

The Enduring Popularity of Lionel Trains

Contributed by Greg Howard
Monday, 04 May 2009
Last Updated Monday, 04 May 2009

Lionel trains continue to be strong in popularity even in today's times when locomotives are not a major mode of transport. How did they achieve this?

When Joshua Lionel Cowen started his business of building Lionel trains as model toys for children and adults all over the world, his aim was twofold. As these toy trains and each Lionel trains set were targeted primarily at young boys, his first aim was to provide a medium for both father and son everywhere to form a relationship and communicate through the time spent together building and playing with model train sets. It has always been well documented throughout history that males bond well together through common activity, and as toy trains hold a global appeal for males of all ages, it was a great way to achieve this objective. The second objective was to show people everywhere the kind of careful detail and ingenious invention that went into these post war American trains, which were a testament to the leap in innovation and invention from the country during its formative years.

During that time, trains were also one of the premier methods of travel, especially over long distances. With that came huge coverage and media interest in everything about trains. Cowen decided to leverage on that, as well as his own passion in the subject, to produce toy trains of such detail and quality that they quickly became popular with children and men of all ages, and were often a favorite choice as gifts. Lionel trains sets also became the choice for collectors and it was often that you would see individuals from that time who had amassed huge personal collections of toy trains which primarily consisted of Lionel prewar trains , which were a popular choice.

Till now, you can often find someone making a Lionel trains purchase as the continued passion in collecting of toy trains and railroad model paraphernalia remains strong, especially in the United States. This is entirely expected with the long and fabled history of the mode of transport which reached its height of strength in post war America. Despite the advancement of technology which has resulted in high tech trains that can now travel at supersonic speeds or speeds which easily overshadows their aged counterparts, there remains an affinity amongst collectors for the antique designs of both prewar and postwar Lionel trains. Part of this is due to the mystique which lends itself to the highly detailed craftsmanship that was invested in building those model toy trains, which was the result of Cowen constantly hiring skilled model locomotive builders who spent long hours making sure that the replicas were true to the original designs.

Along with the consistent number of model railroad collectors worldwide, the tradition of toy train collecting also continues to be spread down from generation to generation. The fact that these toys still hold a fascination with men of all ages and diverse backgrounds, lend them to being timeless mediums for bonding between family members. It is quite a sight to behold when a railroad set is completed and a toy train is seen chugging along the tracks with both father and son, or sometimes the entire family, smiling and cheering on their efforts. With other accessories including scenic landscapes that come with these railroad sets, it is not difficult to understand why Lionel trains remain close to the hearts of train collectors everywhere in the world.

Article Source: <http://www.articlesbase.com/hobbies-articles/the-enduring-popularity-of-lionel-trains-386916.html>

About the Author:

Greg Howard is a collector of Lionel trains set and often provides insights on making your Lionel trains purchase . For more info on Lionel model train sets , please visit Greg's site.