

Ozark Division Newsletter

Www.ozarkdivision-tca.org

Special Points of Interest:

- **Ozark Division Election Results**
- **Evans Auto Loader**
- **Ozark Division Annual Report**
- **TCA 60th Annual Convention**

Ozark Division Election Results: All of the ballots have been counted and certified by the election judges. Bradley W. Marples (95-41819) was elected Vice President and Jon R. Lundvall was re-elected Secretary/Treasurer Edwin L. (Lou) Eggerding (09-63375) succeeds Dennis R. James as President of the Ozark Division-TCA.

The revisions to the Ozark Division Constitution failed to achieve the necessary votes to pass. A copy of the Ozark Division Constitution and By-Laws can be found at the Ozark Division website, www.ozarkdivision-tca.org.

A copy of the Ozark Division Election Results report can be found with this Newsletter.

Evans Auto Loader: The Evans Auto Loader was introduced by Lionel as 6414 Automobile Carrier in 1955. The car stayed in production until 1960 and was included in a number of sets as well as a separate sale item. The automobiles include with the car were loosely based on a 1954 Ford. During production period there were a number of manufacturing variations which I am not going to discuss; I will leave that to the experts.

The story of the Evans Auto Loader was real short, however the concept behind the car probably left an impact on the transportation of finished automobiles and what is seen today. Transporting finished automobiles dates from the early 20th century as the production numbers were low enough that sufficient quantities could be shipped in boxcars. Two to four finished automobiles would usually fit into a boxcar. As new automobile production grew railroads needed to modify their boxcars for more efficient loading. Some of the modifications included longer boxcars, larger sliding double doors located near one end of the boxcar or doors located on the boxcar ends.

Those modifications helped but the demand for new automobiles outpaced the railroads ability to modify and build new boxcars. The Grand Trunk Western Railroad in 1923 experimented with modifying a group of 61 foot wood-framed flat cars to increase their capacity by adding collapsible frames to allow for double-deck operations. The concept was never perfected and as a result failed to gain any acceptance. During the 1940s and 1950s several railroads experimented with automobile-loading assemblies that would lift one or more automobiles above other in the boxcar. There was limited success with the assemblies due to their special use and size; it proved uneconomical to maintain a fleet of these assemblies that could only loaded into boxcars with end doors.

During the 1950s a number of railroads took a cue from circuses as they were a ma

Continued From Page 1

major hauler of wheeled vehicles, carrying all their vehicles on flat cars. The circus solution to loading and unloading vehicles was to use a string of flat cars. A temporary ramp was placed at one end of the string and temporary bridge plates spanned the gaps between the flat cars. The road vehicles were driven or towed up onto one car and then driven or towed down the train. This style of loading became known as "circus loading".

"Circus loading" certainly made loading and unloading easier and faster b

ut still with four to six cars being loaded there was still a lot of space above the automobiles that was unused. The railroads experimented with driving onto the flat cars loaded highway trailers loaded with automobiles. The trailers were tied down with or without their tractors but yet this was not the total solution. Another solution was to take the temporary assemblies used to stack and load automobiles within box cars and permanently attach them to flat cars. The racks created two levels on which automobiles could be loaded. Foldaway bridges were added to the ends of the cars to allow the vehicles to be driven the entire length of a train. All that was needed now was a ramp at the right height.

In 1954 Evans Products Co., a manufacturer of loading racks for carrying automobiles in conventional box cars, developed a bi-level Auto-Loader superstructure with an elevating top deck capable of carrying six cars or light trucks on a typical flat car. Evans Products in cooperation with the New York Central and Union Pacific Railroads constructed and mounted two prototype superstructures on conventional 53 foot GATC steel flat cars for field testing. The NYC car was 500085 and the UP car was 5800, the NYC superstructure was a semi-streamlined while the UP superstructure was more utilitarian.

The problem with the Auto-Loader inside box cars was the time it took to load and unload the car as the ramps inside each car had to be lowered and raised 3 or 4 times (with the auto on it) to get the auto to top row. The new experimental Auto-Loader solved this problem by having open sides for drive-on loading as well as open ends with drop-down end gates that would act as bridges between coupled cars allowing autos to be driven from one car to the next. Each Auto-Loader had two positional ramps; a top ramp that lowered part of the way down and a bottom ramp that rose up to meet the top ramp.

After considerable testing the New York Central Railroad in cooperation with Evans Products Co., and Chrysler Corp. placed NYC 500085 in a train for its first test run. Six new 1954 Dodges were loaded in Detroit, Michigan bound for New York Central's Kingsbridge Yard freight houses in the Bronx, New York. The road test was monitored by officials of NYC, Evans Products Co., and Chrysler Corp. and to witness the unloading of the cars.

The unloading process went something like this; the three autos on the lower level were quickly driven off the car to the station platform.. Then a built-in powered hoist was started to operate the folding ramp that permits quick movement of autos to and from the upper deck. As one end of the upper deck lowered to form a portion of the ramp, the center section of the lower deck rose to meet it to complete the ramp. The auto on the upper portion of the ramp backed off; the ramp was closed to allow the next auto to do the same thing. The operation was completed again for the third auto. It took about 26 minutes to unload all six autos, much faster than from the box cars.

After studying all phases of the testing, New York Central officials were not sold on the Evans Auto-Loader. Only one of the cars was built for the NYC.. It is unclear what became of the car built for Union Pacific. However neither design went into commercial production.

I have a 6414 Auto Loader in my collection, however, I really like the modern era car 6-19489 as it is more prototypical. The car number is 500085 with the NYC logo and it has 4 of the resin Route 66 vehicles that closely resemble 1959 Dodges.

Annual Report Ozark Division: The Ozark Division territory includes the states of Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma and seven counties in southern Illinois adjacent to St. Louis. Those counties are Calhoun, Madison, Monroe, Randolph, St. Clair and portions of Jersey and Macoupin south of Illinois Highway 16.

At the beginning of 2014 the Ozark Division had 502 Train Collector Association (TCA) members residing within the boundaries. The Ozark Division finished with a net 445 TCA members residing within the boundaries; 10 new membership applications were processed during 2014. The Ozark Division membership totaled 180.

The Ozark Division hosted or co-hosted three train shows during 2014. The Division co-hosted the Great St. Louis Spring and Christmas Train Shows held at Immanuel Lutheran School and hosted the annual Membership Meeting held in September at The Pointe. Attendance at the two shows at Immanuel Lutheran School totaled around 700. Attendance at the September show was poor, however there were enough to have a quorum to hold the annual Membership Meeting.

The Ozark Division Financial Report is included as an attachment to this Newsletter.

Membership Renewal: You still have plenty of time to renew your annual membership to the Ozark Division. The annual membership is \$10. If you are not sure about your membership status; if you receive the newsletter electronically you are in good standing. If you received the newsletter by mail it is time to renew your membership. Check the mailing label, if D-15 or higher number appears you are in good standing.

To renew your membership all you need to do is complete the Membership Application included with this Newsletter and mail it as directed.

"I Want to be a Part of it –New York, New York!!": That sounds like the theme for the 61st YCA National Convention, June 20 - 28, 2015. It looks like the crew at METCA have put together a fun convention with 20 plus excursions, a great opening night party, a fantastic Saturday night banquet and a train show thrown in. If you have never attended a National Convention this would be the one to attend. You can see the Board of Directors work to make the TCA the greatest toy train collecting organization in the world; this is *"The Worlds Greatest Hobby"*.

For information about the 61st TCA National Convention go to the Convention website www.TCAconvention.org or to the current National Headquarters News (January 2015). You will find a description of all the excursions and registration information and instructions. Don't hesitate some excursions will sell out early.

In Memoriam: On behalf of all of the TCA and Ozark Division members I want to express our sincere condolences to the family of Joseph E. Jones (75-8375) who passed away late last year.

Calendar: The only event planned for the Ozark Division is the Great St. Louis Christmas Train Show and Food Drive at Immanuel Lutheran School on December 5, 2015. Please see the attached registration form for show details. The Ozark Division has been approached by the staff at Lutheran High School South about holding a train show at their facility. The only date available is November 7, 2015, based on school calendar. The officers and directors of the Ozark Division would like to return to Lutheran South, however, there is a conflict with another group holding a show on that same date. We have reached out to the Gateway Region of the NMRA to see if they would consider combining their show with the Ozark Division. As of right now there has been no response, we will reach out again.

The Ozark Division is reaching out for host volunteers; we need member(s) to host train shows around the Division. If anyone is interested please feel free to contact me at jonlstrains@netscape.net or 314-239-7996.

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Postscript: As I was doing my research for this article I was surprised to learn there was only two cars prepared by Evans Product Co., one for the New York Central and one for the Union Pacific Railroad. From the research the results from all the testing would lead you to believe everything went very well. However why did the NYC rejected the project from further development. I found a copy of an employee newsletter, The Headlight, from November 1964 with an article titled "Let's Talk About Moving New Autos".

According to the newsletter the New York Central was transporting about 50% of all finished automobiles in the U. S. About 10 years before they were transporting less than 4% of all finished automobiles in the U. S. That may explain why the NYC was not interested in this new concept as well as the capital expenditure.

Evans Products Co., of Plymouth MI was a manufacturer of battery separators, heating units for busses and other utility vehicles, railroad car equipment, and other transportation related hardware. In 1954 Evans Products Co. purchased the Colson Bicycle Co. and stopped manufacturing bicycles in 1962.

K-Line also made a Evans Auto-Loader (K694-1751) with six 1957 Corvetts including the car number 500085 and NYC heard.

TCA Mission Statement

"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."

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