

Through the LCCA's Second Decade, 1986-90

1986 - Stocking Stuffers Launch

With the introduction of the Virginia Chemicals Tank Truck based on an idea of Mel Price during the Board's October, 1985 meeting, the LCCA began the practice of offering a special commemorative to honor the Annual Convention. Steve Patterson came up with the time frame of making it a Christmas item and the name 'Stocking Stuffer' has stayed with this "extra/special" Club item since. The matching Virginia Chemicals Tank Car offered this year featured the first ever markings on the end panels of tank cars that would later be adopted by Lionel in its regular production pieces.

Norfolk, Virginia, a city rich in history for its railroad background, was site for the Club's 16th Annual Convention in 1986. Hundreds of members along with their spouses and children came to this Eastern sea port for many family-oriented events that included tours to local member's collections as well as the U.S. Naval Base and to the yards of the fabled Norfolk and Western Railroad. The special decorated tote-bag that was handed out as a Convention souvenir came in very handy during shopping expeditions in the trade halls!

Election results for 1986 had newly elected Officers Richard Tanner, Vice-President; Chuck Seddon, Secretary; and Dienzel Dennis, Assistant Secretary; to team up with Al Otten, President; and Charles Pegram, Treasurer (who were both reelected) along with Bill Hourigan once again assuming the role of Immediate Past President. The Board of Directors consisted of newly elected Bill Button and John Ourso to go with reelected Directors Art Broshears, (who continued as Editor of the *Interchange Track*), Bruce Cox and Jerry Dangelo. With the February, 1986 issue, Larry Black became the sixth Editor of *The Lion Roars*. Also, on page 8 of that issue, full color first appeared on an inside page (the covers had gone to color back in 1983).

By year's end, membership number 10635 was assigned as the Club's growth continued at a pace of approximately 60-70 new Members per month.

1987 - Convention Cars Scale Up

In order to generate some additional funds, dues for Regular Members increased for the first time in six years to \$20 from \$16. (Dues for Charter Members at \$12.50 and Family Members at \$5 stayed the same.)

Now, with the always tough-to-do business of a dues increase out of the way, the Club set out to maintain the positive, innovative role for its Members in the toy train operating/collecting market. Financially the Club closed out its fiscal year with cash-in-bank funds of \$229,210.58.

Besides all the "firsts" the LCCA's prototypical Convention Cars had fostered over the years, the 1987 edition was the initial Lionel Standard "O" Scale car put out by any club. Modeled after the East Camden and Highland Railroad (subtly nicknamed the 'EaCH'), the colorful decoration made this car in particular one of our most highly sought after commemoratives.

The Convention this year in Little Rock, Arkansas, drew many attendees. One highlight of the numerous events was the two hour train ride through some very scenic country. The ranks of the LCCA's membership continued to grow and before the year was over, more than 11000 member numbers had been assigned.

For 1987, the elected Officers (and their previous year's position) were: Bruce Cox, President and Art Broshears, Vice-President; (both were Directors); Chuck Seddon, Secretary; and Dienzel Dennis, Assistant Secretary (both were reelected) and Winfrey Adkins, Treasurer (was newly elected) along with Al Otten, Immediate Past President. On the Board of Directors were newly elected Bill Hourigan (was Immediate Past President) Mel Price and Bill Schmeelk along with reelected Bill Button and John Ourso. Also, beginning with the November issue, Robert Best became the third appointed Editor of the *Interchange Track*.

1988 - Member Growth Returns

Membership #11790 was assigned by the end of the year as the Club's growth began to get back to a rate similar to that of past years.

Our Annual Convention was in Lexington, Kentucky, where more than 1,200 people (from the 646 members' registrations) came in late July, 1988. Tours of local attractions, the Membership Meeting, trade hall and banquet were once again the featured events for all to enjoy. And, since the Public Display set-up overlooked the trading area, 47 people joined the Club at this time! The Convention Car chosen was the Ashland Oil Tank Car (which was the first 3 dome style used by the Club).

Also, the 15 LCCA sponsored meets held throughout the country this year attracted a total of nearly 1,300 members, family and guests.

LCCA Officers for 1988 were: Bruce Cox, President; and Winfrey Adkins, Treasurer (both reelected); along with Harry Overtoom, Vice-President; Dienzel Dennis, Secretary; and Bill Button, Assistant Secretary (all newly elected); and Al Otten as Immediate Past President. Newly elected Directors this year were: Art Broshears, Charles Fellencer, Chuck Seddon and Bill Stitt to go with Bill Schmeelk who was reelected.

1989 - Staggered Elections Begin

To provide the LCCA with consistent leadership to handle the administrative business of the Club, President Bruce Cox headed up a change in the terms of office for both Officers and Directors that would allow for some change each year without a wholesale changeover of all ten elected positions every year. As is now common process today, beginning with the elections in 1989, the President, Assistant Secretary and Treasurer were elected for two year terms while the terms of both the Vice-President and Secretary remained at one year. (These last two positions would change to a two year term in the 1990 elections.)

With this change in place, the 1989 Officers were all newly elected (to either one or two year terms as outlined above) as follows: Bill Schmeelk, President; Harry Overtoom, Vice-President; Dienzel Dennis, Secretary; Bill Button, Assistant Secretary; and Bill Hourigan, Treasurer; with Bruce Cox as Immediate Past President. Although the Officers terms changed, the term of office for the Board of Directors remained at one year. And, in 1989, the five Directors consisted of newly elected Al Otten along with Art Broshears, Charles Fellencer, Chuck Seddon and Bill Stitt all winning reelection. In addition, starting in April, Bill Crace took over as the fourth appointed Editor for the *Interchange Track*.

The 19th Annual Convention was in Columbia, South Carolina, where hundreds of members traveled with their families to enjoy some fine Southern hospitality during the week of activities. The Convention Car was the second Standard "O" single door boxcar used by the Club as a commemorative and it was decorated in the scheme of the Columbia, Newberry and Laurens Railroad.

In terms of membership number "milestones", the LCCA passed another one as number 12000 was assigned during the year.

1990 - LCCA Steams Ahead

As had been decided by a majority of the membership vote several years before, the LCCA chose the 4-6-2 style of steam locomotive and tender decorated in a Denver and Rio Grande Western scheme for the engine to head up our second decade of Convention Cars. To ease the burden of having to pay for it all at once, every active member was allowed to order up to two of the units and pay on a three-payment plan. And, to complete the LCCA's second decade consist, a matching D&RGW Caboose was chosen as the separate sale Convention Car.

The Club's 20th Anniversary Convention was held in the beautiful, Rocky Mountains surrounded city of Fort Collins, Colorado. One tour took many of the attendees on a ride aboard the Wyoming Colorado Railroad to some of the highest traveled tracks in the United States. Others enjoyed the spectacle of a rodeo during the Centennial Celebration of Frontier Days in Laramie, Wyoming, or viewing local members' layouts.

The second phase of the change to a two year term for the Club's Officers took place this year with the elections of: Bill Stitt, Vice-President; and Harry Overtoom, Secretary to team up with the other three leaders who were completing their second year in office as well as Bruce Cox, Immediate Past President. The five Directors were still elected to one year terms and the 1990 slate consisted of: Winfrey Adkins, Bill Beatty, Jerry Dangelo, Dienzel Dennis and John Ourso. Also, Glenn Patsch became the seventh Editor of *The Lion Roars* beginning with the December, 1990 issue.

Due in large part to increased printing and postage costs, financially the Club found itself rather short in funds so that some cost-cutting measures had to be enacted by the leadership team. A study revealed that the costs associated with producing the fourteen publications annually (six issues each of *IT* and *TLR*, plus one issue each of the *Roster* and special *Toy Fair* flyer) were \$19.68 per member with dues at \$20. Besides a belt tightening that took place for the leaders in terms of their Club associated expenses, some of the most noteworthy cost-cutting actions which affected all the members included decreasing the word count in the *Interchange Track* to 50 words (from 100), no longer allowing Family Members to advertise in *IT*, eliminating the separate *Toy Fair* issue of *The Lion Roars* after this year's version (the information would become part of the regular February issue of *TLR*) and printing the *Roster* after January 1st to eliminate as many non-active members from the listings as possible.

Even with all these steps taken, it was still necessary to have another increase in dues where both Charter and Regular Members were set at \$30 with Family Members staying at \$5. The Club ended its second decade with cash reserves in the bank, and financially it needed to operate its business closely watching every expense.

Epilogue 1986 - 90

Citing its motto of "A Lifetime of Happiness Collecting Lionel Trains" and the base of its founding being to promote the enjoyment of collecting and operating model trains, the Lionel® Collectors Club of America continued to bring forth innovative, toy train club practices throughout these five years of its history.

The Club's leadership and evolutionary style showed up during its first twenty years, as evidenced by our membership ranks rising to where there were over 13000 member numbers assigned. This is a significant indicator of the amount of interest we generated since our Club really pretty much specializes with the 'Lionel' audience within the toy train operating/collecting hobby.

The final, closing segment of this year long article on the LCCA's 25 year history will be delivered as Part VI and will be in your next issue of *The Lion Roars*. It will be titled *Leading to Our 25th*, and cover the years 1991 through 1995.