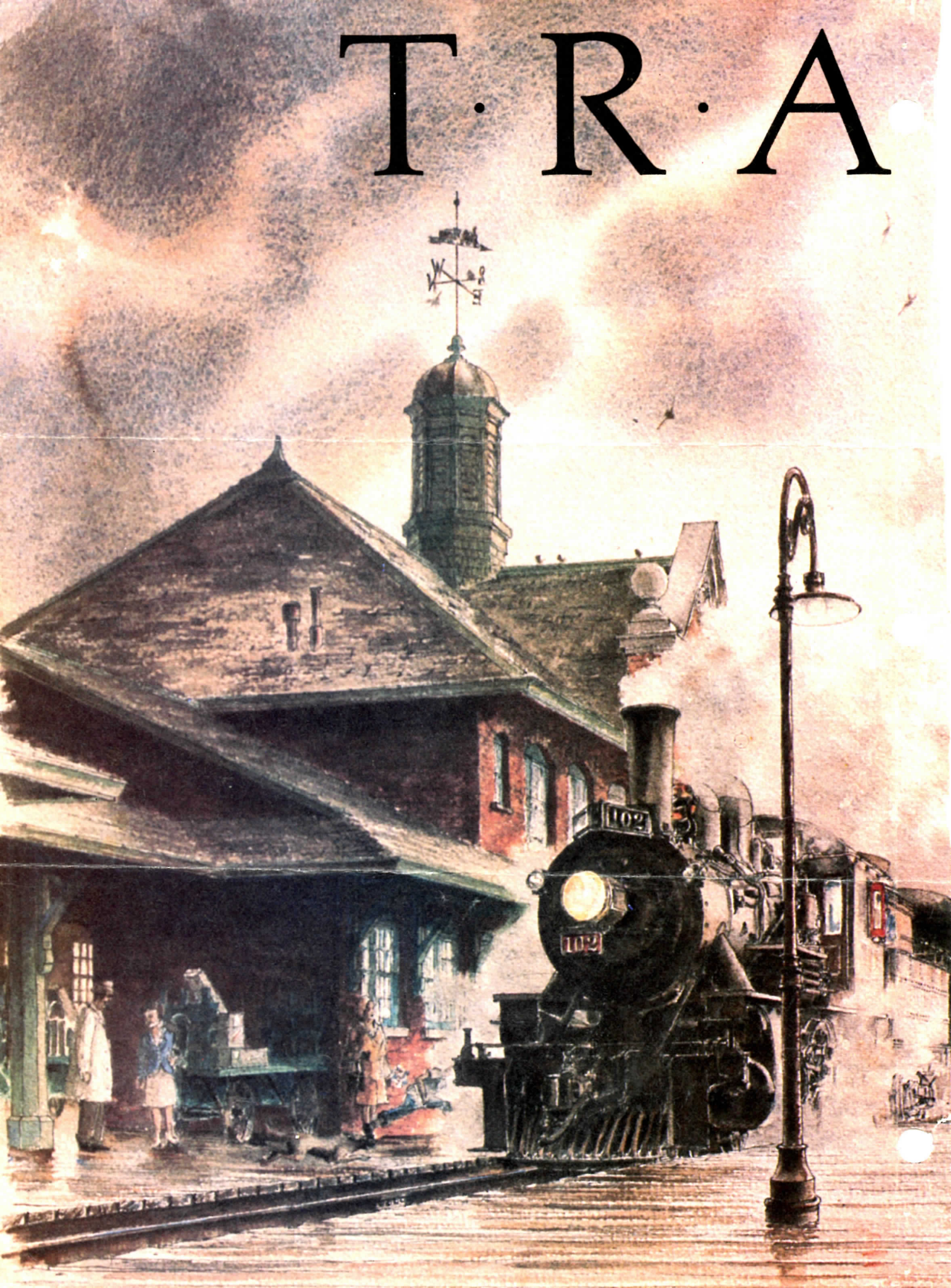
T·R·A



I·N·S

CITY & COUNTRY HOME
COLLECTING

All aboard
for a three-stage trip
as C&CH recaptures the romance
of railway travel
chuffing down
the ribbons of steel
behind a gleaming
locomotive
belching
smoke

Trains and the Artist

by Kay Kritzwiser

Wentworth Folkins romances the steam engine of yesteryear

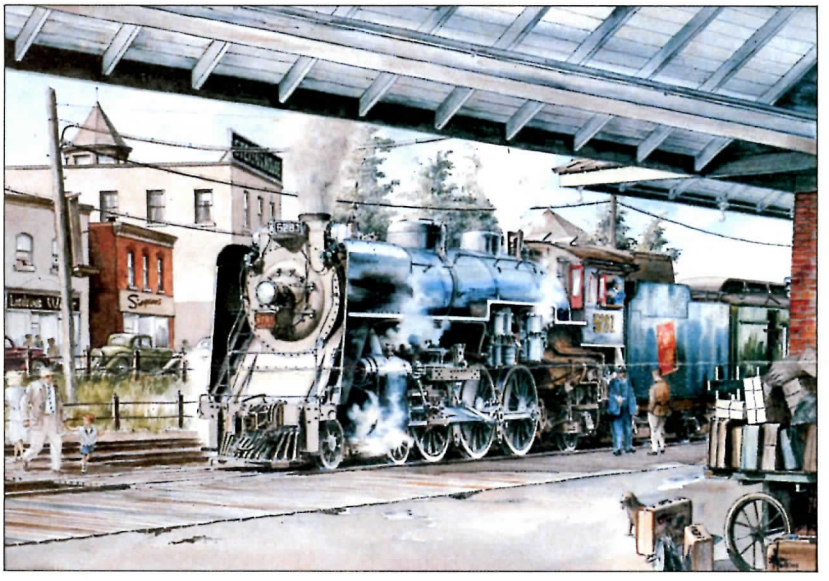
CHERRY HILL, PENNSYLVANIA. *The Strasburg Railroad is one of the shortest, if not the shortest "short line" in the United States. It operates as a common carrier as well as being a most popular and successful tourist railroad. Cherry Hill is a real place along the line between Strasburg and Paradise, a distance of 4½ miles. Stand here, by this diminutive little shelter for no more than a half hour any day during the summer and you will experience a quieter, gentler time of days gone by. The sweet-smelling green countryside, the well-kept white farmhouses and outbuildings of the Amish community, the Amish gentleman wearing the black hat, waiting with his horse and buggy at the crossing, until that indomitable little engine No. 1223 passes. It's quite a sight to see.*

Wentworth D. Folkins, the Toronto watercolorist, describes himself flatly as a renderer of trains. "I do documentations of trains in watercolor."

And then, everything in his face and to his hand in his below-stairs studio, belies his blunt category.

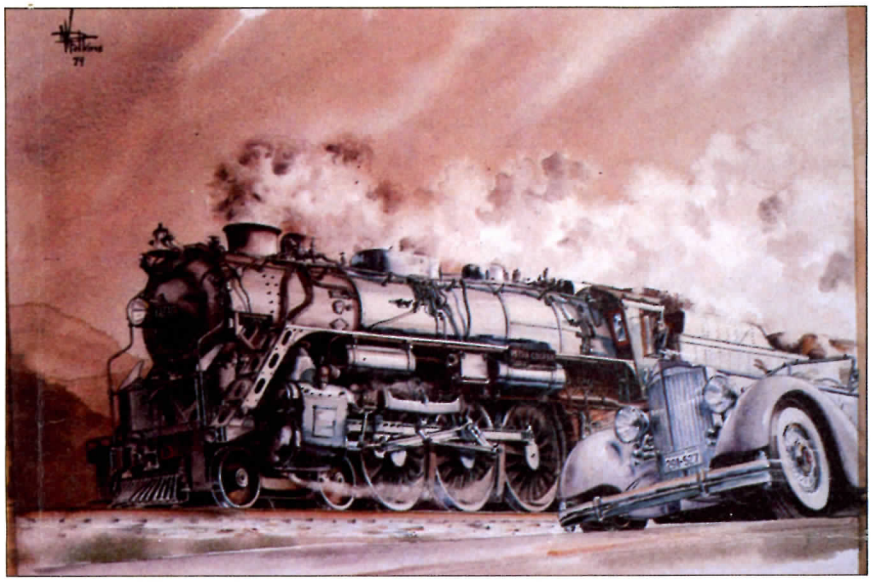
He touches the oil-stained wooden grip attached to the end of a length of chain hanging near his drawing board. It once pulled the whistle on a locomotive his father Otty Folkins took regularly out of Cochrane, Ont. as a CNR engineer. "Sure, Dad used to let me pull the whistle when he took me on runs with him. He'd take me on holidays. He let me run the engine—well, you know . . . I could tell it was my father coming into Cochrane by the way he sounded the whistle. They're memories you never forget."

Over his desk, an old brass plate bears the following cryptic message: "3 blows 3 sec. long at 6-sec. intervals.



COCHRANE UNION STATION, 1948. *This station was originally built by the Temiskaming and Northern Ontario Railroad about 1909 (now the Ontario Northland). Its architectural style was unique and it survived two catastrophic fires which leveled the town in 1911 and 1916. A Union Station status developed about 1911, as the National Transcontinental Railroad pushed through to the West from Quebec. Today the station stands and is still used by the Ontario Northland and the Canadian National, but most of its architectural style disappeared in a 1960s renovation. Here in 1948, No. 11, "The Quebecker" has just arrived from Montreal and Quebec. Pedestrian activity is brisk to and from Railway Street as it is late in the afternoon and within an hour the Northland will depart for Toronto. The engineer of No. 11 is taking a few moments' relaxation and talking to a young rail enthusiast. The locomotive, No. 5281, is a Pacific type, 4-6-2, built in 1918, by the Montreal Locomotive Works for the Canadian Government Railways as No. 509.*

PREVIOUS PAGE: *"Northland meets Polar Bear, Cochrane, 1946." Reproduced courtesy of the Cochrane Board of Trade.*



THE RACE, 1943. *Cars racing steam locomotives along highways that closely paralleled rail lines happened frequently during the first half of the 20th century. It was an exciting diversion from reality and most times nothing catastrophic happened. Tragedy could result if the competing driver was unfamiliar with the highway and suddenly found he was fast approaching a level crossing which left him no room to manoeuvre. The locomotive, a Pacific Type, 4-6-2, No. 3710 of the Boston and Maine Railroad, was built in 1934, as was the competition, a 1934 Packard convertible. Children along the line named No. 3710 Peter Cooper, in a competition originated by the railroad to increase good public relations in the 1930s.*

RUDESHEIM, 1957. *By 1957, electrification of the rail lines along the Rhine valley was nearly complete. Steam in this region disappeared shortly after but steam traction did not totally vanish from the West German Railways until the late 1970s. It is interesting to note that steam is still very much in evidence in East Germany. This painting shows a Deutsche Bundesbahn rebuilt three-cylinder, 4-6-2, Pacific-Type passenger locomotive, originally built in 1939 during the days of National Socialism. The train is a nonstop express on its way south to the Black Forest country. Passengers on the platform are waiting for local trains south to Heidelberg and Frankfurt, north to Cologne and points on the east bank of the Rhine. Due to the frequency of rail traffic in this station, passengers must not wander about, particularly across the tracks, as we could in North America in similar stations. Anyone wandering one step from the main platform sets alarm bells ringing and curt Germanic commands to remain on the platform, shout from the loudspeaker.*

Freight: every 10 miles. Passenger: every 15 miles." With steam locomotives, these "Blow Down Instructions" were very important. If the engineer did not blow down the boiler at regular intervals, minerals in the water would foam to the top and the glass would give a safe reading while the actual water level was approaching a stage which could cause the boiler to explode.

The overhead plumbing pipes in Folkins' studio are painted as red and green as any railway signal light. A battered metal plate bears the numbers: 5278. "That was on Dad's engine. I got it when 5278 was scrapped at Cochrane."

Born in Cochrane, an only son, Folkins remembers that childhood today through a distant cloud of steam. (The engine panted through its thick mist on a wintry morning and the rhythmic sound of wheels slowing into the station was sharp on the frosty air.)

Folkins knows the inner working mechanisms of train engines. "If anything broke down, Dad would show me what and where it was."

As a youngster, he used to draw details of trains. "I drew the mechanisms. What I'm really painting now are the mechanisms." Folkins, who is a graduate AOCA of Ontario College of Art, teaches interior design at Ryerson Polytechnical Institute in Toronto. But he has painted professionally as a railway artist since 1960.

His wife Joan comes down the red-carpeted stairs with a tray of tea things. She teases him. "I don't know why you don't paint nudes instead!"

In a sense, that's just what he does. He paints the anatomy, the structure, the articulation of the parts, the shiny metal skin tones of steam engines just as seriously, as emotionally as an ardent Rubens painted his nudes.

Folkins prefers watercolor to oil. "It works well for metal. I can get the muscle of the train engines better in watercolor."

On his drawing-board, his latest work—"Forks of the Credit"—waits for finishing touches. As a rule he takes preliminary photos of his engines to record details accurately. They must be scrupulously correct or voices will project from that vast, anonymous, subterranean world of

DON VALLEY STATION, 1946. *Trains such as the "Northland," the "Continental Limited," the "Super Continental" and the CPR night sleeper to Montreal all passed through this little station daily along with long freights moving every conceivable type of manufactured article to market. Early one morning, almost before sunup, a few rail fans were on hand to watch the action as a couple of Canadian National freights worked through the station on their way out of Toronto. On the head-end of the Northbound freight was another of Canadian National's numerous Mikado Type, 2-8-2, locomotives. On the Engineer's mind, as he slows to catch the orders, was the long grade ahead up the Don Valley to Oriole. He opens the throttle, and one young fan finds the roar of the exhaust, the blast of the chime whistle, too much so plugs his ears. His friend, however, seems to be enjoying the scene.*

"AULD REEKIE," 1960. *One of British Railway's fast 3-hour Glasgow express trains is seen leaving Aberdeen, Scotland, on a cold winter morning in 1960. Although diesel and electric traction were fast replacing steam in England, and as far north as Edinburgh and Glasgow, Aberdeen was still a stronghold of steam. "Auld Reekie" at the head end of this express, was designed by Arthur H. Peppercorn, near the close of World War II and although this engine was not as fast as previous locomotives of similar design by Gresley, it was more reliable. Known as a Peppercorn Al Pacific Type 4-6-2, it handled most of the East Coast mainline expresses along with engines of similar specification. Aberdeen, the granite city as it is called, experiences long hours of daylight in summer and is very pleasant. In winter the nights are long, cold and damp. Catching a train at this hour in winter must have been quite a sobering experience.*

the railway buff.

"I'm very serious about research," Folkins says. "I have to be. I got a call recently from a collector. He said, 'You know that railway signal you show in your painting? Well, it's half a mile away from where you show it!' Sometimes I'll juggle a background or I'll rearrange or abstract the setting, but I never alter the details of the engines or cars."

In the day of the diesel engine, railway buffs, historians and railway artists like Folkins, look back to the days of steam, if not with nostalgia, then with keen curiosity. The bookshelves in his studio are crowded. (You could shut your eyes and hear the brass bells from them, hear the leashed power as the trains pull out.)

Folkins was retained by the authors to do the covers for a number of these books.

On one wall of his studio hangs a quartet of reproductions of watercolors of Canadian steam locomotives which Folkins was commissioned to paint for distribution by the American Express Company. They capture the essence of a splendid era in rail transportation.

Folkins brought out a painting for which he has a particular affection. His wife has a decisive claim on it. "Look at that Union Jack flying from the old Summerhill station on Yonge Street," she says. "It's one flag I really love."

The hands on the tower clock stand at 8. It was at 8 a.m. every weekday morning that the Montreal train pulled in to unload its passengers. It steams on the high overpass still arching over Yonge Street. Outside the spacious station doors (where customers now stream to buy their liquor), a chauffeur waits beside his luxurious car. The Yonge Street tram has just come up from the underpass where cars now race four abreast.

"It's a scene from 1929," Folkins says. "It's a kind of history of transport in Toronto."

Every summer, during holidays from Ryerson, the Folkins travel. They go to the cathedrals in France, yes, and the art museums of Canada, but they home, too, instinctively, to the transport museums and whatever is left of the railway stations of another age. □

Trains and the Collector

Once considered a child's hobby
model trains today are big—and serious—business
some worth a king's ransom

RESEARCH HELEN FAIRBAIRN

Traveling by rail is passé, right? Jean-Luc Pepin and his federal department of transport are doing their best to further discourage it, right?

Hardly anyone cares about trains anymore, right? Wrong, dead wrong.

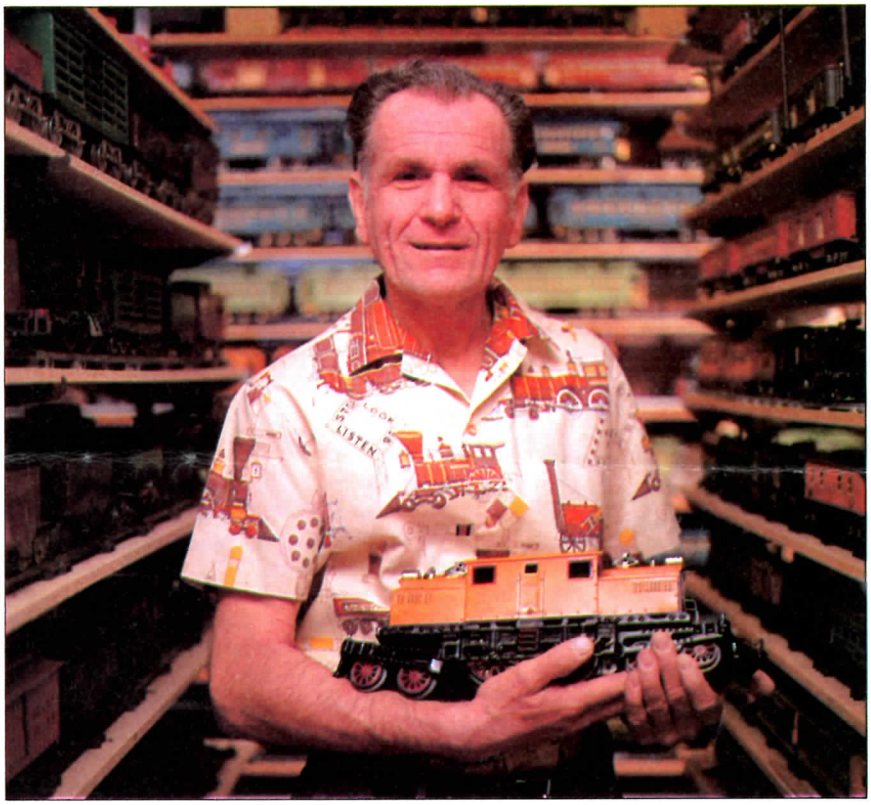
Uncounted thousands of Canadians treasure trains—model trains, at least. To call them "hobbyists" is to shortchange their dedication; some of them spend thousands of hours, not to mention thousands of dollars, collecting, building, and operating model trains, trains that in their miniature complexity mimic their prototypes precisely.

George of George's Trains in Toronto is one of the better known devotees. Just as Queen Elizabeth, or Pope John Paul need no surnames to identify them fully, neither does George—not to model train collectors. When he could afford the postal rates, his catalogue was sent to aficionados around the world; the return mail brought orders from many distant lands. Even today with the catalogue defunct, foreign specialty shops—Harrod's of London among them—advise customers traveling to Canada to make George's Trains a "must-see" stop on their itineraries.

Trains are George's life, his full-time occupation and his recreation. It all began after World War II when he began tinkering in his spare time, repairing trains for others. By 1961 he'd acquired an impressive expertise; he bought a small store on Mount Pleasant Road and began to pass along his advice. Later, he purchased the shop next door, and joined the two properties. Today, George's Trains bulges with locomotives, boxcars, flatcars, "reefers," Pullmans, passenger coaches, cabooses ("cabeese" as George insists), and a staggering assortment of accessories—scenery and buildings to make layouts look more realistic, tools for the modeler, switches, lengths of track, everything. Some of the locomotives, antiques by any standard, are priced to leave very little change from a $1,000 bill. Others, smaller and crafted from plastic rather than metal but just as authentically detailed, sell for less than $5.

When CITY & COUNTRY HOME asked George for a guided tour of model train collections, he consented to find them. "Okay," he said, "but try not to interrupt my train of thought. I'll track them down for you."

Overleaf the tour begins.



PHOTOGRAPHY JAMES EAGER

ABOVE: *Our first stop: a fabulous collection of prewar trains. George, owner of George's Trains in Toronto and our tour guide, stands surrounded by trains dating from 1900 to 1942. Cradled in his arms is a 1907 Ives Corp. locomotive; above his head, a Lionel Hellgate bridge bearing a baggage car and coach; to his left are just a few of the O gauge models in this collection; to his right and behind him are the collector's standard gauge trains which George admits are his personal favorites. Due to the great value of these toy trains, the three owners who kindly allowed C&CH to photograph their collections have requested anonymity.*

Pre-World War II Models

Most collectors of model trains get started when someone gives Junior a "set" for Christmas. By New Year's Day, Father is hooked, has started to build a station, water tower and freight shed. By Easter, the recreation room or attic has been pre-empted, and another hobbyist is committed to a lifelong pursuit.

Once past the initial stages of addiction, the hobby can branch off into a bewildering number of specialties. Some concentrate on one particular make or model; some collect only locomotives and tenders, others only freight cars; some choose a particular prototype railroad—usually a branch line—and construct an operating model layout that approximates the real thing in every detail right down to the rivets and rail ties.

"But basically," George explains, "collectors fall into one of two classes. First, you have the collectors whose biggest kick is in searching out, finding, and then displaying the models they are most interested in. The fun is in the chase, the pursuit.

"Second, you get fellows who like to run their trains. Sure, these collectors get just as big a kick out of chasing down an elusive model, but the main thing is to set it up in a super-realistic setting and run it."

The collection shown on these two pages belongs to a man—a collector pure and simple—whose specialty is pre-World War II models. How many? Even he hasn't counted lately but his train room is packed. Three walls are lined with shelves, trains chock-a-block along each. Freestanding shelves divide the room into narrow aisles and these shelves, too, are crammed. Trains even hang from the ceiling.

"This man's collection consists mainly of standard and O gauge trains," George explains. "Gauge is a measure of how far apart the two rails are spaced. Standard gauge places the rails two and seven-eighth inches apart; O gauge, one and one-quarter inches."

The trains in this collection bear famous names: Lionel, Ives, American Flyer, the giants of the "tinplate" era. Lionel (named for its founder, Joshua Lionel Cowen) was established in 1900; by 1917 it employed 700 workers. American Flyer, by 1918, had sold two million sets of clockwork trains.

The boom was on. It had begun just before the turn of the century when a few German-made electric streetcar models had been imported to North America. Their immediate success with youngsters spurred U.S. manufacturers, such as Lionel, to leap into the market. Lionel absorbed Ives in 1930 but by 1970 was, itself, out of business. Flyer had already ceased production in 1965.

Model trains, like every other manufactured product, are social documents of a kind. The collection shown here includes some Depression-era windups from Lionel; in an attempt to take modelers' minds off the economy, the company produced a line of handcars operated by Mickey and Minnie Mouse, Donald Duck, Pluto, and the rest of the Walt Disney menagerie. They sold for one dollar apiece. Their success pulled Lionel through the worst years.

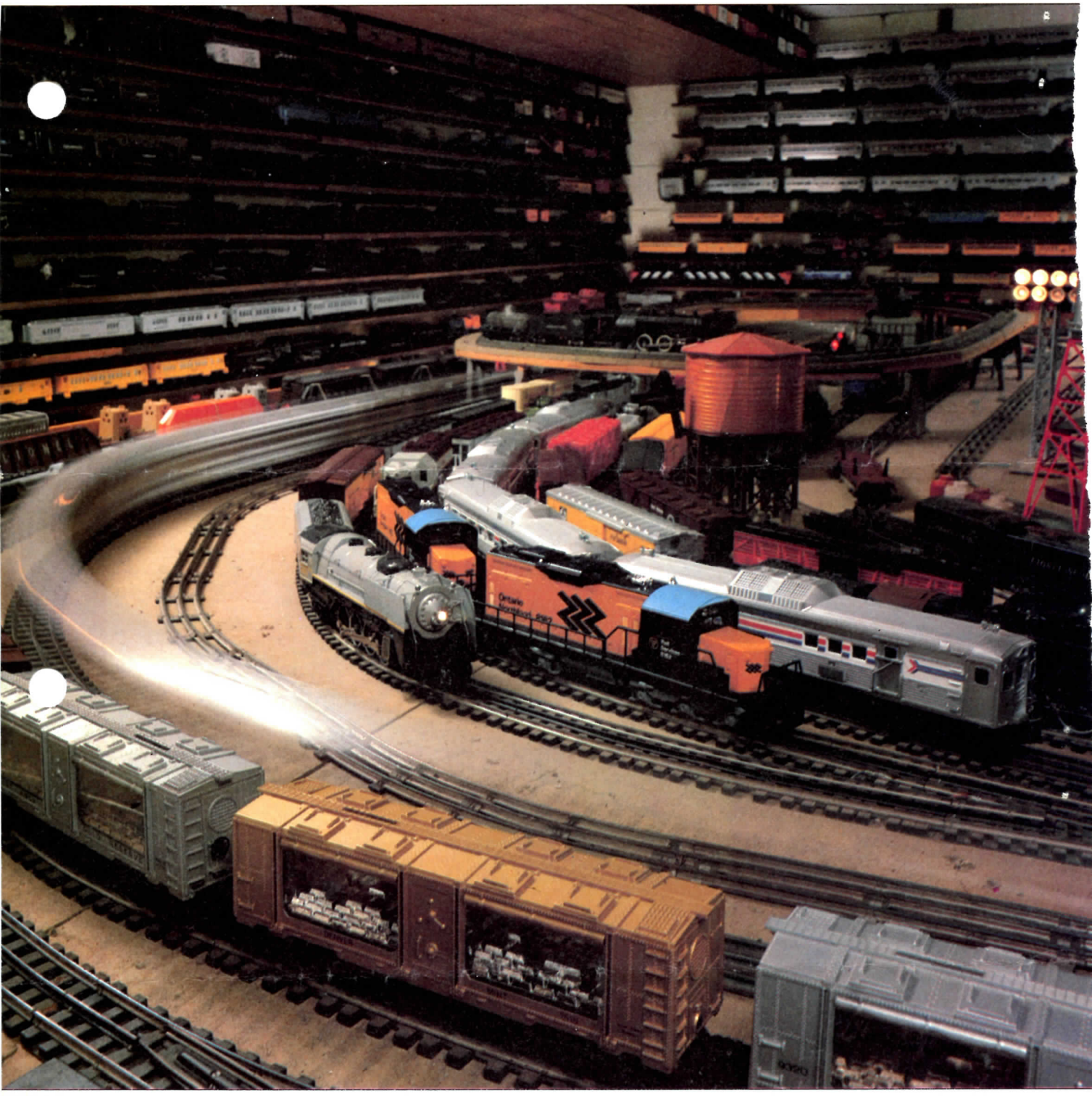
After the U.S. entered World War II, steel production was diverted to the war effort; Lionel resorted to die-cutting trains from cardboard. One of these rare survivors—most have long since deteriorated—lives on here.

George picks up a dining car from the Blue Comet set in Lionel's standard gauge. "Look through the windows," he says. "Each table is complete with its own chairs, the bathrooms are perfect down to the last detail of plumbing." The car reminds George of an incident from the past.

"The same car . . . or the same train . . . often passes through my store several times," he says. "I'll sell it to one collector who'll bring it back years later to trade for something else. I'll sell it again and, occasionally, the second man's widow brings it back once more after his death.

"From one widow, I bought four station wagons full. In the collection were two Blue Comet sets. I advised her to hold back one set for her son. Today that boy has a fine memento of his father . . . and a valuable possession, as well."

RIGHT: *Partial view of a train room. The owner of this collection specializes in prewar trains and accessories and has most of the models the catalogues list as rare. On the back wall are Blue Comet sets—with cars named for founder Joshua Lionel Cowen's daughters Faye and Tempel and their home Westphal—and Green State sets which open to reveal swivel seats, washrooms, even toilets with lift-up lids. On the shelves to the left are standard gauge Lionel, Ives and American Flyer. Trains to the right are O gauge: tinplate Lionel on the third shelf down is from the Vincent Massey collection; Lionel Walt Disney circus train halfway down is a popular collector's piece. The value of such a collection is incalculable: one train sold from George's Trains a few years ago for $100 recently was auctioned off in the States for $8,500.*



ABOVE: *Streaking around the track on one of two enormous operating layouts in the specially excavated train room of our postwar train collector is an S gauge train. Three Fort Knox gold bullion cars (each about 10 inches long) stand in the foreground. The Ontario Northland locomotive was requested by one of George's Toronto customers and Lionel agreed it would make a good model and added it to their line. On all four walls, on closely spaced shelving down the sides of the layout tables, even suspended from the ceiling, are thousands of trains—mostly O gauge. The owner of this collection has no idea how many pieces he has, but says, "If anyone moves anything, I notice." His specialty is boxcar variations: he has, for example, eight Missouri Pacific models, none quite the same.*

Post 1950 Models

Standard and O gauge trains were popular before the 1939-45 war. Since then, the ever-increasing cost of living space, combined with the natural reluctance to give over a major portion of one's home to a model train collection, has given rise to smaller scale trains.

The postwar collection shown on these pages features stock in two of the later scales: HO and S. HO trains (it means "half O") run on track spaced five-eighths of an inch apart. It is, by far, the most popular gauge with Canadian train collectors. S gauge track spaces the rails seven-eighth inches apart and is a rarity in stores. Little of this gauge is manufactured; it must be built from scratch, or—as this collector does—purchased from other collectors.

While HO and S scales are considerably more economical of space than the earlier sizes, they can, in elaborate layouts like this one, fill a room. This collector housed his treasure in unique fashion: in what was planned to be the crawl space of his split-level home, he excavated a large room, *very* large, and two huge layouts don't crowd it. Trains sit on each of the track layouts and more rolling stock—hundreds of cars, locomotives, gondolas, boxcars—line the walls, shelves around the sides of the layouts and display racks suspended from the ceiling.

On the tracks HO and S trains are ready to roll. Tunnels and stations wait for the express to roar through; water towers and industrial buildings dot the sidings. The trains are marvels of intricate detailing; operating lights and whistles heighten the realism.

Collectors who actually run their trains—as this one does—usually belong to one or more clubs. Most large cities have active organizations, many associated with international bodies. The Model Railroad Club of Toronto, to mention but one example, was organized some 45 years ago. The club members operate an O scale setup that snakes back and forth for 119 feet through two large rooms of an old building in the city's west end.

Club membership, especially in those clubs that maintain a complex layout, permits the individual to specialize in the aspect of modeling that interests him most—track planning, building scenery, electrical wiring, placement of switches.

Once the train virus has infected a collector as severely as it has the three shown in this section, he finds he has little "free" time to himself. At home, after working hours, he spends hours perusing train publications and there are dozens. The articles are fascinating but perhaps more intriguing are the thousands of small-type advertisements offering an almost endless succession of trains, equipment and accessories.

Then, the serious collector will spend as much of his vacation as his wife will permit journeying to meetings of other enthusiasts. There he'll catch up on what his fellow addicts are up to, arrange a few trades, listen with envy to descriptions of complete collections up for sale. Not a few of his weekends are similarly occupied.

With house space at a premium, today's model trains continue to shrink in scale. In recent years three new, small-scale sizes have been introduced. These are called the Z, which is smallest; the N mid-range; and the TT, largest of the new small. All, however, are smaller than any of the trains shown in this section. And—an important point to remember—none has been around long enough to attain status as a collector's item. The older standard, O, HO and S gauges can—or may—be.

Each of the train gauges has certain advantages, each its own disadvantages. The older scales—standard, O, HO and S—being larger, are easier to handle and best for display. The detailing is larger and shows to better advantage. But complete track layouts, especially in standard, O and S gauges, consume a lot of floor space.

Smaller trains adapt better to today's living spaces. A complete Z scale layout fits on a surprisingly small table; a fairly complex N scale layout can be accommodated on a surface 30x60 inches.

Model train collecting can involve a considerable investment. No aspiring collector should leap into the field without serious consideration of his aims, and a consideration of which scale best fits his personal requirements.

European Models

The final stop on George's guided tour is this train room belonging to a collector who, for 30 years, has specialized in trains of European manufacture. Some of his cars are more than 100 years old.

Model railroading began in Europe and was imported into North America. Märklin, a German firm, began producing models in 1891 and is still at it today. Others represented in this collection are Bassett-Lowke, Bing, Karl Bub and Meccano.

As the other two train rooms did, this one also overflows with rolling stock. The owner estimates it would take a week to count the trains.

As George has already explained, collectors assemble train collections to either look at or to operate. But the distinction is not always hard and fast. This owner—and the one represented on the previous two pages, as well—do both.

The *pièce de résistance* here is an operating layout featuring Märklin stock. Consistent with the German origin of the trains, the countryside through which the model runs, and the buildings which give it life, are German in inspiration and design. Much more Baden-Württemburg than Baden, Ont.

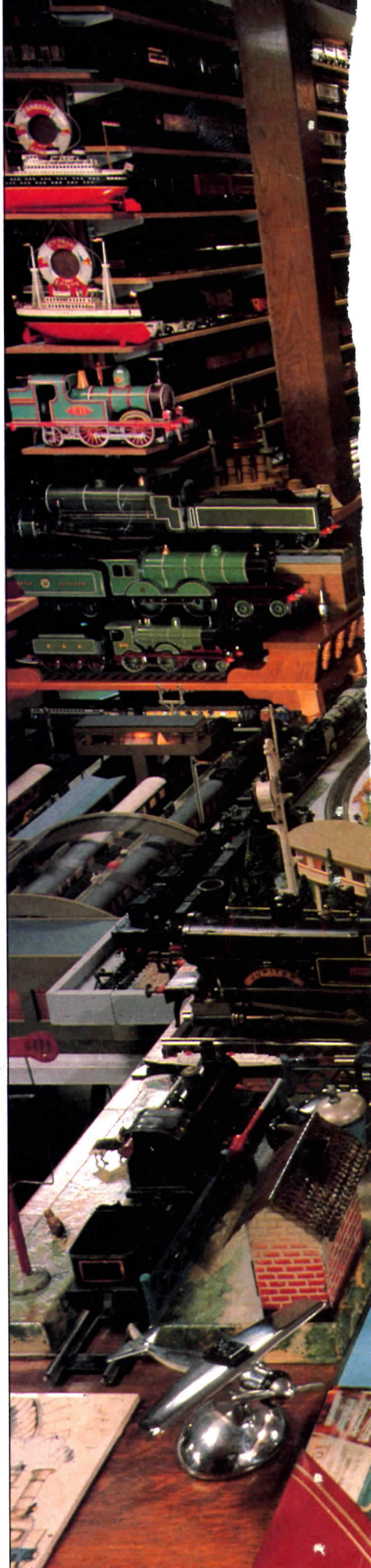
The owner is justifiably proud of the layout and with little coaxing delights to show how it looks in operation. Seated at the control console, he lowers the room lights and the miniature cosmos winks into life.

Trains, with whistles blowing and smoke streaming from their stacks, race through a countryside sparkling with lights—headlamps and running lights on the trains themselves; signal lights directing the "engineers" to proceed or stop; streetlights in the villages; even the houses and buildings along the right-of-way are lit from within.

The layout can become a battleground. In World War I, German forces in France used train-mounted artillery to pound enemy positions; this collection contains several models of similar mobile cannons, one equipped with toy caps to simulate the sound of firing, and the smoke that drifts from the barrel. A Red Cross train comes complete with wounded soldiers on stretchers and nurses to attend them. One car, fitted together with spring attachments, blows into pieces when "hit" by cannon fire.

The trains return to the sidings and, one by one the streetlights dim. Back in the real world George considers his dream. "A museum," he thinks, ". . . model train museum. Think of it. A building . . . somewhere central . . . filled with model trains. Available for everybody. Not everyone wants to collect trains, but I never met anyone—not a single person—who didn't like to look at them, to study them, maybe make them run."

He says this with intensity and conviction. He is a persuasive man. Maybe, just maybe . . . □



RIGHT: *On the desk is a green Great Northern Railway No. 1 gauge clockwork toy locomotive and tender with three matching coaches, made about 1900 by Ernst Plank of Nuremberg, Germany. The black train is a London & Northwestern Railway live-steam toy locomotive and tender with three matching coaches, 1892, made by Gebrüder Bing, also of Nuremberg. The extensive layout beyond the desk is Märklin.*


C.N.R.
THE BASSETT-LOWKE
TWIN TRAIN TABLE RAILWAY
2/-
BASSETT-LOWKE LTD
NORTHAMPTON
HORNBY
BOOK OF TRAINS

ABOVE: *In a rare moment, the camera catches Jim and Norma Conklin relaxing. During the hectic CNE schedule, they, with their children, Patricia, 25, Frank, 23 and Melissa, 21, appreciate having their 90-foot long private train car right at the fair.*

BELOW: *In the walkway between the dining room and kitchen, Amtico vinyl floor pattern is repeated on walls—and even covers the refrigerator in the tiny galley. Firebox with axe is just one of many details the Conklins preserved from the original train.*

PHOTOGRAPHY CLIVE WEBSTER/FORMAT

Modern vagabonds revert to "riding the rails" . . . in superlative comfort

Life in the Ultimate Train

TEXT KAY KRITZWISER
RESEARCH VIVIAN DE BOICE BAKER

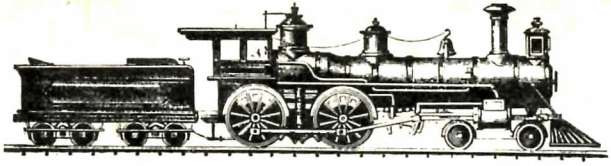
In the small towns like Yorkton, Sask. and Trail, B.C., and the big ones like Toronto and Vancouver, the children used to wait for that Pied Piper of a train, the one with orange letters on its green sides. The signs said "Conklin & Garrett" but they spelled CARNIVAL!

The boys with their dogs, and the little girls hugging dolls strained for a look through the windows at the Midway People. On the other side of one window, of one car in particular, a small boy in shorts, young Jimmy Conklin, looked back at them.

Today, James F. Conklin, only son of the famous Patty (James Wesley) Conklin, still lives in a Conklin car—at least during Toronto's annual CNE. Jim and the three Conklin children work the show. (On stopovers in other cities, home is the local hotel.)

The car is, for Conklin, of course, a nostalgic reminder of what it was like to be a Conklin child before the day of the diesel, when that carnival whistle went Woooo-ee! He spent 13

ABOVE: *In the 9x16-foot sitting room wrap-around wallcovering and matching fabric de-emphasize the unusual dimensions. The trompe l'oeil effect of the hand-screened Chinese Bamboo #2 wallcovering by American designer Louis W.Bowen, gives a 3-D effect. A sensational 16-foot long sofa with down cushioning is suspended from the wall and runs the full length of the room. Wing chair, in Biedermeier style, oak tables by designer Budd Sugarman, are scaled down to the space.*



summers as a preschooler, then as a pupil at Ridley College and later as a student at McGill University, traveling in the Conklin Show train with his parents, Patty and Edith.

Show business has been in the Conklin blood for four generations. The Conklins of Brooklyn, N.Y. operated concessions at fairs and carnivals. Patty their son, was born in 1893, and was running his own concession by the time he was 14. In the early twenties, with Speed Garrett, Patty formed one of the first Canadian carnivals in Winnipeg.

Early in the partnership, Speed died of tuberculosis but Patty kept the legal name of the firm, Conklin & Garrett Limited. Patty's brother Frank continued the partnership with him until his death. When Patty died at the age of 78 in 1970, his son James had been groomed and was ready for the presidency. Now *his* son Frank is the fourth-generation Conklin to carry on its role and tradition.

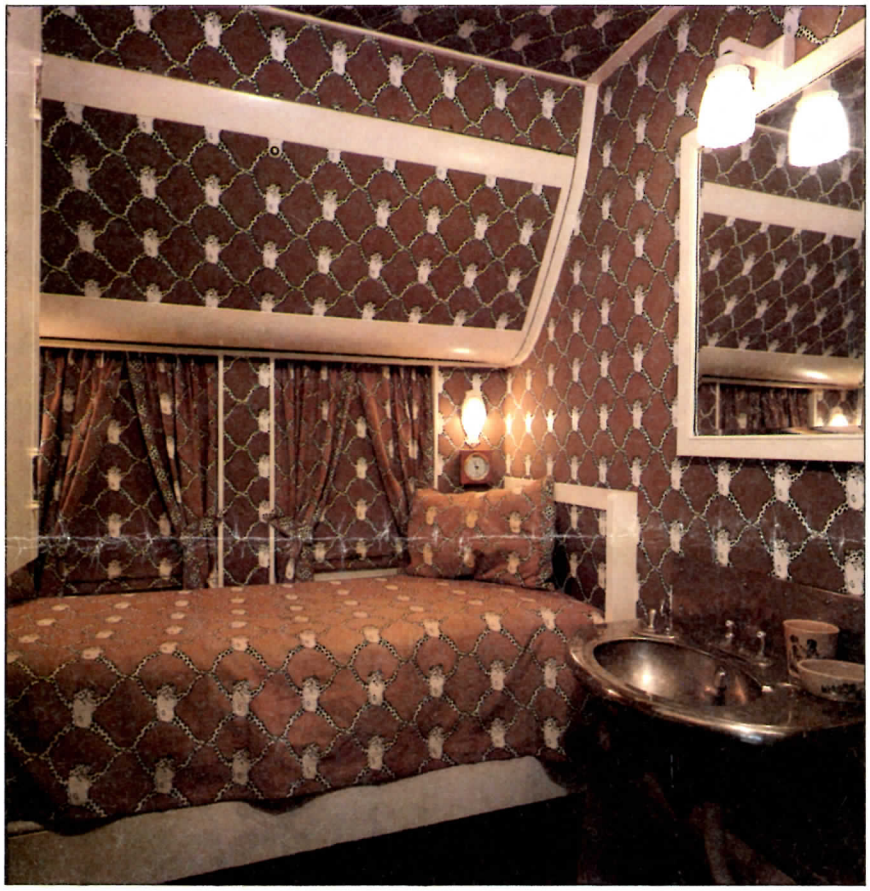
Jim Conklin has inherited his father's flair for showmanship and innovation. What else would prompt him to rescue old rail cars and make them livable again?

He now owns seven. One is a stationary office at Niagara Falls. Several will be outfitted for use as administrative offices at Brantford, Ont. where the Conklin family has its permanent home. Some are for sale.

His star performer is admittedly the beautifully renovated car he maintains at the CNE grounds. It has a history impressive enough. It was Canada's first private railway car, built in

LEFT: *In the 9x16-foot dining room, floor-to-ceiling mirrors placed opposite each other and louvred shutters are wondrously effective space stretchers. Display cupboards, illuminated from within, was space once used as bunks for train porters. Chocolate Brinton carpet complements the simple Italianate-style table and Biedermeier chairs. Made of cherrywood with gilt detailing, these chairs, made in Austria and Germany in the late-19th century, are upholstered in Chinese leopard twill by Brunschwig & Fils. Copies of antiques, the little wingback chairs covered in the same fabric have been modified in height so they can be used for both dining and sitting. Antique bronze French "mistletoe" light fixture casts a glow on Woodson's "Foliage" wallpaper, the pattern based on a Matisse painting.*

BELOW: *For formal dining, Norma Conklin uses vintage CN and CP silver-plate flatware and serving dishes—along with her own fine china, linen and crystal. She has prepared food for as many as 45 guests from her tiny railway galley kitchen.*



Preston, Ont. It was first owned by Sir James Pliny Whitney, premier of Ontario from 1905-14 and was used successively by six Ontario premiers. It was originally built of wood but was rebuilt with steel-plated sides in 1933.

By 1976, age and miles of sooty travel had left it less than lovely when Conklin asked Toronto interior designer Budd Sugarman to give it a fresh lease on life.

It was typically Dreary Pullman, Sugarman recalls, with light fumed mahagony lining walls and ceiling. There were the customary upper and lower berths, postage-stamp toilet facilities and poor lighting.

Today, mirrored areas add illusionary space; the photographs belying the uncompromising dimensions of the layout. Distinctive wallpapers ingeniously used on the curves of walls and ceilings echo their patterns in down-filled couches, bedspreads and window draperies. Sugarman kept the old railway blinds but covered them in each case with the matching fabrics. Not much could be done with the standard railway-car kitchen but to leave its stainless steel fittings and cover counters, cupboard doors, even the standing refrigerator and freezer, with a mosaic-patterned vinyl.

The Conklin car, with comforts far exceeding many a summer cottage, carries on a family tradition. In her day, Edith Conklin refused to travel with Patty on the long hauls, until he provided her with a car outfitted entirely in white, even to white carpeting throughout. □

For anyone who remembers basic CP bedroom decor, these interiors are a delightful change.

ABOVE LEFT: *One of the four bedrooms is papered with a Brunschwig & Fils design of stylized frogs; matching fabric is used for the spread. A full-size bathroom was installed but the original copper basin shown here was purposely kept—a nostalgic accent.*

LEFT: *Field of Flowers sheeting by Woodson is wrapped around another bedroom—even to cover the original railcar blinds. Emerald-green carpeting completes the sprightly look of a French boudoir—charmingly unexpected in a 1905 train interior.*