

**THE HISTORY
OF
EMD STYLING ARTISTS
(Condensed Version)**

Originally, the Electro-Motive Corp., a subsidiary of General Motors in 1937, tapped the talents of one of their design illustrators in Detroit, Leland Knickerbocker, to create a colored styling scheme for the Santa Fe "Super Chief" E1A diesel. The reception to this revolutionary packaging to Railroad's new power source was immediately embraced by both the Railroads and General Motors management. GM's Sales and Public Relations departments envisioned the promotional advantages in utilizing this new, slick colorful packaging to wean the Railroads off of the antiquated Steam locomotives that had seen their better days. Another GM design illustrator, Paul A. Meyer, hooked up with Knickerbocker. Between the two, they created many advanced styling schemes for the Railroads and did much to help the advertisement of EMC's diesel electric locomotives.

In 1940, when a future EMD styling artist, Nick Zullo, was being born, Mr. Knickerbocker died! This left Paul A. Meyer with a heavy schedule of future artwork for approximately one year. In January of 1941, General Motors brought EMC and Winston Engine Group together to form the Electro-Motive Division. General Motors was unable to ignore the contribution that these two pioneers had made in furthering the business of selling their diesel locomotives. A decision was made to establish a Styling Department to continue and expand what Knickerbocker and Meyer had started.

An EMC engineer by the name of John Markstein, who imigrated earlier from Holland to the USA and found employment with EMC, was chosen to staff and head up this new EMD Engineering Department. Harry U. Bockewicz, a commercial artist and Ben Dedek, a technical illustrator were hired in 1941 to create and carry forward the efforts that Knickerbocker and Meyer had started. As soon as these two artists began producing styling arrangements for the individual Railroads, pioneer stylist, Paul Meyer who worked out of Detroit, returned to the automobile design work.

Harry U. Bockewicz (employed 1941 to 1961) was a professional commercial artist before he was hired by EMD. During the next several years he produced many finished and "quickie" pieces of artwork. His artistic style was similar to Paul Meyer's, but distinctly different from his co-worker, Ben Dedek's works. When John Markstein was promoted to a higher management position, about 1949 Harry became the supervisor of the department. However, he continued to report to Markstein. His artistic contributions became somewhat less than before due to his other increasing functions. When Markstein was transferred from the LaGrange plant to the Diesel Div. plant in London, Ontario,

Canada about 1953, Harry and the Styling department reported directly to the Chief Engineer. After Harry retired, he longed to fulfill his dreams of sailing the high seas. Now, rather than do it physically, at this time in his life, he went on to paint his dreams on canvass. During his "so-called" retirement years, Harry went back to work in his home studio and produced beautiful seascapes. His works have been showcased in a number of "one man" art shows in LaGrange Park, Illinois. This writer had the privilege to visit with him during one of these shows. Some of this history of the Styling Department's early days were gleaned from that meeting. Distinguished, mild mannered and talented was the Harry that most people knew. He was every bit of that.

Ben Dedek (employed 1941 to 1960) was a professional artist also before being hired into EMD. An experienced Technical Illustrator and scenery painter. Before the Chicago Lyric Opera became it's name, Ben worked for it's predecessor, the Chicago Opera Company as a back drop scenery painter before he started to paint locomotives on artboard. Before the Opera Co., Ben worked for a "silent" movie studio on the north side of Chicago doing basically the very same thing, creating back drop scenery. According to Stylist Ed Morreau, Ben used to chat with actors Charlie Chaplin and Ben Blue on the movie sets. Ben was another mild mannered, highly talented and easy going guy. He was extremely detail oriented. Almost every piece of his historic Railroad art, displayed this photographic style and genius. With Harry Bockewicz busy with other supervisory duties, Ben became the lead and most prolific artist of the group up to his retirement. Because of his recognized talent in the work place, Ben was constantly bombarded with requests by employees to paint little sceneries on postcards and envelopes. Ed Morreau used to tell this writer that Ben would give up his valued lunch hour to honor these requests. All for FREE! Ben was what some would have called "a soft touch"! He had a real problem with refusing people....even at the expense of his own lunch hour. The other Styling people that he worked with, tried to tell him that these people were taking advantage of him and his good nature. Eventually, his close co-workers would take turns inviting him to lunch at a restaurant, just to get him out of the department for his own sake. They would also start passing the word out around other employees that Ben was becoming over worked and burned out by their requests. So "buzz off"! Obviously, there were always some that never took the hint, so all the stylist would give dirty stares to those employees who would be so bold to visit the Dept. in an unofficial capacity, for the express purpose to bother Ben with another of their selfish requests. Ben generated most of the scaled line perspective drawings of various locomotive models that became the foundation for all of his, and many of his fellow artist's paintings and "quickies". Ben usually pointed his

locomotives to the right of his artwork. Those artist that borrowed his drawings, would reverse the direction of the locomotive by turning the drawing upside down to transfer the image. This gave the impression that the foundation drawing was by the same artist that airbrushed the color in! It was an expedient and non-redundant practice exercised in the Styling Dept. during those days. There are only a couple, but rare original foundational perspective drawings that were generated by artists like Bockewicz and Rex Prunty, other than Knickerbocker and Meyer before 1960. After that, only two other artists, Jack Pellicane (1961 to 1965) and Nick Zullo (1966 to 1992) were ever specifically hired in from the outside to generate scaled perspective drawings and finished locomotive artwork. Other than a few nameplate and medallion designs, you would be hard put to find very many production drawings by Ben Dedek. His specific function was to produce the beautiful artwork that he did so very well that helped propel the EMD Streamliner era.

The common definition of a EMD Styling Artist was and still is a misconceived understanding by those that never worked in the confines of the Styling department in LaGrange. The common misunderstanding, rest in the notion that every person that was hired into the department and given the title of artist, as his EMD job description, was capable or qualified to generate a scaled perspective drawing from scratch; working from Engineering flat single dimension drawings or from rudimentary sketches to a finished artwork. Nothing could have been further from the truth! This is not to diminish the single and collective contributions made by all of the past Styling Dept. members that held the loosely defined title of "Styling Artist". Everyone that has worked in that Dept. had specific responsibilities and functions to perform. But in the purest sense of the word, not all of them were technical artists or illustrators. The department needed the talents of many to achieve it's total objective.

The "Styling Artist" had to satisfy one of two main functions. Only a few had the capabilities or the opportunity that could perform both functions. Those two main functions were the necessary ingredients that (1) "advertised" the locomotive; and (2), "painted" the locomotive. So, the Styling Dept. had to assist in the Sale; and also in the Production Painting of the locomotive. This required two different types of Styling "artists". One who could paint the beautiful Styling proposals and one who could generate the production paint shop instructional drawings and full size patterns. The experienced Illustrator had the capabilities of handling both functions if time allowed. But most draftsmen couldn't do an Illustrators job. The Illustrators, like Dedek and Bockewicz had their hands full, and Markstein needed someone to fill the production drafting function. He looked internally for someone who could

not only handle that function, but also someone that could step in and do a "quickie" in an emergency situation. He found those credentials in Ed Morreau.

Ed Morreau (transferred to Styling Dept. 1941 to 1967) was a degree architectural engineer. He was also artistically inclined with mechanical drafting experience. He was already working in the Engineering design department when Markstein selected him to come aboard and become a stylist. With Ed's more advanced knowledge about the locomotive from an engineer's perspective over Bockewicz's and Dedek's limited technical background on the product at that time, a mutual working team spirit jelled. Thus the nucleus of the new Styling Dept. was formed. Ed told this writer (Nick Zullo), years later (1966) when I was hired directly into the Styling Dept., that he wasn't sure if he had made the right career move in those early days. However, almost in the same breath, he remarked, "I don't regret making the move, now that I look back in retrospect". Although, he was about 24 years my senior, Ed and I formed a bond of mutual respect and friendship. He was "group leader" of the Styling dept. when I was hired. Every payday (twice a month) we would go to the bank together and cash our checks. After we left the bank, he would always stop by the nearby drugstore and purchase a variety box of soft mints for his wife. A very sensitive and romantic man with great love and affection for his wife and children. I never heard Ed complain about anything. He taught me more than just the routines and the functions of our department. By the same token, I never heard an unkind word about Ed. He was well liked throughout EMD! Ed smoked a pipe. In those days, smoking was permitted in various departments. His favorite tobacco was Kentucky Club mixture. Very aromatic! We used to kid him about the numerous matches he would use to keep his pipe lit. He had a great sense of humor.

Ed succeeded Harry Bockewicz in a "non-supervisory" position of "group leader". The group as a whole and individually reported to the supervisor of Commercial Sales Engineering thereafter. Through no fault of his own, Ed lost a well deserved promotion. However, EMD decided to restructure their organization and this left the Styling Group without a "hands on" supervisor. This situation remained status quo well into the middle of 1976 without change. Ed died in 1967 of a brain tumor at the young age of 50. He is well remembered by this writer. For I know it was his interview with me and his recommendation, that his boss relied upon, that opened the door of opportunity for me to be hired. Ed organized the production designs that became known as the "Styling and Painting" Diagrams, along with the intricate full size nose curves and ornate medallions that the Paint Shop used as patterns to paint the Locomotives with. His superb color matching and organized cataloging skills kept the group running in stride and meeting deadlines. He also had a terrific artistic flare with "Old English" Calligraphy.

During the years from 1941 to 1949, The Styling dept. grew in personnel. Production drafting to produce Paint shop pattern drawings were greatly required by the increased demand for diesel power. Antique Styling and Painting drawings show that these people also were Drafting Stylists: R. Klee (1946-1948); J.J. Hovorka (1948); and D. Allison (1951). Little is known about them except the Styling and Painting drawings that they made.

The Styling group also produced their own silk screened logos and medallions for application on the locomotives. This in itself, turned into a major production. Highly flammable and noxious fumes permeated the engineering building atmosphere, to other personnel's dissatisfaction. The art of silk screening required people that had steady, feather touch and artistic hands to wield sharp exacto knives to cut the multitude of screens. Eventually, the Styling dept. that resided on the second floor of the building, were moved downstairs where proper ventilation could be found for their operation. However, long before this took place, or about 1947-1948, **Barbara Luse**, who later married EMD engineer Milt Bluemke, came into the group to do drafting work. Her chores eventually involved her in artistic presentations, silk screening and even a one time shot at making a "quickie" water-color proposal of a locomotive. Barbara has the unique distinction as being the only woman EMD Stylist in it's history.

Along with Barbara, came Rex Prunty and Bob Flodine into the Group. This writer does not know whether Rex or Bob were transferred from another dept. or hired in fresh from the outside. During and towards the end of WWII there was a big increase in the employment ranks at EMD due to the War effort. The "Pancake" diesel engine was developed at this time for marine application.

Rex Prunty came into the group with illustrating and airbrush experience under his belt. Rex did a number of both finished and "quickie" color proposals and was adept in drawing from scratch, scaled perspective drawings of locomotive models that Dedek didn't have time to do. Stories that were passed down about the group, identified Prunty as a temperamental personality. Not totally uncommon among good artists! Apparently he would occasionally kick his waste basket across the room when his artwork wasn't going according to his satisfaction. This was disturbing to some, but to others, they made humor out of it. His paintings often reflected his temperment. Turbulent red, orange and gray skies were a trademark of Rex Prunty.

Bob Flodine was another Stylist that apparently had prior artistic experience before coming into the group. However, his talents came via the colored pencil medium. Several "quickie" and abbreviated colored styling sketches for switcher type locomotives are attributed to him. He and Barbara Luse created many Medallion design proposals and production Styling drawings.

In 1949 a detail (entry level) draftsman, hired into the

drafting department. Shortly afterwards, he transferred into the Styling group to assist in preparing detail production paint shop patterns and to help with the silk screen process. His name was Lee Buchholz. After a short time in the Dept., he entered into the U.S. Marine Corp. for a tour. He had no fine art or technical illustrating background, nor much drafting experience. There are no "quickie", or finished artwork, let alone complicated perspective drawings to his credit. He served one of the two functions that were earlier noted. That being, a production drafting stylist that prepared painting diagrams and paint shop instructional production drawings and details.

By the late 1950's, the fabulous "Streamliner" era was coming to a close. The silk screening process departed to the Paint shop temporarily, until outside vendors could be found to supply the Logos and Medallions more economically and efficiently. The design of locomotives shifted to a more functional and economical producible "box" like product. This obviously left the Styling dept. with less work, resulting in the departure of Stylists Barbara Luse Bluemke, Rex Prunty and Bob Flodine. This left Bockewicz, Dedek, Morreau and Buchholz to continue the Styling Dept. functions up to 1960, when Ben Dedek retired.

In 1961, Harry Bockewicz retired. This would have left the group without an illustrating artist. To prepare for this happenstance, Harry hired in from the outside a young illustrator by the name of Jack Pellicane to replace him.

Jack Pellicane had an illustrating and design background, and some limited prior experience. With Morreau and Buchholz taking care of the production work, this left Jack to knock out the necessary color artwork proposals. That was primarily his function. From 1961 to 1965, Pellicane was involved in a variety of art projects for not only the Styling Dept., but he also worked very closely with the design carbody engineers. He produced numerous colored pencil sketches and "quickies" of Locomotive cab and carbody concepts for "Rapid Transit" proposals. This was a new market that EMD was trying to tap into. He also generated perspective colored pencil Locomotive proposals for the growing Export Market as well. Jack produced only a few known hand brushed water-color pieces. It is not known if he was adept at handling airbrush technique painting, for there remains no physical artwork evidence. His residual artwork suggests that he was greatly influenced by the auto industry's fancy, round airfoil car designs of the late 1950's. It is evident that he tried to introduce this style into the stagnant box type locomotive designs that prevailed during his short five year stay at EMD. At the end of 1965, Jack left EMD to pursue a career in the aerospace industry where his advanced futuristic ideas could be utilized. This now left the Styling Dept. once again, without an Illustrating Artist. Without any qualified people at EMD to internally fill this vacancy, the Styling Dept. went to the outside to hire Nick Zullo.

Nick Zullo (employed 1966 to 1992) was an accomplished General and Technical Illustrator. At age 25, he had worked for two years as a civilian Illustrator for the U.S. Army, and had served four years with the U.S. Air Force. Academically, he was schooled at Chicago's American Academy of Fine Art, as well as a couple of Jr. colleges. He was experienced in the art of airbrush techniques, water-color rendering, scaled perspective drawings, as well as specializing in oil portraits, landscapes, seascapes and the charcoal medium. When Nick applied for the position of Styling Artist in January of 1966. he was interviewed by Ed Morreau, who was the Styling group's leader; by Ed's supervisor, Malcolm Greenlaw (Commercial Sales Engineer); and by Malcolm's boss, Billy Friar (Manager of several departments). It didn't take EMD long to decide whom they wanted, to fill Pellicane's vacated position. Nick was offered the position the very next day!

In his long tenure with EMD (26 1/2 years), Nick was with the Styling Dept. up to it's closing on August 16, 1980. He was the "last" Styling Illustrating Artist to be hired from the outside to perform the kind of work that was done by the earlier masters, namely Knickerbocker, Meyers, Bockewitz, Dedek and Prunty. Ironically, Nick was born in the year 1940, when the "first" Stylist, Knickerbocker died! When Nick assumed his Illustrating Stylist position, responsibilities had changed. Not only was he expected to wear the "hat" of an Illustrator, like his predecessors, but also assume the duties making production paint schemes and related pattern drawings. In the span of those 15 years, numerous finished and "quickie" pieces of artwork were generated by him for both Railroad and other Industrial customers. Many of these paintings were given to various customer CEO's as gifts from the Sales Dept. In the Dec. 1967 issue of "Trains" magazine, page 8, Nick is shown putting the finishing touches on EMD's newest "covered wagon", the FP45 for Santa Fe. In "Trains" mag. issue, April 1975, page 13, one of Nick's airbrush paintings of the new GM6C Electric Loco. is featured. Designated for Penn Central, sales Dept. requested that it be dressed in their midnight green, with a large white "GM" logo on the cab sides. Nick retired from EMD on June 1, 1992 as a Senior Design Checker.

In 1966, the Styling Dept. was staffed by Morreau, Buchholz and Zullo. In 1967, the first wave of Corporate Railroad mergers took place with the Atlantic Coastline and the Seaboard Air Lines, later known as the Family Lines. This kicked off a rash of other mergers in the following years. With the Railroads combining their aggregate power sources, EMD looked to others places to fill a saturated power market. Some of the areas that Nick and the Styling Dept. became involved in was the Stationary Power, Export and Rebuild Locomotive business. So, to stimulate business in these newer arenas, required a strategy in the same tradition of what the previous Stylists, like Knickerbocker, Meyers, Bockewitz, Dedek, and Prunty had done for the Steamliner

age, Zullo made perspective colored airbrush water-color renderings for Sales presentations in penetrating these new markets. At the same time numerous "quickies" were made to "Short Line" and "Spur Line" Railroad customers. EMD engineers and designers did not remain stagnate during this period of time. A variety of new Locomotive models were in different stages of development. Since the glory days of the full carbody models of the discontinued "Streamliners", EMD was busy developing a new full carbody Loco. for customers like the Santa Fe, in the form of the FP45 and F45. New improved GL and GA export models were also being worked on. The Electric Power Companies, the Viet Nam War arena, hospitals and skyscrapers were requesting Peaking auxiliary stationary power units such as the MP45.

By the fall of 1967, the Styling Dept. lost Ed Morreau through death. This left Nick Zullo and Lee Buchholz to run the Styling functions. Since Buchholz had about 15 years seniority over Zullo in the department, he was given the title of "group leader". Nick and Lee still reported, individually to their supervisor, Malcolm Greenlaw up to about mid 1976. At about this time Lee was promoted to official supervisor of the group and Nick was promoted to Sr. Graphics Engineer.

The Styling Dept. in 1967 needed another Stylist to replace Ed Morreau. Someone to help with the drafting portion and assist in overhead and slide presentation artwork, and perhaps an occasional "quickie" art piece. The powers to be, decided to look internally. They found John Jordal, a recent hire into the Blueprint room.

John Jordal had no previous art or drafting experience, but displayed a real interest in learning the Styling business. Both Lee and Nick thought they should give him a try. John learned quickly the routine. He acclimated to the environment and blended in perfectly. John stayed on for about five years. He had a flare for learning the airbrush and after a while, watching Nick produce proposals with it, he started practising on his own. He was given the opportunity to do a couple of side view "quickie" locomotive proposals during those five years. Nick and John lived in the same community and car pooled to work together most every day. John decided to go to work in Wisconsin and left EMD about 1972. About 1977, he returned to the employ of EMD through the efforts of Nick. However, not in the Styling Dept., as his old position was no longer available. Today, John supervises the Publication Art dept., where CAD artwork is generated. Over the years, John perfected his artistic abilities and on occasion produces very beautiful airbrush water-color art of new Locomotive models.

Albert Rodde replaced Jordal in 1972 as a Stylist. Al was a mechanical and electrical draftsman for the Fisher Body Div. of G.M. in Willow Springs, Illinois before being transferred to the EMD drafting dept. When he found out that Jordal was leaving the Styling Dept., he applied for the position. He became

well suited for the conditions. Like Jordal before him, he shared most of the routine drafting duties with Nick Zullo, as well as a variety of Art projects for slide presentations. Al, also produced a hand brush water-color design of a prototype being considered. He became a gifted "caricature" artist at EMD. He was sought out by various departments to make "look alike" cartoon type character cards of retirees for retirement parties. Much wit and humor, besides artistic talent, is required to produce these keepsakes. Today, after wearing many "hats" at EMD, he works as a CAD Publication artist.

On August 16, 1980, Nick and Al were transferred into the Drafting Dept. because of their many design skills, math background and product knowledge. Among their mechanical design responsibilities, they continued to produce Styling and Painting drawings and various art projects as the need required.

When the historic Styling Dept. closed it's doors at EMD in 1980, Nick, Al and Lee have the distinction of being the "last" Stylists to have worked there. There have been erroneous articles written in the past, that coronate the name of "one" person as being "the last of the Stylists"! They should be ignored, for recorded history in the archives of personnel at EMD prove otherwise. Non the less, it was the end of an exciting era!

The list below, states the known names of all Stylists to have worked in this dept. from 1941 to 1980:

1. Harry U. Bockewicz
2. Ben Dedek
3. Ed Morreau
4. R. Klee
5. J.J. Hovorka
6. Barbara Luse Bluemke
7. Rex Prunty
8. Bob Flodine
9. D. Allison
10. Lee Buchholz
11. Jack Pellicane
12. Nick Zullo
13. John Jordal
14. Al Rodde

The above history, chronicles the Original Styling Dept. Stylists to the best of this writer's memory, as gleaned from personal experiences and "pass me down" information.

Nick Zullo
EMD Stylist, 1966 to 1992
Retired

March 12, 1998