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New Pacific Electric 500s Back in LA!

GATS Sold!!

In a surprise announcement on October 19, 2001, Great American Train Show (GATS) CEO Dave Swanson announced that the company he founded back on 1984 would be sold on November 1, 2001 to Moe and Kathy Geoghegan. Moe and Kathy are currently show managers for the company. Moe and Kathy's credentials include experience both as hobby shop owners and GATS vendors. No radical changes to the GATS schedule or modus operandi are expected in the near future.

First Showing Outside California For SCTC

After almost six years of operation and twenty-eight appearances, all in California, the Southern California Traction Club appeared at the Cashman Center, 850 Las Vegas Blvd North, Las Vegas on October 20-21. Members George Jones, Bob Hill and George Huckaby assembled 15 modules into a 16' by 16' display and set-up the display on the Friday evening before the show.

It used to be said "getting there is half the fun". That is true for railfans. Starting out at 6:00 AM on Friday, we caught the early action at Devore.



Both SCTC vans and trailer at Devore with George Jones (SCTC member)



Amtrak locos in another paint scheme!

Below are overall views of the set-up and some of the interesting scenes!





Milwaukee Electric 1188-1189



Pacific Electric 1463 and boxcar



Nightliner SEPTA Kawasaki 9038

Replica Cars Finally Reach Southern California

Rumors began circulating over the weekend of October 13-14 that the two replica PERY 500s may be transferred from Seattle to Southern California for the final stages of their construction. On Monday, Trolleyville received an invitation from The Port of Los Angeles Project Director, Robert Henry, via Southern California Traction Club (SCTC) member Dave Garcia to be in Wilmington at the same berth that car 1058 currently resides on Tuesday morning, October 16th at 10:30 A.M. Something was going to happen between 10:30 and 11:00 AM. George Jones, another SCTC member, and I arrived in advance of that time and were ready.

Below is the interior of the building where cars 500 and 501 would soon be located. Substantial clean up of this area had taken place so that there would be room to place the cars and work on them.



Everyone on site pitched in to make this happen, John Smatlak of Railway Preservation Resources was caught with a broom sweeping the area where the containers would eventually be located. Note the truck frames and wheelsets in the background.



Right on cue, at 10:43AM, the first of three OST trucks carrying the containers, arrived at the guard shack, followed shortly by car 500 on another flatbed trailer. The containers held traction motors, compressors, underbody parts removed from car 501 prior to the move from Seattle and all other necessary equipment.



Seen in front of the guard shack is Robert Henry, the Project Director, a very hands-on leader, who has a reputation for “getting things done” and he has lived up to his reputation. He has put together a team that showed during the day that they are dedicated to getting the job done as much as he.



Shown above is Dave Garcia, whose knowledge of air brake systems is not only legendary but he is currently being interviewed periodically to get what he knows documented for future generations.

Car 501 arrived soon afterward and by 12:15AM both cars had shed their protective tarps and we could be the excellent progress made by the project to date.



While the two cars were unwrapped, the trucking company was busily backing the first truck with the containers into the berth when the first of the problems cropped up. When backing the containers into the building, it was discovered that the containers were just inches to high. One beam of the roof structure was just too low. From the looks of this beam, it appears that this was not the first time, this beam had been a problem.



This forced all the loading plans to change. First the truck with the containers was moved to the north side of the building where the containers were removed with forklifts and placed inside the building through the loading dock side doors.



What was impressive is the speed with which the problem was identified and the solution decided and implemented. These guys know what they are doing, do it well and seem to like it even more.

Once the containers were placed in their final location, they were unloaded and some of the reconditioned hardware could be unloaded. One of the first items out of the containers was this reconditioned traction motor. There is virtually none of the original wiring left in this motor. They are well insulated and should last indefinitely.



The speed of the unloading process was so impressive that we missed the placement of the first car, car 501, into the building. Car 501 is further along in the construction process and will be finished in priority ahead of car 500. Shown below are photos of car 501 inside the building and the first known photo of cars 500, 501 and 1058 together.



The most interesting observation was the solution to getting the cars into the building. Because of the same beam that impacted the movement of the containers, improvisation and adaptation was again to rule the day. What was done was to lift the car bodies from the trailers using two (large) fork lifts, one from the end of the trailer and one from the side. The body was lifted and the trailer pulled out from under. The body is then lowered and the one forklift on the side moved to the opposite end.





The two forklifts then, with careful coordination moved the car body inside the building. There was a little excitement as one of the wood blocks slipped during the movement of car 100 but another block was inserted without much ado and the movement continued. The last car entered the building at 1:58 PM.



I have been told that this type of thing is commonplace for these guys but seeing it for the first time, it was impressive to me. These guys work with the skill of a military operation. The parts sorting and inventory process started immediately and construction work should be starting before the end of October. Stay tuned. First trolley is supposed to run in the summer of 2002. For direct information on the Port of Los Angeles Waterfront Red Car Line, check their web site at <http://www.railwaypreservation.com/page8.html>.