



THE HOTBOX

July 2006
Issue # 396

ISBN:1093-622X

NATIONAL CONVENTION ISSUE!

**THE OFFICAL PUBLICATION OF THE TEEN
ASSOCIATION OF MODERN RAILROADERS**

Now on five nights a week after your late local news!



July 2006

Issue 396

THE HOTBOX SUMMER CONVENTION ISSUE

ON THE COVER: . A train rolls through Bound Brook, NJ February of last year. Photo: Erik Romatowski

FORM 19 A message from your editor in chief

Hello and welcome to the July Hotbox, Summer Convention Issue! This special edition is filled with everything you need for the upcoming Summer National Convention, *The Blue Comet*, including an itinerary, event information and location, lodging info, and even some Jersey jokes thrown in for good measure. I sadly won't be in attendance of this great convention due to an unscheduled meeting with a deer (don't worry your editor is fine, the deer is much worse off), but I want to let you know what a great convention this is going to be. The members in the NY/NJ division are just about the hardest working members in this group, planning regular events, setting-up tables at train shows, publishing the NER newsletter, and more. Their efforts have paid off with making the NER the only region to show any growth over the last year (I hate to say it but the rest of you out there could learn a thing or two from these guys). It's that kind of effort that's been applied to this upcoming convention in August. If you can, I urge you to attend. Speaking from the past experience of

numerous TAMR conventions I've attended over the years, it's the most fun you can have in this hobby and will leave you with great stories of rail adventures and mis-adventures you'll be telling into retirement.

In other news, the photo contest has sadly been postponed. Due to a lack of entries I've decided to put it aside for a few months, possibly bringing it back this fall or winter. Those who entered can either stick with what they sent me, or resubmit when it is brought back.

We also have a new Southern Region Representative. His name is Matthew Roberts. He recently joined our group and contacted the board about this long-standing open position, and was appointed by the Board to serve in this post till elections this fall. His full info will be at the end of this column.

Speaking of which, elections are just a few short months away. For all present officers and anyone interested in running I need your letter of intent (a short



Tim Vermande, photo.

essay on yourself, why you want to run and what you would do if you were elected) by September. For those without their constitution handy, any member can run for office as long as, One: they are under 21 years old, Two: have an active membership, and Three: have a photo of Regis Philbin by their nightstand. Actually I just made that last one up, but anyway, the open positions are, well, almost all of them, Prez, VP, Treasurer, Editor, and all the regional positions (though you have to live in the region you want to run for). You've got less than two months so get cracking!•

Matthew Roberts

Age: 15

Editor—Peter Maurath
Publisher—Peter Maurath
Contributing Columnists—
Jonathan Schoen
Steven Goehring
Art Director—Duh Vinci
Photographer—Jay Vecce
Librarian—Uses the Library roof
to work on her fan.

CONTRIBUTIONS

Send your check to my...oops, sorry, you mean that type of contribution. We here at The Hotbox are always in need of new material. Here are a few examples:

FEATURE ARTICLES:

This is what we're always looking for. From a railfan trip, to your home layout's story, or your own story. Size can range from a paragraph to a full page. Pictures are always appreciated. New officers are too.

COLUMNS:

Full of great tips on layout improvement? Got a million reasons Alco is better than GE? Start a monthly, or bi-monthly column. Size same as features.

PHOTOS AND DRAWINGS:

Got a great photo collection you want to show-off? Got a notebook full of railroad cartoons, or layout logos? Send them to the Hotbox staff for consideration.

SEND ALL SUBMISSIONS, OR HOTBOX QUESTIONS

TO:

Peter Maurath

OR EMAIL AT:

TAMRHotbox@sbcglobal.net

I will triumph over my
head injury!

GET WIRED

Check out TAMR on the web at:

www.TAMR.org

Or join our online yahoo news group, by contacting:

plvotpin@TAMR.org

(By joining you'll receive updates on TAMR news and events, plus be connected to dozens of other TAMR members. There's no cost to join this group, do it today!)

If you have a web site relating to trains or model railroading, why not join the TAMR web ring. It costs nothing, and provides a link for all TAMR members to find other TAMR sites. To join, send your e-mail address and web site URL to:

plvotpin@tamr.org

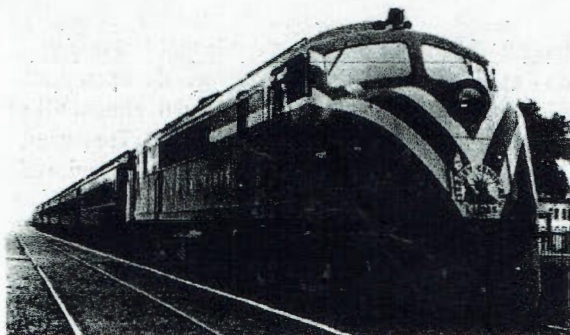


THE BLUE COMET

A History By: Erik Romatowski

Overview

Traditionally, TAMR Summer National Conventions are named after some sort of former streamlined train that went through the area. For example, the 2002 national convention, which was held in New Jersey, was named after the Pennsylvania Railroad's famous Broadway Limited. This year, we picked a somewhat more obscure train, but name train none the less. *The Blue Comet*, the premier train of the Central Railroad of New Jersey (CNJ). This train wasn't known for flying from state to state as most name trains are, but it holds a special place in the hearts of many New Jersey railfans. Initially a beautiful train, over time it became more of a workhorse, as competition from other railroads caused extreme measures. What it always was though was a train that did its job, and a train that represented a small, but hardworking railroad, and a small hardworking state, that all did what they had to do to get business done, no matter what the work entailed.



THE RR WAS WELL KNOWN FOR ITS UNUSUAL EQUIPMENT, SUCH AS THESE DOUBLE-ENDED BALDWIN LOCOMOTIVES, KNOWN IN RAILFAN JARGON AS "BABYFACES".

The Railroad

Famous for its logo that includes the Statue of Liberty, and their main terminal in Jersey City on the Hudson River, The Central Railroad of New

Jersey was born in 1849, with the merger of two smaller railroads, the Elizabethtown and Somerville Railroad

and the Somerville and Easton Railroad. In 1866 it expanded into the coal regions of Pennsylvania, and began to quickly turn a profit. By 1901, the larger and more powerful Reading Railroad purchased a controlling interest in the line, but the CNJ continued to operate as its own railroad. At this time, the railroad also reached a high of 711 route miles. The railroad leaned heavily on its revenues from Pennsylvania coal into the depression. The depression brought the first round of bankruptcy, which lasted from 1939-1949. Throughout the railroad's history, its mainline had paralleled that of the Lehigh Valley Railroad into Pennsylvania, and the two were fierce competitors for coal and other freight traffic. As the CNJ had heavy commuter traffic and short freight hauls, both money losing ventures at the time, the railroad was in and out of bankruptcy ever since the first time in 1939, until the last time it would be declared in 1967.

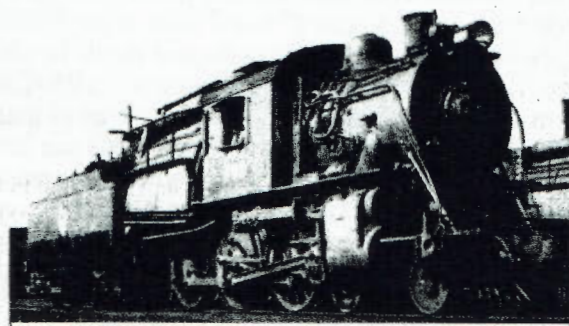
After this bankruptcy, all Pennsylvania operations were ceased in 1972, and taken over by the Lehigh Valley Railroad. Eventually in 1976, the Central Railroad of New Jersey became a part of Conrail, along with the other bankrupt railroads of the northeast. Throughout all of this though, especially in its later years, the railroad was a railfan favorite because of its extremely friendly crews and employees, and its reputation for its

unusual mix of equipment.

The Train

Known as "The Seashores Finest Train", the Blue Comet competed with trains of other railroads provid-

ing service to the New Jersey Shore by providing fast service (the train ran on a 3 hour schedule) from New York to Atlantic City. The train made two round trips daily during the week, with more added on the weekends. The crews, known for their friendliness just like other CNJ crews, would often toss daily newspapers or other goods to residents of the remote sections of the Pine Bar-



ANOTHER UNUSUAL LOCOMOTIVE, THE CNJ WAS ONE OF THE ONLY RAILROADS TO HAVE "CAMELBACK" STEAM ENGINES.

rens. These residents would often reciprocate this good nature by bringing baked goods or seasonal berries to the Lakewood station for the crew. Everything about the train suggested comet, as the exterior was painted a deep blue with a rich cream stripe running down the center (also a reminder of the expansive skies, wide beaches and powerful surf of the Jersey Shore). Each car was named for a comet, such as the most famous Halley's Comet. The Comet motif continued inside, which had deep blue rugs; comet's etched in the glass, generously cushioned and reserved seats, and a general sense of luxury. A dining car with tables of inlaid wood, and plates of great food, and an observation car also awaited would be passengers. Like many comets, the Blue Comet burned out, and lasted only from 1929 to 1941. Facing increased costs because of the depression, stiff competition from the Pennsylvania Railroad, and the expansion of the state highway system, services were greatly reduced, until the train ended all together. The train may of made its last run on September 27th 1941, but it will forever live on in New Jersey railroad lore, and the hearts of New Jersey railfans. ●

FROM THE DESK OF THE CONVENTION DIRECTOR...

Hey everyone! I'm definitely looking forward to the this years summer national convention, the Blue Comet 2006, held here in New Jersey from August 8th to 15th 2006. It will be chock full of events all around this tiny state, and should be a blast of a time. The last time a national convention was held in NJ was back in 2002, and this one should prove to be just as fun, if not more fun then that one. During the years of 2003 and 2004 we did not have a Summer National Convention due to out of the ordinary problems, so its good to see that summer conventions are again becoming a staple of the TAMR after a two year absence. We in the NY/NJ Metro Division have been working hard to make this year's convention as good a representation of model railroading and railfanning in the state that we can, and personally, I think we did a pretty good job. Its not easy putting together a national convention, as it entails lots of phone calls, writing e-mails, etc. but it can be rewarding as well, as often they result in many new friendships made. I hope that this is again the case this year as it has been in the past, and hope that all of you find the information in this convention issue to be helpful, and maybe even persuade you to make the trek east to New Jersey. Your all more then welcome to come, in fact, the more the merrier. If the info inside this issue isn't enough, or you have a question or concern not covered, please contact me at the contact info bellow. Also, if you would like a copy of the convention video, contact me with your name and address, and I'll send you one on CD free of charge. It would also be helpful if you could contact me or any other NJ Division member if you are planning so we know when you expect you, etc.

Mail:

Phone:

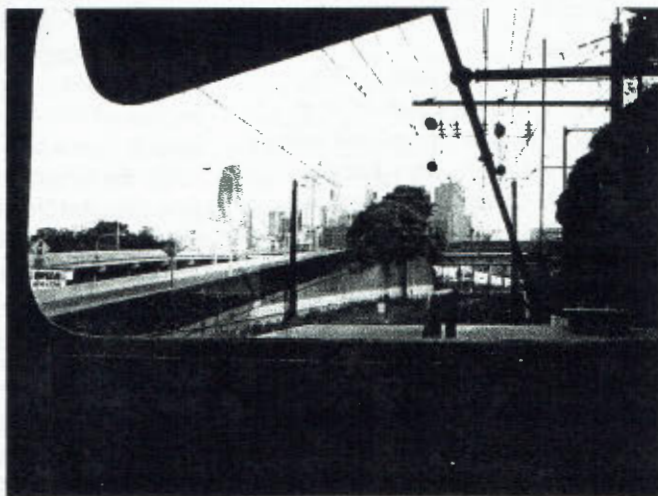
E-mail: eromatowski@yahoo.com

This will be a great convention, and I'm looking forward to seeing as many of you guys as I can in August!

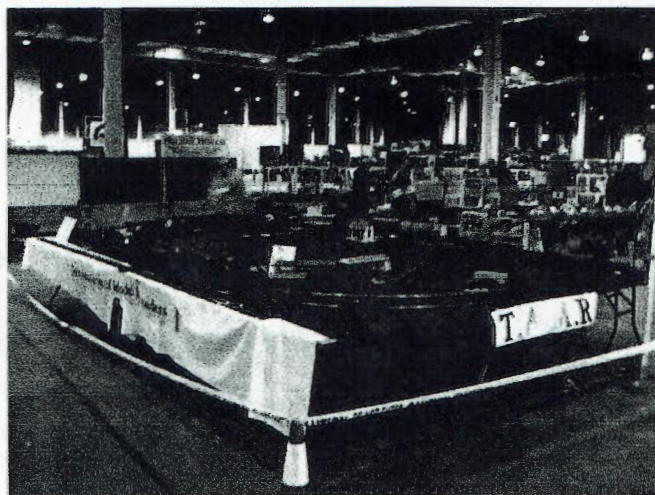
Happy Railroading,

Erik Romatowski
2006 Convention Director
TAMR Auditor

P.S. Oh, and sorry about the delay info, there were some problems with some contacts, but everything's worked out now and a great convention should follow!



A VIEW OF PHILLY YOU CAN ONLY
GET FROM THE TRAIN. BOTH PHO-
TOS BY: ERIK ROMATOWSKI



PART OF OUR TYPICAL SETUP AT
THE GREENBURG TRAIN SHOW, AT
THE RARITAN CONVENTION CEN-
TER.

TAMR Summer Convention 2006: *THE BLUE COMET* SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

TUESDAY AUGUST 8TH, 2006:

THROUGHOUT DAY: ARRIVALS AND VARIOUS RAILFANNING

WEDNESDAY AUGUST 9TH, 2006:

9 AM: LEAVE FOR NEW JERSEY LIVE STEAMERS (NJLS)

10 AM - 3 PM: VISIT NJLS

4:30 PM - 9 PM: RAILFAN NORTHEAST CORRIDOR AT JERSEY AVE. STATION



THURSDAY AUGUST 10TH, 2006:

1 PM - 5 PM: RAILFAN NORTH JERSEY COAST LINE AT LONG BRANCH

6 PM - 9 PM: CHASE SA-33 FROM BROWNS YARD TO DAYTON

FRIDAY AUGUST 11TH, 2006:

12 PM - 6 PM: SET UP FOR TRAIN SHOW

6 PM - 10 PM: RAILFAN LEHIGH LINE AND RARITAN VALLEY LINE AT ROSELLE PARK

SATURDAY AUGUST 12TH, 2006:

9 AM - 4 PM: GREENBURG TRAIN SHOW (ACTUAL SHOW IS 10 AM - 4 PM)

6 PM - 10 PM: RAILFAN LEHIGH LINE AND RARITAN VALLEY LINE AT BOUND BROOK

SUNDAY AUGUST 13TH, 2006:

9 AM - 8 PM: GREENBURG TRAIN SHOW (ACTUAL SHOW IS 10 AM - 4 PM)

MONDAY AUGUST 14TH, 2006:

9 AM: LEAVE FOR ATLANTIC CITY

12 PM: TRAIN FROM ATLANTIC CITY TO PHILADELPHIA

2 PM - 4 PM: TOUR OF PHILADELPHIA 30TH STREET STATION (NO CAMERAS ALLOWED IN CTEC DISPATCHING CENTER FOR SECURITY REASONS)

? PM: TOUR OF SEPTA'S FRANKFORD YARD (MAYBE)

7:30 PM: ARRIVE BACK AT 30TH STREET STATION

8 PM - 10 PM: TRAIN FROM PHILADELPHIA TO ATLANTIC CITY

12 PM: ARRIVE HOME



TUESDAY AUGUST 15TH, 2006:

TOUR OF PAVONIA YARD (POSSIBLE, VARIOUS RAILFANNING OTHERWISE)

NOTE: Schedule subject to changes by convention time.

THE BLUE COMET

Event Details

Tuesday:

This will be the day for arrivals and greetings. In the evening or sometime during the day, we might go do some railfanning close by. This will be an extremely relaxed day.

Wednesday:

New Jersey Live Steamers Visit:

During this visit, we will be riding on, and possibly taking part in the operations of some live steam model trains. The TAMR Vice President John Sommer is a member, and I've visited with him, it's a fun way to spend a day.

Railfan at Jersey Ave. Station: This is a station on the Northeast Corridor in New Brunswick NJ which provides good photo op's and the possibility of some freight action as well.

Thursday:

Railfan at Long Branch Station:

Located on the NJT North Jersey Coast Line. At this point the electrification ends from Rahway NJ, and diesel service begins down to Bay Head NJ.

Chase SA-33: SA-33 is a local train that operates from Browns Yard in Old Bridge NJ to an industrial park in Dayton NJ over the Amboy Secondary and the Dayton Secondary. There are several spots along the line that provide excellent shots.

Friday:

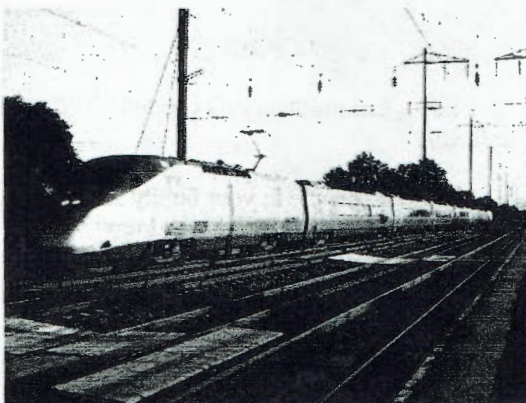
Setup for train show: We'll be setting up our booth for the train show the coming weekend, this will take a few hours to get everything up and running, and during the time other people will also be setting up their areas.

Railfan at Roselle Park Station: Roselle Park is located on the Conrail Shared Assets portion of the Lehigh

Line, the main route into the New York City market from the west. The station is located in between the tracks, and also features NJT Raritan Valley Line action.



A TRAIN OUT OF BROWNS YARD MAKES ITS WAY THROUGH SPOTSWOOD, NJ. BOTH PHOTOS BY: ERIK ROMATOWSKI



A NORTHBOUND ACELA TRAIN FLIES THROUGH JERSEY.

Saturday:

Train Show Day 1: We will arrive about an hour before the show starts, in order to make final preparations to our set up. The train show consists of many layouts, dealers, etc. and the purpose of

the day is to promote the group.

Railfan at Bound Brook Station: Further west then Roselle Park, Bound Brook is also located on the Lehigh line, but just east of Port Reading Junction (the junction between the CSX Trenton Line and the NS Lehigh Line for the journey east), this station also features Raritan Valley Line action.

Sunday:

Train Show Day 2: More of the first day, the day will consist of many vendors, model railroad clubs, etc. The purpose of the day is to promote the club to the public and other train enthusiasts. After the show is over, we will spend some time breaking down our set up. Because this will take awhile, we have nothing planned, but railfanning can be done if desired.

Monday:

Atlantic City train ride and Philadelphia tours: The convention goes will depart for Atlantic City, NJ in the morning, where we will get on a train from Atlantic City to Philadelphia. Once we get into Philadelphia we will get a tour of 30th Street Station (the main station for the city) that will cover everything from the mail handling to the CTEC Dispatching Center (where no camera will be allowed because of security). After this, we will hop on a SEPTA train and get a tour of Frankford Yard (this is only a possibility, still working out details). After the tour, we will get back to Philadelphia; get on a train back to where we will have an opportunity for cab-rides on the trip back to Atlantic City.

Tuesday:

Possible Tour, Railfanning and departures: A yard tour at Pavonia Yard is currently being worked on, but cannot be said as a definite yet. If this doesn't happen, we will do some local railfanning, and will be another relaxed day as this is the last day and will include departures of members. ●

THE BLUE COMET

Final Details

Lodging Info and Accommodations

For those that will be in attendance, you are more than welcome to stay at an area members house, as long as you make prior arrangements. For those of you that would rather stay in a hotel, or need hotel info, we recommend the McIntosh Inn of East Brunswick, conveniently located next to Dennys, IHOP, Red Lobster, and Brunswick Square Mall, and one of the cheapest around:

McIntosh Inn
764 Route 18 North
East Brunswick NJ 08816
(732) 238-4900
Nightly Rates of \$87.02

Rules of the 2006 Blue Comet

1. Respect all other members in attendance, people giving tours, the general public, respect everybody you come in contact with.
2. Do not trespass onto Railroad property, or any other private property. If you're not sure if it's trespassing, ask a local member, if their not sure, don't go there.
3. No smoking, drinking, drugs, etc.
4. Use common sense
5. Have fun

And if that isn't enough to convince you to attend then perhaps...

YOU KNOW YOUR FROM JERSEY IF...

You know that the only people who call it "Joisey" are from New York (usually The Bronx) or Texas.

You don't think of citrus when people mention "The Oranges."

You know that it's called "Great Adventure," not "Six Flags."

You've ordered a hard roll with butter for breakfast.

You've known the way to Seaside Heights since you were seven.

You've eaten at a diner, at 3 am.

Whenever you park, there's a Camaro within three spots of you.

You know that the state isn't one big oil refinery.

At least three people in your family still love Bruce Springsteen, and you know what town Jon Bon Jovi is from.

You know what a "jug handle" is.

You know that a WaWa is a convenience store.

You know that there are no "beaches" in new Jersey - there's "The Shore," and you know that the road to the shore is "The Parkway" not "The Garden State Highway."

You know that "Piney" isn't referring to a tree.

Even your school cafeteria made good Italian subs, and, you call it a "sub" not a "submarine sandwich" or worse yet, a "hoagie" or a "hero."

You know that this is the only "New..." state that doesn't require "New" to identify it (like, try ...Mexico, ...York, ...Hampshire (doesn't work, does it?).

You only go to New York City for day trips, and you only call it "The City."

You consider a corned beef sandwich with lettuce and mayo a sacrilege.

You know that the real first "strip shopping center" in the country is Route 22.

You know that no respectable New Jerseyan goes to Princeton - that's for out-of-staters.

The Mets -Yankees game has started fights at your school.

You can see the Manhattan skyline from some part of your town.

You've had Fried Oreos on the boardwalk.

You have a favorite Atlantic City casino.

Every year you have at least one kid in your class named Tony.

You know the location of every clip shown in the Sopranos opening credits.

You weren't raised in New Jersey -- you were raised in either North Jersey, Central Jersey or South Jersey.

You start planning for Memorial Day weekend in February.

You've never pumped your own gas.

You actually get these jokes and pass them on to other friends from New Jersey. ●

THE TAMR IS A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION CREATED TO PROMOTE, FOSTER, AND ENCOURAGE YOUNG PERSONS IN THE HOBBY OF MODEL RAILROADING, THE ACTIVITY OF RAILFANNING, AND THE PRESERVATION OF THE HISTORY, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY THEREOF. REPRINTING OF THE HOTBOX IS PROHIBITED WITHOUT THE EXPRESS WRITTEN CONSENT OF THE TEEN ASSOCIATION OF MODEL RAILROADERS.

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TO BECOME A PART OF THE TAMR, OR TO RENEW, SEND YOUR INFORMATION TO:
TIM VERMANDE, TAMR PIVOT PIN,

OFFER GOOD WHY SUPPLIES LAST, NEGATIVE EQUITY APPLIED TO NEW LOAN BALANCE, MUST TAKE DELIVERY OF DEALER STOCK, SEE STORE FOR COMPLETE DETAILS. NO PURCHASE NECESSARY, VOID WHERE PROHIBITED. FOR A COMPLETE LIST OF RULES, REGULATIONS, AND THE BEST DARN RESTAURANTS IN ST. ALBANS, WV SEND A SSAEBDR TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS. IF YOU ARE AT ALL UNSATISFIED WITH THIS HOTBOX, PLEASE RETURN UNUSED PORTION FOR A COMPLETE BLOW-OFF BY OUR STAFF. THANK YOU!

COMING SOON TO THE HOTBOX:

- All our usual knuckleheads return to there regular features!
- Two words: rubber monkey.

COMING SOON TO THE TAMR:

- Summer convention will be here soon!
- Decision 06', elections this November, you know you wanna run.

We're on the web!
www.tamr.org



Teen Association Of Model Railroaders
"Putting the future of model railroading on the right track"



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