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## Orange Empire Traction Day and Swap Meet!

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As has now become a September ritual, the Orange Empire Railway Museum held its Fall Railroadiana Swap Meet. Over the past years, The Museum has hosted "Day Out with Thomas" featuring Thomas the Tank engine. The resulting crowds to ride behind Thomas have provided the museum with much need revenue for capital improvements. One of the major improvements have been the paving of Alpine drive, Georgia street and many other areas, adjacent to the area where the swap meet in held. The asphalt paving eliminated the dust that used to plague visitors and vendors alike.

The Southern California Traction Club began setting up their 16' by 20' display in Town Hall on Sunday, September 12th and returned on Friday, September 17th to finish the job. Three members of the SCTC, George Jones, Pete DeBeers and George Huckaby spent most of this day "tuning up" the modules for the Saturday showing.



Above is the 16; by 20' display of the Southern California Traction Club set-up in Town Hall. Shown within the module perimeter are (l to r) Fred Gurzeler, George Jones and Byron Brainard (back to camera). Meanwhile, Custom Traxx was one of many vendors selling all kinds of model trains, structures and memorabilia.



## More Bowser Traction Floors Being Developed!

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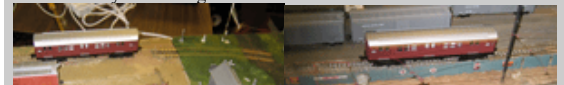
In the September issue, we reported on the HO scale Bowser traction floors for the (1) AHM/IHC/Mehano Light Rail Vehicles which were used in both San Francisco and Boston and the (2) Ken Kidder Double Truck Birney streetcar which was used in dozens of U.S. cities A third floor was developed for the International Hobby Products SEPTA Single-end Kawasaki Light Rail Transit vehicle currently used in West Philadelphia; Now under study is a metal floor for the (4) NJ Image Replicas / Funaro & Camerlengo Third Avenue Railway Systems 1201-1225 streetcar and the (5) Image Replicas Pacific Electric Double End PCC cars 5000-5029. All these floors are being made to accept the Bowser 1999 mechanism and the A-line 20040 flywheel kits. Floors 1, 2 & 3 were extensively tested by Custom Traxx and returned to Bowser for minor adjustments. The first production floors for cars (1), (2) and (3) were returned to Custom Traxx on September 23rd. Floors (1) & (3) are expected to be running in selected vehicles on the modules of the Southern California Traction Club during the HobbyVisions Show in Las Vegas, NV. on October 7-10, 2004. Floors 4 & 5 are still under evaluation. See photo in column 1 of the LRV production floor equipped with two Bowser drives, two A-line 20040 flywheel kits, directional headlights and automatic couplers. There should be much more information on these new Bowser traction model floors in the November Trolleyville Times.

If you are an HO scale entrepreneur contemplating production of a resin shell for a streetcar, interurban, subway/elevated car or self-propelled car that will use double trucks, consider using Bowser to make the floors. The Bowser 1999 double truck mechanism uses two trucks with 6' 4" wheelbase and 26", 30" or 34" wheels. By providing them one of your shells, Bowser can make the correct floor for you. Large quantities are not required. They can be made in quantities of ten or more. Of course the unit cost is less when you make more of them. Northwest Short Line also makes nickel silver wheel sets for the Bowser 1999 traction mechanisms in 26", 30", 33" and 36" sizes. For more information, contact Custom Traxx at 310-990-5422.

## Miniatronics Developing Neat Automatic Reversing Unit

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Be on the lookout this Christmas season for a reversing unit that will enable the modeler to add that little streetcar line to his/her layout. the prototype unit was tested by the Southern California Traction Club last month using some Proto 1000 New York City Subway cars shown below at the beginning and end of the 15 foot test track section. The unit has many interesting features:



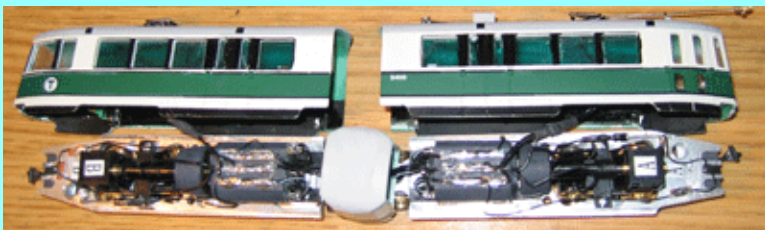
It has its own power supply and speed control, allowing adjustment for the running characteristics of different vehicles. It automatically adjusts to the ambient light in the room allowing for almost foolproof operation. All it takes to reset the unit, if the ambient light changes, is to de-power the unit and re-power it. The unit has provisions for reversing and five intermediate stops. The unit slows the vehicle down before stopping at each stop. Stop times vary among the five stops provided allowing for much more realism. The SCTC ran the unit for almost an hour without any malfunctions. Not once did the unit allow the test car to runoff the end of the track, as there were no bumpers at one end. The SCTC will definitely have one on their modules as soon as the production models are available. The unit is expected to retail for about \$90.00 but could provide so much for the shelf modeler. Check the Miniatronics catalog for more information at [www.miniatronics.com](http://www.miniatronics.com).

Brass models trains were available but traction models were plentiful as you can see from the pictures below.



This event is a must for trolley and interurban modelers in all scales. Keep an eye on the museum web site, [www.oerm.org](http://www.oerm.org) and check for the dates each March and September. The museum has made so many improvements in the last two to three years in addition to the paving of many of the streets. The entrance has been remodeled and there is a beautiful walkway at the entrance that is compatible with strollers and wheel chairs. On special occasions, there are local vendors with excellent food, snacks and treats. So when you read about special events such as Day Out With Thomas [November 13, 14, 19, 20 & 21, 2004] and the spring 205 Rail Festival, please mark your calendar and come out and spend the day. You will not regret it

*Sneak Look at AHM/IHC/Mehano LRV model with Bowser floor, see column two for details.*



## Pacific Electric "Blimps" ACF versus Pullman

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by Dave Garcia

Most Pacific Electric fans know that the well known Pacific Electric "Blimp" coaches and combines came second-hand to the PERY from two different sources. The 19 cars of the 300 series came from the Northwestern Pacific Railway, which ran north of San Francisco Bay. These cars had been rendered obsolete by the opening of the Golden Gate Bridge. The 48 coaches and 4 combines of the 400 series came from the Interurban Electric Railway (IER). They were brought to Los Angeles by the United States Maritime Commission in 1942 after service from Oakland to San Francisco had been abandoned by the IER, then, a subsidiary of the Southern Pacific Railroad.

The 52 cars of the 400 class were divided into coaches, 400 through 437, and 450 through 459; and combines 496 through 499.

What is generally not known is that while the four combines were all built by Pullman Standard, the 48 coaches were constructed by two different builders, American Car & Foundry (ACF) and Pullman Standard. The number of side windows and other items differ on each type. When Ed Suydam visited Orange Empire Trolley Museum and got the measurements and other information for his brass model, he measured car 418, which was built by Pullman. The other Pullman built 400 series coaches were 402, 403, 409, 410, 412, 413, 415, 416 and 427. All other coaches, including the 435, which resides today at Traveltown in Los Angeles, were built by ACF.