



In Loving Memory of Ron Morris

by Jim Potts • TCA 64-1063

TCA
memorial

It is with sadness that I must report the sudden passing of one of TCA's most dedicated and accomplished volunteers/members. Ron left us on the last day of 2017 at the age of 90. Right up to the end Ron was hard at work fulfilling his various duties on behalf of TCA. How blessed we have been for over four and a half decades to have such a committed, knowledgeable and able-bodied volunteer.

Ron was born and raised in Chicago. He went on to graduate from Illinois Institute of Technology and he served in the U. S. Navy. His career as an electrical engineer took him to Reading, Pennsylvania where he worked at Western Electric/ AT&T until his retirement. He and his wife Agnes raised two daughters and a son. Being long interested in pre-war Lionel trains and accessories, he joined TCA in 1970.

Ron will be missed and remembered by many, many TCA members. He is perhaps most widely recognized for his "New and unusual at York" feature in the *Quarterly*. He took over this duty in the late 1980's and took his last round of photos at the October

2017 York Meet. How we have looked forward to these informative photos as you never knew what to expect. If you ever watched Ron take photos of all kinds of special trains, accessories, and related items brought to his small closet/studio at York you can appreciate the work involved.

However to all those who knew him, photography was really an extension of his overarching desire to dig into the history and manufacturing of toy and model trains. And Ron loved to share what he discovered. I always keep handy my vol. 25 no. 1 *TC Quarterly* from January 1978, in which Ron presents his very extensive examination of all the pre-war Lionel lampposts. Just last week I referred back to it after finding a beautiful Lionel no. 67 lamp post in a dusty back corner of an antique flea market to check on which variation it is. Ron's research also led to his early involvement with the TCA museum. He and others recognized the need to organize and catalog the growing paper material side of our collection. The Library Committee was formed in 1983 with Ron as chairman. From then until his passing he was a driving force behind the development of our literary assets into the world-class toy train reference library that it is today. According to an article in the October 1987 *Quarterly*, Ron and his library committee were already pushing to use an early "micro-computer" to modernize the research and reference process. And today, after Ron's insistence that the library needed a professional scanner, all of the older *Quarterlies* and countless other documents are available to our members online. Most recently, you could have found Ron down at the library each week, scanning old copies of other train club publications into our library database. Countless TCA members have asked Ron for and received answers to questions about their collections or their research over the years. Ron's ability to find the answers for us will no doubt be a great loss for TCA.

Along with his years of commitment to the library, Ron found time to serve TCA on the Standards, Strategic Planning, Editorial Review, and Internet committees. In 2007, he was appointed as the third TCA Historian and his last post is in the January 2018 issue.

Although busy with national TCA duties, Ron didn't forget about his local TCA division. He was a Keystone Division BOD member from the beginning and served three times as President: 1983-1984, 1994-1995, and 2002-2003. He took over the position of meet registrar/chairman in 2003 and was working on the registration and setup for the January 2018 meet at his passing. Keeping track of everything to conduct a train meet is a big job and I once asked Ron if he would like an assistant. Way into his eighties he answered, "No, I don't need one." Looking back, I'm impressed with how reliable Ron was and how much we depended on him to get the job done.

Ron's lasting legacy will also include his reproduction Lionel landscape plots. He loved the original plots and taught himself how to reproduce them in his home workshop. He has sold them for years at the train shows and recently on-line. They are perfectly made and great to use in place of the now-fragile originals on layouts. Well done, Ron! Thanks for all you have done.