cards, or to a board on your layout wall. Such a system could also be used to designate weather and traffic conditions at a certain spot now and during the future. You are welcome to submit articles on layout operation such as this, either original or modifications of something like this.

FROM THE FIREMAN'S SIDE

I recently had the chance to have a cab ride in a U34CH from the Beautiful (that's questionable) terminal in Hoboken, NJ to the typical suburban town of Ridgewood on the EL. The route that I rode is far from pleasing. Well, anyway, here goes. . . .

It was a nice evening as fellow member Ken Bitten and I met an engineer friend. The engineer, who shall remain nameless, had told me to come up in the cab any time I wanted to. Well, I took advantage of it mainly because we were coming home from Montreal and we were almost broke.

Departure time rolled around and soon we heard the conductor giving us the OK to leave with two whistles on the signal line. The signal ahead of us read restricting and we started moving at a wild 10mph. An electric MU on the Morristown line, headed to Dover passed us up as we headed thru the maze of slip switches in Hoboken Terminal (the tower is a very hectic place at rush hour and they often have three or four people in it then). As we reach the east end of the shed, we see a green signal ahead of us. The throttle opens and we start to move faster, but half a mile later we were slowed to a stop in Bergen Tunnel as the MU crossed over ahead of us. After that, the signal cleared and we moved back out and slowed down to pass West End Interlocking. Now, we start to parallel Croxton Yard, and approach the PC main line to New York City and the New Jersey Turnpike. After that comes County Road and we slow down in accordance with a slow order. Soon after, our speed picked up and we came up to a clear medium signal which is the approach to the Hackensack River bridge. After the last of our six-car train cleared the bridge, the engineer notched up the throttle. Here is a grade crossing known as Garbage Road mainly because we and it are now surrounded by garbage dumps. After closing the cab windows, we clear the dumps and now come into Kingsland Station. A brief stop is made and off to Lyndhurst. Lyndhurst is only half a mile (.8km) from Kingsland so our speed couldn't have been above 45mph. We now cross the Passaic River and approach Passaic. Here more passengers get off, and we leave.

By now, you're wondering how the U34CH rides. The only answer that I can give is we move side to side more than forward. These are good freight locomotives but many engineers think engines more designed with commuter service in mind are needed.

Clifton Station--we leave more passengers and continue. We have been on double track most of the way and now come to the junction of the Newark Branch (from Belleville and other exotic places) and enter a single track section for two miles.

Our single track now takes us to South Paterson where we make a long stop. No, not because of the passengers but the conductor forgot we were stopping and didn't open the doors. Naturally, nobody got off then. As we go the final half mile to Paterson, two kids along the tracks set a new running record as the engineer

(from the Fireman's Side, contd)

used the air horn to scatter them. The train stopped at Paterson and I looked back at the cars and watched more people get off. We hear the signal and leave. After about two more miles of running thru the low income section of Paterson, we come to a grade crossing (one of four on the line) and then cross the Passaic River again and pass an eastbound as we enter Hawthorne Station. We head to Glen Rock, enter the station. Here is where I say good-bye (sob) to Ken Bitton. The conductor lets us know that it's ok to leave. Half a mile later, we round a curve and see Ridgewood Junction. We cross over to the passenger track on the now-four track main and go into Ridgewood station. The train stops and I must now get out and call home, since I don't feel like walking three miles!

The ride is a little on the rough side, but I can't complain.

From Hoboken to Paterson the line is surrounded by industries, and Hawthorne is the signal of suburban territory, from Glen Rock the end of the line at Suffern NY, the line goes thru basically "bedroom" communities.

REGION WRITE-UP

Mark Morgan has been appointed to head the Western Region, and is busy trying to get some activity going out there. A long letter, disguised as a newsletter, was recently sent out, with Mark's ideas on how to help the region. If you would like to get a copy of this letter and future newsletters, send \$1.50 to Mark at 3533-A Vail SE, Albuquerque, NM 87106. If you're in the region and didn't get the newsletter, let Mark know. There is a survey in it asking about interests, meets, officers, and so on, and, as it says "the survival of the region depends on how many people show some interest and return this survey". Right on!

The Chicago Division, the active part of the Great Lakes Region, continues to show signs of life and is planning a meet at State Line Tower in Hammond, IN near Thanksgiving. Anyone living near Chicago or GLR or TAMR members who would like to go to this or future meets should contact Doug Johnson or Tim Vermande. The idea of a spring convention in Milwaukee is being discussed.

The Allegheny Region continues its rambunctious way, with members meeting all over the East Coast. A meet was held recently in Ocean City, NJ where a lot of region business is discussed. The Dispatcher features cover drawings, photos of members and sometimes trains, misspellings, convention reports, and an almost genuine old-fashioned feud. Altho most mailmen, the Dispatcher says, vow never to deliver another railfan publication to your address, you can get in on it for \$1.50 a year to Betsey Summers, female TAMR member and Secretary, 209 Tadmar Av., Pittsburgh, PA 15237

For some time, now, the Editor has been putting up with all sorts of flack, but now he gets his chance to strike back. Believe it or not, this is the last issue before Christmas. You can probably already guess the devilish machinations going thru the Editor's mind, as, in the grand tradition, we present to you

THE EDITOR'S CHRISTMAS GIFTS

in which the Editor plays Santa Claus and level his bag of toys at the officers, members, and others, presenting presents not too badly needed.

JOHN C. EULL--A map of Hamilton , Ontario, so you can find your way around.

CHRIS BUCKLEY--A model of the Roosevelt Road bridge in Chicago, made out of pizza.

JOHN W. HEILD--Our GM Scrapbook and a tour of EMD.

PAUL MANTON--A year of Indiana Sundays. (the dry kind.)

FRANKIE CHADWICK--a dictionary and all your slides you've sent me.

MARK MORGAN--lotsa luck, but I guess you'll really need it.

GORDON MIDGELEY--a framed picture of CN 6060.

TERRY BURKE--a badge, so you can play EMD cop, too.

RAY HAKIM--the Atlantic Ocean.

DOUG JOHNSON--all the missing secretarial records.

DALE MADISON--a protrait of your friendly local N&W cop.

BENGT MUTEN--the bill for all those calls you make to the US.

TIM TONGE--the Diesel Spotter's Guide.

Now I realize this list isn't long, but we had to put SOMETHING on this page! The obvious answer is to write an article or send an ad--remember, ads will pay for a photo page!

Why not write to a new member today!

A new directory is being prepared and should be on its way to you ahead of the next Hotbox. Not that we'll say anything about delivery of same!

The next issue will contain a section on railfanning and our members as such. If you'd like to submit a cover dealing with that, or a story about railfan experiences, do it now. And remember, if you have an electric typewriter (or a manual) and can use it, contact the editor.

FRANKIE CHADWICK, JR.

BLACKHAWK SLIDES-4

Smoke and Steam on Midwestern Roads, 30 slides, Questionable: In this set of action and still transparencies only two would get the "thumbs up" sign from me. The roads pictured, NYC, PRR, NKP, CB&Q, NP, DM&IR, B&O, and IC are taken primarily in Minnesota, Illinois, and Indiana and the title is somewhat misleading since I've seen GG1's beillow more steam and smoke.

Steam on Pennsy's Elmira and Shamokin Branches, 36, Questionable. Good scenery and a few from the air type of shots were all that served to keep this set from poor. Though I like Pennsy steam, this did not impress me. All I can say is poor composition of the transparencies is the culprit.

Electric Railroading, PC and PRR, 36, very good. Even if I cast off my ardent love for PC and PRR mainline electrics this very comprehensive set would still get a high rating. The satisfying combination of still and action shots from both the Pennsy and its merger product include the rare B-1's of LIRR, DD-1's, E2B's, etc., as well as the customary GG1's, E44's.

Memories of Steam-Eastern Roads, 50, very good. If this set were compared with the other steam sets it would be in the top three. Blackhawk sure did something right since there were only 2 slides that received a rating under good in this set. Blackhawk seems to have had a foul-up somewhere tho, since scenes of Wabash 4-8-4's, IC and Bohhommio and Hattiesburg Southern shots are included.

Those Famous Alco Diesels--Western and Canadian Roads, very good. 40 slides.

Many unusual and rare Alcos are portrayed in this set which covers the above types on RI, MKT, MP, SP, ATSF, UP, GN, SP&S, CN, CP, and others. Tho it has only two action shots the stills make a good showing of their excellent detail and color.

Those Famous Alco Diesels--eastern roads, 50, excellent. Just like its counterpart of the west, this set is a sheer beauty. About 1/3 of the slides depict Alcos in action and the rest are well-balanced, finely composed profiles. Roads covered are D&H, NH, NYC, PRR, L&NE, LV, RDG, EL, B&O, WM, SAL, L&N, NKP, and even SOO, AA, WAB, GM&O. Highly recommended.

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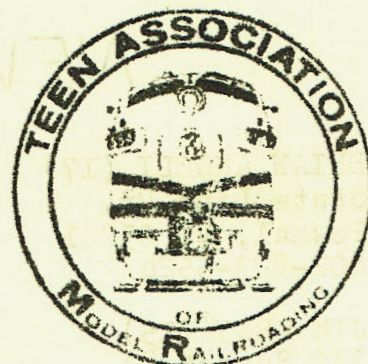
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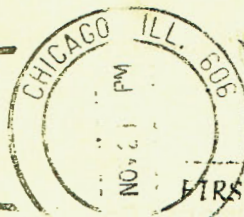
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