

The Origins of the  
**TIDEWATER BIG TRAIN OPERATORS CLUB**

By John A. Reid

September 2014

**Preface**

As this club is approaching its thirtieth Anniversary, I thought that it would be appropriate to let our newer members know just how this club came into existence. Since there is only one original member still on the roster, I have had to rely on memories and early Gulls to put this story together. Thanks to Faye Stewart and Alice Maisey for providing copies of the early Gulls.

**Background**

In the early 1960's the Lehman Toy Company, in Germany, decided to add a new toy line for children. They decided to make an electric operated train, but did not want to compete with the "HO" and "O" gauge trains that were plentiful on the market. They decided to use Gauge 1 for track size and from that they developed the iconic 0-4-0 engine based on a narrow gauge engine used in Europe. The first train sets were produced in 1968 and were intended for the European market.. However, American importers began buying these starter sets for distribution in the United States. Among these importers was Arthur "Junie" Lancaster, then owner of Coleman's Nursery in Portsmouth, Virginia. Sales of LGB train sets expanded so rapidly in the US that soon clubs began to form especially on the East Coast. Junie Lancaster sold the Nursery and opened a new business in Suffolk. It was on the sight of this business That Mike Twiford moved his Mikes Trainland Shop from Coleman's to the corner of Bridge Road and Shoulders Hill Road. It was

1979 that the first Annual Convention of the L.G.B. Big Train Operator's Clubs was held. The fourth Annual Convention was hosted by Mike Twiford and Junie Lancaster at Coleman's Nursery August 9 – 12, 1982. At this convention, Bob Stewart and 15 other residents of this area joined the L.G.B. B.T.O. club. The fifth convention, 1983, was held in Strasburg, PA and the sixth (1984) was held in Chicago, IL.

The seventh convention returned to Virginia and was held at Mike's Trainland in Suffolk in 1985. At this convention, Bob Stewart applied for permission to form a local Tidewater Chapter. Permission was granted and the very first meeting of The Tidewater Big Train Operators Club was held on September 24, 1985 at Mike's Trainland. The original nine members were:

Bob Stewart & Family	President
Don Blair & Family	Vice President
Bob Maisey & Family	Secretary/Treasurer
Bill Alderman	
Ralph Welch & Family	
Louis Anderson & Family	
Same Luke & Family	
Garland Culpepper & Family	
Robert DeFord, Jr.	

Even though the first meeting was held in September, 1985, a hand written roster lists the membership date of the above nine founders as November, 1985. This is explained because in those early

years, meetings were held only every other month. The first meeting was strictly organizational and the November meeting the first official meeting.

In December, 1985 four new members were added. They were:

Shelton Owens

Maurice Phillippi & Family

Richard Atkinson

Arthur (Junie) Lancaster & Family

In Jan. 1986, Alan Lindauer and Bruce Beenken & Family were added.

The last entry on the hand written roster is John & Faye Reid, Members #17, who joined on Feb. 4, 1986. While many of the members were listed as " & Family", Faye Reid was the first female to attend the meetings and take an active part in the meetings and activities.

Another roster dated 1986-87 lists several additional members making the number of club members as 24.

Dues were \$6.00 per year for individuals and \$7.00 for Family Membership.

The 1990 Membership Roster, dated Jan. 1, 1990 has 41 members listed. Eighteen of the earlier members have already dropped out.

The 1991 Membership Roster, dated Jan. 1, 1991 lists only 37 members out of a total of 65 that had joined, a loss of 28.

**Tidewater Big Train Operators Club, Inc.**

Officers - Terms are July 1 of the year listed until June 30th of the following year.

	President	V.P.	Secretary	Treasurer	Registered Agent	
1985-86	Bob Stewart				Not Incorporated	
1986-87	Bob Stewart	John Reid	Shelton Owens		Not Incorporated	
1987-88	John Reid		Shelton Owens		Not Incorporated	
1988-89	John Reid		Shelton Owens		Not Incorporated	
1989-90	John Reid		Shelton Owens		Not Incorporated	
1990-91	John Reid		Shelton Owens		Not Incorporated	
1991-92	John Reid		Shelton Owens		Not Incorporated	
1992-93	John Reid		Shelton Owens		Not Incorporated	
1993-94	John Crafton	-----	Steve Galovics	Steve Galovics	Not Incorporated	
1994-95	Bob Maisey	-----	Joe Walls	Joe Walls	Not Incorporated	
1995-96	Bill Mahoney	Ken Berg	Dave Caldwell	Bill Colleran	Not Incorporated	
1996-97	Ken Berg	Manning Merritt	Henry Burkett	Teya Caple-Woods	Not Incorporated	
Corp. Yr.						
1997-98	1998	Manning Merritt	Bill Werner	Dan Hamer	Teya Caple-Woods	Teya Caple-Woods
1998-99	1999	David Caldwell	Bill Werner	Buddy Stark	Teya Caple-Woods	Teya Caple-Woods
1999-00	2000	Teya Caple-Woods	Bill Werner	Buddy Stark	John Reid	Teya Caple-Woods
2000-01	2001	Teya Caple-Woods	Bill Werner	Buddy Stark	John Reid	Teya Caple-Woods
2001-02	2002	Teya Caple-Woods	Bill Werner	Buddy Stark	John Reid	Teya Caple-Woods
2002-03	2003	Teya Caple-Woods	Bill Werner	Buddy Stark	John Reid	Teya Caple-Woods
2003-04	2004	Teya Caple-Woods	David Caldwell	Bill McLean	John Reid	Teya Caple-Woods
2004-05	2005	David Caldwell	Al Onley	Bill McLean	Dave Fahy	Teya Caple-Woods
2005-06	2006	Teya Caple-Woods	Bob Maisey	Denise Bamberg	Dave Fahy	Teya Caple-Woods
2006-07	2007	Dan Hamer	Talmadge Piland	Denise Bamberg	Dave Fahy	Teya Caple-Woods
2007-08	2008	Dan Hamer	Talmadge Piland	Suzanne Durbin	Roland Smith	Teya Caple-Woods
2008-09	2009	Talmadge Piland	Teya Caple-Woods	Sherry Caldwell	John Reid	Teya Caple-Woods
2009-10	2010	Talmadge Piland	Teya Caple-Woods	Sherry Caldwell	John Reid	Teya Caple-Woods
2010-11	2011	David Caldwell	Jerry Kay	Sherry Caldwell	Becky Jungans	Teya Caple-Woods
2011-12	2012	Jerry Kay	Mark Junghans	Sherry Caldwell	Becky Jungans	Teya Caple-Woods
2012-13	2013	Jerry Kay	Suzanne Durbin	Sherry Caldwell	Pat jennings	Teya Caple-Woods
2013-14	2014	Suzanne Durbin	Faye Reid	Sherry Caldwell	Pat jennings	Teya Caple-Woods

## Founding Members of TBTO

### From original handwritten roster

1 <b>Bob Stewart &amp; family (Founder)</b>	Nov. 1985	<i>ACTIVE</i>
2 Don Blair & family	Nov. 1985	NLM
3 Bob Maisey & family	Nov. 1985	Deceased
4 Bill Alderman	Nov. 1985	NLM
5 Ralph Welch & family	Nov. 1985	NLM
6 Louis Anderson & family	Nov. 1985	NLM
7 Sam Luke & family	Nov. 1985	NLM
8 Garland Culpepper & family	Nov. 1985	Deceased
9 Robert Deford, Jr.	Nov. 1985	NLM
10 Shelton Owens	Dec. 1985	Deceased
11 Maurice Phillippi & family	Dec. 1985	NLM
12 Richard Atkinson	Dec. 1985	NLM
14 Arthur (Junie) Lancaster	Dec. 1985	Deceased
15 Alan Lindauer	Jan. 1986	NLM
16 Bruce Beenken & family	Jan. 1986	NLM
17 <b>John &amp; Faye Reid</b>	Feb.1986	Active

### From 1986-87 roster

18 Norman Goodloe		NLM
19 Sterling Tuttle		NLM
20 James Goodwin, Jr.		Deceased
21 William Powell		NLM
22 Charles Rose, Jr.		NLM
23 M.L. Otis		NLM
24 Nick Boogades		NLM
Mike Twiford (Honorary)		NLM

### The next roster in my possession is the 1989 roster

25 Ralph Kidd, Jr.	1987	NLM
26 Unknown		NLM
27 James Venable	1987	NLM
28 Unknown		NLM
29 Unknown		NLM
30 Warren Geng	1987	NLM
31 Don Krudop	1987	NLM
32 Bower Patrick, III	1987	NLM
33 J.L. & Margaret McCoy, Jr.	1987	NLM
34 Roger Yard	1987	NLM
35 <b>R.B. Hall, II</b>	1988	Active
36 Charles Payor	1988	NLM

37 Robert Thon	1988	NLM
38 James Overton	1988	NLM
39 Larry Beverley	1988	NLM
40 Bill Scott	1988	NLM
41 Bill Tyrrell	1988	NLM
42 Steven Lewis	1988	NLM
43 Richard MacDonald	Nov. 1988	NLM
44 Larry Nester	Nov. 1988	NLM
45 Mike Lewandowski	Dec. 1988	NLM
46 Tom Russell	Dec. 1988	NLM
47 <b>Linwood Spratley</b>	Feb. 1989	Active

From 1991 roster

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48 Nicholas Morton	Feb. 1989	NLM
49 George Hillier	Feb. 1989	NLM
50 Ray Santana	Feb. 1989	NLM
51 Paul Hillier	Apr. 1989	NLM
52 James McDonald	May 1989	NLM
53 Arthur Conrad, Jr.	May 1989	NLM
54 Neal Brock	May 1989	NLM
55 William Page	Aug. 1989	NLM
56 Bob Buhrman	Oct. 1989	NLM
57 Jack Heatwole	Oct. 1989	NLM
58 John Crafton	Oct. 1989	Deceased
59 Eric Hinckley	Feb. 1990	NLM
60 Harry Heal	Mar. 1990	NLM
61 Bill Colleran, Jr.	Mar. 1990	Deceased
62 Pete Piszczek	Oct. 1990	NLM
63 Richard Peery	Oct. 1990	NLM
64 Charles Kadas	Oct. 1990	NLM
65 Jack Williams	Nov. 1990	NLM

Note: The 1991 Roster is dated Jan. 1, 1991 and lists only 37 members out of 65 that have joined.