

If you are not a current member this may be your last issue.

THE MUSEUM OF EASTERN SHORE LIFE



A 501 (C)(30 NON-PROFIT

WWW.MESL.US

Preserving the Heritage and History of the Eastern Shore

**2700
VISITORS !**



Marylin
Aston's drive
in theater
complete with
movie.

This year's Christmas Train Show sponsored by the Museum of Eastern Shore Life, the Delmarva Train People and the National Capitol Trackers Club set a new attendance record. Over 2700 adults and children came through the doors of the 4-H building at the 4-H Park. Just watching the children staring, mesmerized by the train layouts was a thrill to the museum staff and the train operators. Those same hungry children and adults ate over 200 dozen cookies and drank 30 liters of punch! Next to the County Fair this may be the largest event of its kind in the county. Visitors came from Delaware, Virginia, Pennsylvania, New York and many places on the Western Shore.

The engineers, John Harper, Gary Schnappinger, Carl Hedges, Pete and Bill Rampmeyer, Phil Layfield, Joe Ciatolo, Ed Hammer, Regis Storch, John Nizer, Marylin & Don Aston, Matthew & Cyle Johnston, Rob Burton, Mike Craft, Paul Derdul, Mike Fistere, Randy & Zach Pichtelberger, Chuck Pestacchi, Fred Koester, Jeff Darby, Bill Spanarelli and Royden Powell III spent 3 days preparing the spectacular layouts that



greeted our visitors: Carl's "Z" gauge train, so small you were sure it was a toy; Bill and Pete's "drive it your self" display attracting lines of eager kids; Don and Royden's every



Jeff Darby and family watch their train display go round and round. Jeff was a first time "engineer" but he'll be back again next year.

growing display of large, beautiful and "disappearing" trains; Gary Schnappinger's "Home Town" village with business names a local would recognize. Phil and John's "Winter Wonderland" display evoked memories of Bing Crosby's famous movie "Holiday Inn". That's "White Christmas" to all you younger folk. We all waited for those four intersecting trains to crash but they never did. Jeff Darby, a first time exhibitor had children pressing their noses tight up against his display table to watch as the trains went up and down and round and round.

Train raffle Winners

Did you "just know" you were going to have the winning ticket? Well Erina Howell of Chestertown did. She bought tickets for the Polar Express in her 6 year old son Wyatt's name hoping to win it as his Christmas present. The movie Polar Express had been on TV Friday night before the show opened and as a result the Polar Express Train Set immediately drew the attention of both young children and adults. I'm not sure who was more excited. Me, when I left a message on her answering machine or her when she called me back, twice. That must have been a great Christmas morning.

See you next year, Wyatt.



Here they come again !

The Polar Express and Harry Potter trains were donated by John Harper of Centreville. The Harry Potter was won by Jean Hillary of Centreville and The Buddy "L" donated by Phil Layfield of Queenstown was won by James Miller of Annapolis. Congratulations to the winners and we'll see you next year.

Through the eyes of a child





Behind every great train show is a very busy woman and here are some of ours. From left, Bonnie Roschy, Ann Shortall, Chairperson of MESL, Katherine Draper and Helen Lampman. Also part of the crew were Lynn Paul, Alice Crouch, Helen Cecil, Marie Malaro, Faye Lister, and Nancy Layfield.



There's nothing better than a personal story about growing up, going to school or church, your first car or horse ride, days and nights of sleeping with your animals and water balloon fights at the fair, going to town on a Friday night when local towns had all your needs or those very early morning crabbing trips.

YOUR STORY or the story of someone in your family would add a new dimension to our newsletter. You don't have to be a professional writer. You don't even need a computer. We will help to write and edit your story for publication.

You've always had that "special" family story in the back of your mind that you wanted to share. Here is your chance to put it on paper and to share it with hundreds of readers!



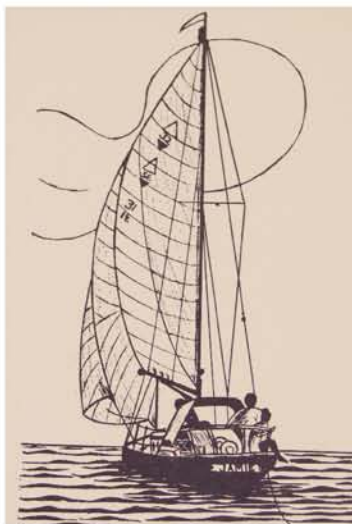
Wine & Cheese

This year the Railroad "engineers" and the Museum hosted a wine and cheese reception on Thursday, December 6th for many of our supporters and members. Over one hundred people attended. Our special thanks to John Harper who arranged and provided wine and cheese for the reception, to Phil and Nancy Layfield who contributed wonderful foods and wines and Lynn Paul for her cheese ball dip and assorted goodies.

cut



Just like Daddy's⁵



The negative image or "cut" mounted on a block of wood

The positive or printed image as you finally see it

I want a tractor just like daddy's. That was the wish of many boys and girls, even those who did not grow up on a farm. Today toy and pedal tractors are collected by both kids and adults with antiques often costing considerably more than a new model.



As steam, diesel, and gas engines gradually replaced horse driven machinery, toy manufacturers and tractor companies didn't take long to see this as an opportunity to influence the next generation of farmers in their tractor purchase.



By the 1960's and 70's collecting and restoring toy tractors became the preserve of many adults. Some just wanted to relive their youth while others saw it as a collecting hobby they could afford. Just like model railroaders, replica or toy tractor hobbyists could now build miniature farm scenes or keep an entire line of one or more brands in their warm basement instead of in a cold, drafty and expensive barn.

In the early years there were many manufacturers producing toy models for tractor companies but today most models are produced by several large companies like Ertl, Scale Models, and Spec-Cast plus many smaller companies and individuals doing limited runs of fine, hand made toys. A visit to a "Tractor Toy Show" or a serious perusal of "Toy Farmer" magazine will give you an idea of the vast scope of this hobby.

Our printers, Austin and Pete, have discovered a great variety of "cuts" in our collection of images for the C&P press. In the days before the photographic process, an image of a person, place or company ad was cut into a substrate in reverse like a mirror image of the original and mounted on a block of wood. The cut was mounted in a frame along with the text for the story, placed in the press, inked, then pressed onto the paper. The resulting image was a positive of the negative cut. The image of the sailboat, "Jamie" (above) that Pete printed is a good example of the positive and negative images of a cut. Some of you might remember making potato prints in grade school. It's the same concept. Today cuts are collected by people as reminders of an earlier day. Some, depending on subject and rarity, have become quite valuable. Stop in someday and request to see our collection. You just might find someone you know.



Popular toy tractors like John Deere, Case IH, Massey-Ferguson, Allis Chalmers, Ford New Holland, and Oliver are readily available while older models such as Minneapolis-Moline and Farmall can still be found. Not only can you buy the tractor but there are all types of accessories on the market. Farm buildings, animals, fences, landscaping, and mechanical accessories for the tractor can be found in hobby stores and on the Internet.

Replica tractors are manufactured in various scales relative to their big brothers. Scales usually used are 1\8, 1\16, 1\25, 1\32, 1\43, 1\50, 1\64 and 1\87. Most collectors favor the 1\16 scale - 16 inches on a real tractor equals 1 inch on a replica giving you a model approximately 6 inches tall and 9 inches long. If you have a small "indoor" farm or just like to display your collection the 1\64 scale is a more logical choice.

Like many collectibles, toy tractors can be purchased in a variety of qualities. If you are especially serious a limited edition or collector edition might be your choice. Because of the short time they are manufactured, the limited quantity available and the quality of the replication, they can be quite valuable. Extremely accurate models available in limited, numbered editions are even more detailed and more expensive. For the average person the mass produced models available in toy stores or tractor dealers are probably adequate.

Toys originally were made from a variety of materials that included composition, glass, tin, lead, rubber, paper, wood, sheet metal, cast iron and plastic. A form of plastic called Celluloid may have been used about a 100 years ago. This leads to the constant debate, "is metal better than plastic" for toys. It probably depends on what you are looking for in your collection. Plastic is capable of producing extremely fine detail at a reasonable price. If your collection criteria is detail and accuracy on a limited budget plastic may be the way to go.



Most collectors seem to favor metal because it appears to be intrinsically more valuable and authentic. If you appreciate those qualities then metal would be your choice.

Kids, of course, often prefer action toys, so pedal powered versions of daddy's tractors were their favorites. Children played with smaller versions of horse drawn carts and wooden horses so it wasn't surprising that they would want smaller versions of daddy's big tractor. Just like pedal cars these tractors were made with sheet metal bodies over a wooden chassis and wooden wheels with hard rubber tires. During the 1940's and 50's pedal planes and army jeeps became popular.

Modern versions can be had for as little as \$150 while the older, sheet model versions, depending on model, rarity and condition can go for much, much more. Not to be outdone by the toy collectors and real tractor owners the pedal tractor groups have their own web sites, tractor pulls, swap meets and farm displays just like model railroaders.

Stop by the Museum and take a look at our collection of pedal tractors and toys. You might find a toy that you once owned.



Answers to last issues Centreville Kindergarden Picture

1. Sandy Patchett
2. Debra Moore
3. Cynthia Nash
4. Kathy Conley,
5. Marvin Coppage,
6. Craig Callahan,
7. Joey Cheezum,
8. Teresa Moore,
9. Tommy Gannon,
10. John Price,
11. Jennifer Barcus,
12. Samuel Patchett,
13. John Maynard,
14. Melvin Hawkins,
15. Mark Whitby,
16. Sandra Anderson,
17. Wanda Butler,
18. Abby Baer,
19. Terri Stoops,
20. Doug Hunter,
21. Lisa Allen

Train Maintenance Department

On Jan. 5&6 the National Capitol Trackers held their now annual train repair and maintenance session at the Museum.



John, Randy and Paul dismantel an engine prior to testing its electrical components



Bill Spanarelli puts the pieces back together after a repair



Mike Craft and a visitor go over what needs to be done.



Don Aston oils the wheels before taking it for a spin
John and Paul check out the electrical contacts inside the engine



Did You Know ?

Your Museum

1. Hosted 2700 people at the annual Christmas Train Show.
2. Is visited by hundreds of students each year.
3. Loans materials to schools, and civic groups.
4. Is restoring a 95 year old Steam Traction Engine.
5. Has displays covering 200 years of Eastern Shore history.
6. Has a working turn of the century print shop.
7. Has video remeberances of some of our oldest citizens.
8. Produces a quarterly newsletter for members.
9. Has a web site WWW.MESL.US
10. NEVER charges visitors or groups for admission.

➔ Important Membership Notice ➔

Due to increased mailing and publication costs future issues will be limited to our members and supporters. To insure continued receipt of the newsletter we invite you to join as a member of the Museum.

Name _____ Address _____

City _____ Zip _____ E-mail _____

MEMBERSHIP ENROLLMENT FORM

Date _____

_____ INDIVIDUAL \$15

_____ FAMILY \$25

_____ CONTRIBUTING \$50

_____ SUPPORTING \$100

_____ BUSINESS \$200

_____ LIFE \$300

Please make checks payable to The Museum of Eastern Shore Life, P.O. Box 525, Centreville, MD 21617

Please write "MEMBERSHIP" on your check's memo line

cut here _____

MESL
P.O.Box 525
Centreville, MD
21617

Non-Profit Org
Permit #17
Centreville, MD
21617

