

March Model Trolley Happenings Model Train Expo, Descanso Gardens Orange Empire Railway Museum, GATS!

Southern California Traction Club Makes Three Appearances!!

T'was a busy month for the members of the Southern California Traction Club (SCTC). Ending February with an appearance at the two-day Model Train Expo at Pomona Fairplex and following two weeks later with another showing at Descanso Gardens for the Los Angeles Division, PSR, NMRA on March 13-14 and the following weekend returning to Pomona Fairplex for a Great American Train Show. The latter show is the topic of a separate story in column 2.



As is customary with the SCTC, something new is usually added at each show. At the Model Train Expo, three modules were re-introduced to the display that had not been used since early 2001. The three modules consisted of two modules, which contained a car storage yard and loop, and the third module, which contained a small cemetery, which contained a track for funeral car service. The use of these modules allows club members to display their collections in the view of the public while minimizing the possibility of "mysterious disappearance".



Also at the Model Train Expo, we got to see the new LGB large scale New Orleans 900 series "St. Charles" car. What a "beauty"! We noted that the car was numbered 952, which is the car that is in service

Orange Empire Railway Museum Semi-Annual Swap Meet

If you consider yourself to be a traction fan and you live within driving distance of the Orange Empire Railway Museum, you should be watching their calendar for March and September. In each of these months, normally the first weekend, the museum hosts member's day or model traction day along with a swap meet that brings out more traction items than you will see anywhere on the West Coast. The number of traction items available rivals those found in the East coast Trolley meets. One SCTC member obtained two Hi-Country Brass PERY 100 series cars along with a Custom Brass PERY "Dragon", all three in "mint" condition. Another member obtained a Suydam 1222T painted and lettered accurately. The weather at this show was perfect, especially important since the entire swap meet is outside.

Custom Traxx attended this meet for the first time and unveiled its new line of ORR Street Railway Track, which was acquired from Richard Orr last year. Also displayed were their complete line of HO scale decals and a large selection of brass traction and Corgi 1:50 scale PCC cars.



The attendance was high, with crowding around displays rivaling those found in indoor meets.

in San Francisco today. Compare this car below to a Fairfield Traction Models HO scale car finished as NORTA 451 (Riverfront Line) and a later MTS Imports HO scale model finished as NOPSI 920.



It does appear that the large-scale car has been foreshortened a little but compared to other large scale "shrinking", the effect is not so noticeable.

Two weeks later, on March 13th and 14th, the SCTC displayed their modules at the beautiful Descanso Gardens, and the following weekend at Pomona Fairplex. The 20s and 30s was even running a Pennsylvania GG-1 electric locomotive on one day of the show.



The SCTC has been running a lot of freight trains lately. Below is Oregon Electric Railway box motor 901 with an Overton passenger train passing Northern Electric Railway box motor 1010 with a train of single sheathed boxcars.



Next photo shows Boston Double End PCC car 3346, LAMTA all-electric PCC 3148 and LATL air-electric PCC car 3025 in operation.



Of course the stars of the show are always the trolley cars themselves. Recently returned to service is the former Tucson #10, which originally was Pacific Electric #332 until leased to that city by the museum for 10 years.



Pomona Fairplex

Not Recommended for Model Train Clubs and Vendors!

Over the last dozen years, both Custom Traxx and the SCTC have appeared at Pomona Fairplex, in Pomona, California at least once each year, mainly with Great American Train Shows (two-days) and Great Western Train Shows (one-day). At almost every show, either the parking people or the security people do their best to make you uncomfortable if not unwelcome, especially if you are a vendor or a train club exhibiting a layout. It seems that every time you arrive, there are new or different rules, which cause pain, a longer walk or cost more money. But the recent events at the March 20-21 Great American Train Show were so intolerable that except for commitments already made, both SCTC and Custom Traxx have decided to cease appearances at this facility unless significant changes are made.

This is not a new problem. Some time ago, a very prestigious HO scale model railroad club, The 20s and 30s Model Railroad Club, after the conclusion of an appearance, was not allowed to bring their vehicles next to the building when tearing down. This forced the club members, some of which were elderly, to carry their six-foot modules over long distances to their cars. The club management wrote letters to Pomona-Fairplex, all of which were ignored. The Pomona-Fairplex management

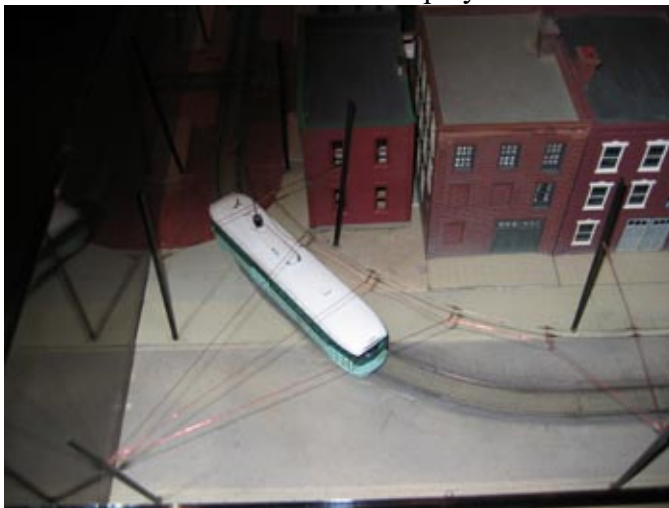


At the GATS Pomona Show, Custom Traxx displayed HO scale San Diego Trolley Models decorated with their latest decal set, CN-449. This set details the cars from their initial mustard yellow scheme to the final green and cream scheme. The decal set allows the modeler to detail the few cars painted in an experimental orange and cream paint scheme.



Check the Custom Traxx catalog for these and many other traction decals at www.customtraxx.com or their page at www.trolleyville.com.

Below is a rooftop photo taken of LAMTA 3148 as it rounds a corner on show display module 970.



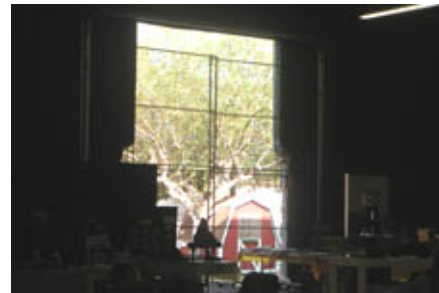
World's Greatest Hobby On Tour - All Aboard!

The April issue of Model Railroader published the results of a study which identified the 10 top model railroading cities in the United States and they are:

1. Milwaukee, Wisconsin

environment at that time obviously did not encourage responses to customer complaints. So the club had no choice but to refuse to appear at the Pomona facility for over five years. Feeling the incident might have been an aberration and management may have changed, they relented and started to appear at Fairplex once more. A little while later, the security folks took the chairs from under senior citizens watching a Custom Traxx workshop, interrupting and virtually canceling the demonstration.

We have always considered the operation of this facility and the condition of some of their facilities to be the "bottom of the bottom" but the recent show was the final straw for Trolleyville. Pomona-Fairplex provided a building that normally had five entrances, three of which could not be used for access by vendors, due to nearby construction. One of the buildings (Building 7A), the one assigned to Custom Traxx and the Southern California Traction Club, had a gaping floor-to-ceiling hole in one wall



that could not be closed for the duration of the show. Although security is purported to be "Job 1" for these clowns, the hole was merely filled with construction fencing except for the top 30 inches. This allowed the neighborhood birds to enter the building overnight and grace many tables with their "bombing runs". This "hole in the wall" was not even told to the GATS people until the day before the show. One of the two available entrances had to be reached using a blind alley making the positioning of trailers almost impossible. Even with the gaping hole in the building, vehicles were not allowed to drive into the building so the SCTC had no choice but to unhitch both trailers and, using manpower only, push them downhill into the building, unload the trailers and push them uphill back out of the building. All vendors and clubs using this building had to fight to get in and unload and to load up and get out through the two available exits. The access problem could have been greatly alleviated if one small picket fence had been removed. This would have allowed another large entrance to be used and this entrance did allow for safe vehicle entry. But this action was not even considered, although it was suggested to the event coordinator, Curtis Noffsinger. During a lengthy discussion with

2. [Pittsburgh](#), Pennsylvania
3. [Philadelphia](#), Pennsylvania
4. [Cleveland](#), Ohio
5. [Washington](#), D.C.
6. Cincinnati, Ohio
7. [Boston](#), Massachusetts
8. [Seattle](#), Washington
9. Kansas City, Missouri
10. [Chicago](#), Illinois

Now you can argue with the results of this poll. It was based on the known number of model railroaders in these areas but almost everyone knows that most model railroad shows held in these areas are usually memorable. [Note that the cities in blue have significant electric transit service by heavy rail, light rail, rapid transit subway/elevated trains streetcars or electric buses.](#) The other three areas were noted at one time for the North Shore, double trolley wire and unique all-electric PCC cars, respectively. Again, if this study is true, where are the models of these items?

The Worlds Greatest Hobby folks have decided to take their show on the road and will be starting with four high quality shows late this year and early 2005. These shows are in main population centers such as the New Jersey Expo Center, December 11-12, 2004; America's Center, Saint Louis, MO, January 8-9, 2005; Long Beach Convention Center, February 19-20, 2005 and Denver Convention Center, Denver, CO. If you live near, be there!

this Event Coordinator, he alleged that he did not know about the hole in the wall until the day before the show. He also removed himself from any responsibility for solving any of the problems by telling us that Pomona-Fairplex subcontracts most of their services and these subcontracts seem to allow their contractors, security people and parking people total autonomy in conducting their duties. He was virtually helpless. Speaking about parking, most of the other California halls, of which we are familiar, either sell vendors a parking pass, at a slightly reduced rate for the entire show or do not charge vendors at all. All Pomona-Fairplex management seems to want is **your money, more money and more, more money.** This year we were forced to pay \$6.00 for parking if you wanted a long, long walk to the show, If you wished a shorter long walk, you paid \$9.00, each day. On top of that the "company of geniuses" those runs the parking decided unilaterally that the vendors could not use the closer hotel parking lot, used by GATS vendors for years. All vendors had to park in the parking lot using gate 14. The main problem with this lot is that there is no easy way to get from that lot back to the hall to load after the show, especially with the entire public leaving at the same time. There is no left turn allowed at the entrance allowed. Let us not even talk about the restroom facilities in Building 7A. This building should have been condemned even before the gaping hole was placed in the side. Trolleyville has written a letter to the Pomona-Fairplex concerning our recent displeasure but if history is any indicator of their concern for their customers, there will be no response. After all, what do they care! So, a boycott is the only answer for us!

Trolleyville recommends that if you like to be at a show and you feel that you like to conduct business in a decent environment, go (almost) anywhere but Pomona-Fairplex.