



Train Collectors Association Western Division Newsletter

Vol. 66, No. 6 November/December 2020

Visit www.tcawestern.org or contact info@tcawestern.org



COVID-19 Derails TCA Holiday Meet



As we continue to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, TCA-Western Division will not be meeting for the remainder of the year.

We hope to resume early in 2021, following local health guidelines. For the latest updates, just visit: www.tcawestern.org. 

Muzeo Express: Holiday Model Trains Hoping to Get Back-on-Track Soon!



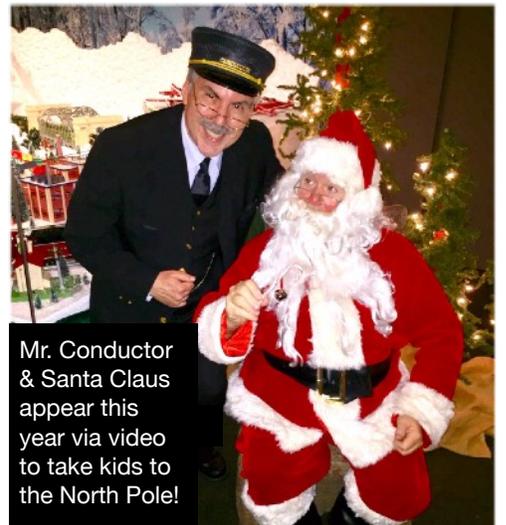
Muzeo photos by Mandy Rodriguez

SANTA CLAUS and his helpers have been working diligently this year on *Muzeo Express: Holiday Model Trains*. Now, it's ready and waiting to re-open sometime in the near future, after Orange County is able to move out of the COVID-19 Purple Tier.

A team of dedicated model train experts from TCA-Western Division and TTOS-Southern Pacific have joined with the Southern California Railway Museum (formerly OERM) and the Orange County Model Engineers to create the 5th Annual *Muzeo Express: Holiday Model Trains* for 2020-2021 in Anaheim, California.

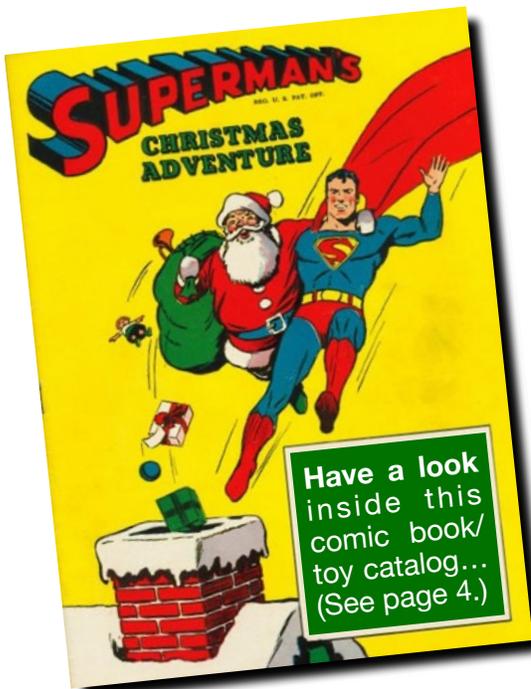
Special thanks goes out to Muzeo's Katie Adams Farrell, Della Rose, and Mandy Rodriguez for arranging with Santa Claus, Jingles-the-Elf and Mr. Conductor to take time from their busy schedules to make virtual visitations to *Muzeo Express*.

The talents of Wayne Sheriff, Steve Eastman, J Keeley, Diane & Bill Senyak, Lois & Larry Carpenter, Glenn Olsen, John Bowman, and Larry Pearson contributed to the displays. Special virtual video appearances feature Doug Marsh, Ken Schwartz and Steve Waller.



Mr. Conductor & Santa Claus appear this year via video to take kids to the North Pole!

(Muzeo coverage continues next page.)



Muzeo Express: Holiday Trains 2020

Photos by: Mandy Rodriguez



Steve Eastman's
"Radiator Springs"



J Keeley's
"The Polar Express"



Diane & Bill Senyak's "Standard of the World"



Wayne Sheriff's
"Metropolitan Layout,"
featuring three levels of trains.



Lois & Larry Carpenter's Snowy Village "Postwar Trains"



Glenn Olsen's "Thomas & Friends" (designer: Steve Eastman).

Besides the six layouts above, *Muzeo Express* features many other exhibits, including John Bowman's 1914 "Depot Hack," provided by the Ford Model T Club of Long Beach, CA, the "Holiday Window Display," outside on Broadway, by Diane & Bill Senyak and a railroad diorama in the Muzeo lobby, created by Wayne Sheriff. See the 7.5" gauge locomotives loaned by the Orange County Model Engineers, including one built by OCME member Mike Getscher. To watch a video featuring Mike's unusual logging-type locomotive, click on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qU1Aj48E5oQ>.

Access to the exhibition will be given to family groups at ticketed times to ensure proper social distancing. Groups are limited to 10 people, or no more than 3 family groups at a time. Remember to give all guests at least six feet of space, both inside and outside the gallery. Per CDC guidance, masks are required for all guests over 2 years of age.

The Exhibit runs through January 24, 2021. Business hours are subject to change. All admissions must be booked in advance! Visit <https://muzeo.org> to go to the home page or click on <https://muzeo.org/tickets/> to see available dates. (Orange County needs to be out of the Purple Tier to allow for re-opening.) Call Muzeo's gift shop/admissions desk at (714) 765-6450 for more information.

All child guests will receive a free gift! *Don't forget to bring your letters for Santa – our mailbox to the North Pole is ready!* 🚂

Film Actress Olivia de Havilland, 1916 - 2020

By David Otth (TCA #74-7028)

Recently, I read with sadness the news that Olivia de Havilland had passed away at the age of 104 on July 26, 2020. The two-time Oscar winner appeared in "Gone With the Wind" (1939) and was called "the last major movie star of Hollywood's Golden Age."

We recall highlights of her amazing career. Olivia was only 19 when she first appeared in Warner Bros' film adaptation of Shakespeare's "A Midsummer's Night Dream" (1935).

De Havilland was soon teamed with an unknown Australian-born actor named Errol Flynn. Their first two filmed pairings, in "Captain Blood" (1935) and "The Adventures of Robin Hood" (1938), made them movie stars of the first rank.

But it was their next movie, "Four's a Crowd" (1938), that is best-loved by fans of Lionel Trains. The film has a prominent part for the little toy trains from Irvington, New Jersey.

Character actor Walter Connolly was featured as an eccentric millionaire who spent much of his time playing in a large backyard train layout (which was actually filmed inside a Warner Bros. sound stage in Burbank).

In the most memorable scene for miniature railroaders, Connolly's Lionel 763E Hudson steam locomotive (pulling an "O" gauge Blue Comet consist) was raced against Flynn's 752E Union Pacific M-10000 Streamliner. The streamliner won, but only because Flynn cheated by slathering butter on the adjacent tracks.

Over the years, in addition to my collection of Lionel Trains, I acquired a 16mm film print of "Four's a Crowd" and some rare stills from the USC Archives.

During my annual trek to Northern California, in search of treasures at TCA Nor-Cal, I had the pleasure to become acquainted with fellow train collector Warren Heid (TCA #60-433). Warren's home, in Saratoga, CA, was where Olivia de Havilland had lived as a child.

In the later years of her life, Miss de Havilland liked to visit her old house at 20250 La Paloma Avenue. She and Warren naturally became friends.



Errol Flynn, Olivia de Havilland & Walter Connolly with Lionel layout. Olivia's elegant handwriting identifies her distinctive autograph at top.



Harold Shapiro at the 2003 TCA auction.



1938 photo

When TCA Western hosted the 2003 Convention, Warren and I collaborated to get Olivia's famous signature on an 11"X14" photograph from "Four's a Crowd."

I had it professionally framed and arranged with Wayne Sheriff to place it in the TCA-Western fundraising auction at the 2003 National Convention in Ontario, CA. With Bob Caplan as auctioneer, the bid increased so fast it amazed me! The gavel dropped at \$2,700.00.

Running back among the stirred-up audience, I located and thanked the winning bidder: TCA member Jerry W. Hamen (TCA #95-41072) from Chicago, Illinois.

I asked where the large 23" x 27" framed photo would be displayed and his wife immediately said, "Over the living room fireplace!" A fitting location for such a classy-looking piece of Hollywood memorabilia. 🚂

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Editor's note: "Four's a Crowd" is available on DVD. The train footage from the film can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9w5FRyu4a0I>. And be sure to see the Facebook page entitled "Toy Trains Go Hollywood."

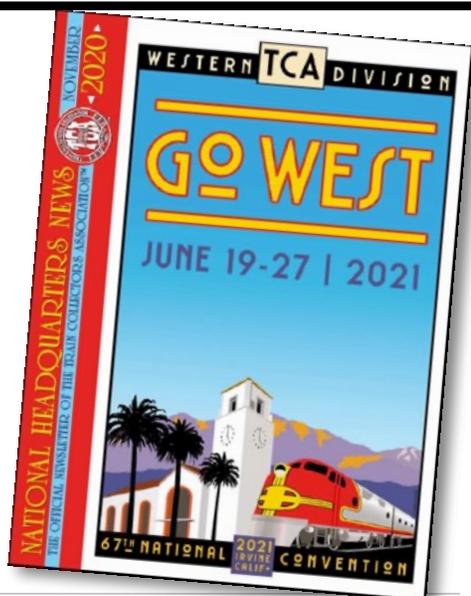
It's been almost eighteen years since Western Division hosted a National Convention and held an auction like this! Please join us for the 2021 TCA National Convention in sunny Southern California. Visit <http://tcaconvention.org>.

"Superman's Christmas Adventure"

Story by Jerry Siegel, Art by Jack Burnley



Excerpt from a vintage toy catalog/comic book. (See cover on page one.) Distributed in Nov/Dec, 1940.



Eye-popping cover of the latest TCA National Headquarters News. Graphic is by Alan Rellafor, art direction by Harold Shapiro.

Convention preparations are progressing in spite of the many challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. Promising vaccine developments bring us hope that Orange County will re-open for business in 2021. To allow all of us more time, TCA National has delayed the start date of Convention Registration from January 1st to March 1, 2021. Visit <http://tcaconvention.org>.

As announced in the current TCA National Headquarters News (see cover at left), merchandise embroidered with the 2021 Convention logo is now ready for advance ordering at <http://www.tcawestern.org/merchandise.htm>. Hats, polo shirts and dress shirts are available in several colors and styles. Check it out!

Sales from the Bob Nord Collection continue. To see the latest offerings, click on the link: <http://www.tcawestern.org/nord.htm>. We're also selling Erector Sets from the Ron Hall Collection. For info, send an email to info@tcawestern.org.

While we're social distancing at home, why not take some time to explore the Western Division website? You'll find fun videos on the home page; plus, there's an extensive History section with pictures of your TCA friends. Also, see the authoritative Manufacturers Index, which covers most any toy train-maker you might imagine. We've been adding more Newsletter back issues, so have a look there, too. Visit the TCA-WD home page, <http://www.tcawestern.org>.

Watch for developing news on the Convention Hotel, which will be covered in the next Newsletter, coming January, 2021. 🚂



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- Wayne Sheriff**, Membership Secretary/Mailings/Treasurer (Past National President)
- Colette Shepard**, Recording Secretary

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-Harold Shapiro & Wayne Sheriff

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- Jeff & Denyse Meyer** - Operating Layout
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