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THE PACIFIC ELECTRIC RETURNS TO LOS ANGELES

The Sahuaro Central "Everything Railroad" Show and Swap Meet

George Huckaby - Why would anyone drive 400 miles through the desert to attend a four-hour show and drive the return trip, all within 30 hours? The answer is to attend one of the great Sahuaro Central "Everything Railroad" Swap Meets. Since 1992, members of the Trolleyville Community have been attending these great swap meets held in Phoenix, Arizona. These meets are so beneficial that the drive is welcomed everytime there is such a show. Many of the traction items now running on the Southern California Traction club layout were obtained at these meets. The Sahuaro Central slogan "Everything Railroad" clearly states this non-profit organization's interest in the promotion of all facets of railroading. These include every type of prototype railroading, particularly as it relates to Arizona, and all scales and sizes of model railroading. It is Sahuaro Central's purpose to coordinate and promote activities, events, education and information pertaining to railroading for the benefit of the public as well as Society members. This is a big job for an organization with a big name. The Sahuaro Central Railroad Heritage Preservation Society, Inc. sponsors three railroad shows each year and it creating the Adobe Mountain Railroad Museum and Desert Railroad Park at 23280 N. 43rd Avenue in Northern Phoenix.

The Fall, Winter and Spring "Everything Railroad" shows are held in October, February and May of each year and have been some of the best "buyer" shows in the Western half of the United States.

On October 26, 1985, the Sahuaro Central Railroad Heritage Preservation Society, Inc. put on its first show at the Student Union Building, Glendale Community College in Glendale, AZ. (See [flyer](#)) It cost only \$1.00 to get in and \$4.00 for the entire family. Since that time, they have sponsored at least two shows every year. For over ten years, the show was held on the BCI Bingo Hall on Indian School Road in central Phoenix until the use of computer monitors made the hall impractical for a swap meet. From 1997 to 1999, the shows were held in the Postal Union Hall on Greenway Avenue in North Phoenix. The new millennium found the show moving to grand quarters in the North Phoenix Baptist Church, 5757 North Central Avenue (Central and Bethany Home Road). At the same time, the show hours were changed from 9:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M. to 10:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. to allow for more shopping and to encourage the general public to view the model railroad displays.

[Flyer.jpg] Two Trolleyville vendors, Custom Traxx and Holland Traction Supply are regular visitors at the Sahuaro Central shows and they both were at the most recent show held on May 20, 2000. This facility is one of the grandest available for a regularly scheduled model train show. The floor of the 10,000 square foot hall is carpeted and the facility provided comfortable upholstered chairs and sturdy vendor tables, all of which are maintained in excellent condition. Model railroad layouts were added in the year 2000 due to the size

of the hall. But more important, parking is plentiful and easily accessible from the hall. Sahuaro Central always has a snack bar at any of their shows or swap meets with reasonably priced food. They serve their well-known chili that seems to disappear quickly once it is ready to serve. But trolleyville residents should note that there are usually some great traction items available at this show.

Admission to the show is currently \$4.00 and vendor tables are available for \$24.00 to \$28.00. The hours of the show are currently 10:00 to 4:00 P.M. The next show is scheduled for Saturday, October 21st. For more information, please contact Harold Shelton, 602-242-0751 or Elden Barbieri, 602-494-7430.



George Huckaby - On Sunday, July 9th, the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LACMTA) rolled out two freshly repainted Blue Line Light Rail Vehicles (LRVs) for the Electric Railway Historical Society shop tour. These cars had been painted in the colors of the Pacific Electric Railway (PERy) to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the inauguration of the Blue Line. The Blue Line (Twenty-one miles from Los Angeles to Long Beach) returned electric transit to the Los Angeles area in 1990 after an absence of 29 years. It only took 39 years for the colors to return but it was quite a sight. Both cars will be released for daily service later in the month of July after the 10th anniversary formal celebration. Both cars are also equipped with the reproductions of the old PERy E-flat whistles, which occasionally reproduced that sound formerly familiar to all Angelenos. Inside of both cars are many color pictures of the locomotives and cars of the Pacific Electric Railway. These two cars now join San Francisco's PCC car #1061 in displaying the red and orange heritage of the once proud electric railway.



Cars #109 and 148 arrived at the Long Beach Transit Terminal at about 10:06 A.M. dressed in the colors and heralds of the PERy, whose red and orange livery were a staple in the City of Angels until 1961. Both cars arrived with whistles blaring and transported all of us to the Dominguez shops of the LACMTA where all the Blue Line cars are stored and maintained. Several of the new P-2000 cars slated to begin service on the Green Line next month were also in the yard. The most colorful cars by far were cars #109 and 148, prompting many to suggest that these two cars made the rest look very plain and almost unattractive.


The LACMTA is to be commended for their effort in paying tribute to the Pacific Electric Railway in this manner. Perhaps they should consider a pair of 1937 yellow, silver and black cars in tribute to Los Angeles Railway, or maybe a pair of post 1945 yellow, green and white "Fruit Salad" Los Angeles Transit Lines cars or the two tone yellow used on the original Los Angeles Railway PCC cars in 1937. After all, there were two electric transit systems in Southern California until 1961 and why should San Franciscans have all the fun?

Prototype adherents noted that the orange stripes were allowed to continue through the doors on the two cars, a practice never

embraced by the Pacific Electric. They also noted that the green trim used on the roof and transition sections was definitely not the truck green used by the PERy, and the trucks were not painted the well documented Pacific Electric truck green. The green that was used was much brighter and looked fine on these cars and the overall effect was enhanced by both deviations. Most felt that the fabricated whistles did not always capture the tones of the old PERy but again MTA sure gets an A+ for effort. Too bad that whoever advised the LACMTA on this project, did not tell them of the number of these whistles still in private collections and at local museums, some of which could have been made available and used at much less effort. One was even seen on the Long Beach Transit Terminal platform, brightly polished and tuned up. But now that those comments have been made, it must be emphasized how grand the two cars are. The MTA even fabricated simulated P.E. style interurban headlights for the car ends.



When arriving at the shops, a complete tour of the facility was given and the car and truck jacks were demonstrated when freshly painted but not yet striped car #111 was raised five feet in the air by the three trucks and lowered. While in the shops and the yard, cars in the continually evolving paint schemes could be observed. The original white with blue and red stripes was accompanied by the present white with gold stripes and there were even some with blue stripes on the end similar to the one car on the Green line with green stripes on the end. This was definitely a modeler's delight. On top of this, the employees of the MTA were courteous, knowledgeable, motivated and well versed on the history and current transit operations. It was a pleasure to be in their company for the morning.

 Almost anyone interested in electric railways was present on the trip especially the old-timers and retired transit officials. Seen among the riders was Joe Strapac (Shade Tree Books) and Donald Duke (Golden West Publishing). Among the many railfans on this trip were Southern California Traction Club members Byron Brainard (Southern California Interurbans), Dave Garcia, George Huckaby (Custom Traxx), George Jones and Jan Podganski.