

The Trolleyville Times

March 2005



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Over 28,000 visit the World's Greatest Hobby on Tour in Long Beach, CA

After two highly successful and fun shows in Edison, NJ and St. Louis, MO, the World's Greatest Hobby on Tour (WGHoT) came to the Long Beach (California) Convention Center on February 19-20. This show featured many operating model railroads in Z, N, HO, O and large scales, a large riding train, over 150 manufacturers booths, a conference room full of Thomas the Tank engine trains for the kids to run, DCC controlled trains for the patrons to operate, live music, demonstrations, seminars and a Walt Disney Railroad Story exhibition. Trolleyville vendors were well represented with Alpine Division Scale Models, Custom Traxx, Light Rail Products, and MTS Imports, Inc. all in attendance displaying their traction products. [See floor plan for the show.](#) Traction modeling was represented by the Southern California Traction Club (SCTC) and the San Diego chapter of the European Train Enthusiasts. The SCTC ran a four Pacific Electric steeple cab lash-up during the show.



The ETE operated models of some of the modern trains currently used on that continent.



Despite torrential rains, hail, downed trees, flooded freeways and some of the most inclement weather normally found in Southern California, 15,000 patrons visited the show on Saturday and another 13,000 on Sunday. Most of the time the aisles of the show resembled rush hour subway train platforms. Sales were brisk, with many vendors being forced to make Saturday evening restocking trips. It appeared more crowded on Sunday as an average of over 1850 visitors entered each hour, versus the 1500 average on the previous day.

"Silly Philly" Strikes Again!

It appears that the City of Philadelphia may be the only city in the free world that does not seem to understand the value of heritage trolley lines. The Trolleyville Times learned last month that on January 26th the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority offered up for sale vintage subway cars and PCC cars. Among the treasures offered were: 1960 Budd "Almond Joy" subway-elevated cars 610, 628, 632, 639, 645, 845 and 846; Broad Street Subway Cars 1 (1928), 51 (1928), 166 (1938) and 1025 (1936); PCC cars 2054 (1940 air-electric); 2098, 2117, 2150, 2160, 2168, 2187 (1948 all-electric) and 2728, 2748, 2799 (1947 all-electric). This list is filled with treasures from Philadelphia's past. These are the very vehicles that would form the basis of a heritage trolley line or excursion vehicles that lure tourists to places. This is consistent with the narrow thinking of SEPTA senior management at this time. The public will really like the new PCC-II trolleys if they ever get to ride on them so SEPTA officials are appearing to make sure that there will be no more cars to rebuild for service on Germantown Avenue (Route 23). They have already paved over Torresdale Avenue ensuring no streetcars return to route 56. Last year, they 'evicted' car 8534 from Elmwood Depot. This car, built in 1926 was among the last conventional cars that ran in Philadelphia until 1957. The Times suspects that this "rape of the past" is being spearheaded by a few short-sighted "trolley-hating" SEPTA officials. Like the 1950's Communists, they have no use for any history that does not agree with their current limited aims. These actions were so disgusting, this reporter found himself cheering for the New England Patriots during Super Bowl XXXIX! Hopefully these items will find loving homes outside of the so-called city of Brotherly Love!

Meanwhile, other cities with more intelligent and visionary public and transit officials are placing these heritage trolley lines in operation and finding them to a serious tourist draw. Tourist dollars bring badly needed funds into urban areas. Silly Philly does not seem to recognize that.

This is not the first incidence of the destruction of Philadelphia's transit history. It continues regardless of who is running the local transit system. In 1957, no one in the Philadelphia Transportation Company saw the wisdom of saving some of the 1923-1926 Brill trolleys that last ran on Routes 17, 32 and 46. These were the very cars that were copied by Milan, Italy and some of them are also running today in San Francisco along with the ex-Philadelphia PCC cars. These were similar to the vintage cars that still run on the Saint Charles Line in New Orleans. That same city has returned brand new look-alike cars to the Canal Street Line, which was abandoned in 1964. These cars were even built by the shop forces there. Now that city has three trolley lines, where only one existed. Philadelphia has five trolley lines where 14 existed.

In 1960, again no one in Silly Philly saw the wisdom in preserving the first subway car in Philadelphia, car 1 from the Market Street Elevated Passenger Railway. So all 215 of those 1907 vintage cars were burned and scrapped. A few years ago, SEPTA officials allowed the last 1922 Frankford Elevated car to be scrapped. So Here they go again, the first Broad Street Subway Car, a 1928 vintage car, has to go. There seems to be no more room for history in the City of Brotherly Love.

Philadelphians devoted precious money in the last few years to refurbish 18 PCC cars for service on Route 15, Girard Avenue, in a bid to spur redevelopment. These cars now sit at both Callowhill and Elmwood depots due to an inane argument between a City Councilman devoid of any real leadership qualities, a very vision-less transit authority and some rather un-thinking residents, moderated by a "brain-dead" mayor. Meanwhile, another potential tourist draw with the attendant funds for the city is being lost.

One of the major attractions was the large 130' N-trak layout seen below. It extended all the way to the wall in the rear. It took at least one-half hour to walk around the entire display.



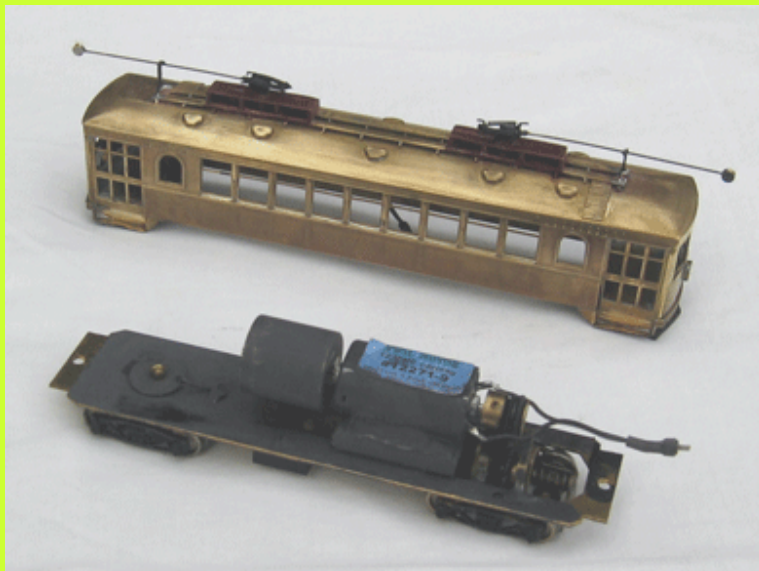
The show had been well advertised with notices in six different model and toy train magazines, over 50 commercials on four local television stations, 40 spots on local radio and 25 ads on nine area newspapers. 30,000 postcards were also mailed to train enthusiasts. I guess there is a lesson to be learned here also!

Anyway, the major lesson learned is that when World's Greatest Hobby on Tour comes to your area in 2006, don't miss it. There is more than plenty of "Bang for your buck"

New Can Motor from NorthWest Short Line for those tougher traction repowerings!

Late last month, the Trolleyville Times learned of two new miniature can motors that have traction applications. These two flat can style motors are both 12x15x27mm with 1.5 mm shafts and are rated at 12,500 RPM at 12 volts with no load. The first one is 12270-9 with 1.5x9.5mm single shaft and 12271-9 with 1.5x9.5mm double shafts. Both motors are only \$19.95 (MSRP). NorthWest Short Line has appropriate flywheels, 400-6 and 401-6, available at \$3.00 each for these motors along with bushings for converting the motor shafts from 1.5mm to 2.0mm (10161-9) or 1.5mm to 2.4mm (10164-9). Both of these bushings are available, 2 to a package, for \$1.95.

Custom Traxx obtained one of the 12271-9 motors and some of both bushings and used them all on a Fairfield Traction Models Nine-Window Double End Curveside Car being converted to overhead wire operation. This car had just been acquired at a local Great American Train Show needing a rear truck and was a good candidate for an immediate repowering. Generally the same procedure used in the Trolleyville article was to be followed except that we were using a different and smaller motor.



Every day, thousands of tourists in San Francisco ride PCC cars that used to grace Allegheny, Erie, Germantown, Ogontz, Rising Sun and Girard Avenue in Philadelphia. Silly Philly said that they were too "worn out" for Philadelphia transit riders but after a moderate rebuilding, they have been the hit of San Francisco for ten years. Above are San Francisco cars 1055, 1061 and 1052 which until 1992 were Philadelphia cars 2122, 2116 and 2110. When we want to remember the 'gold old' days in Philadelphia, we go to San Francisco and ride car 1055, which is painted in the colors of the old Philadelphia Transportation Company. Last week, we found some great cheese steaks in Culver City, CA. and another reason not to go to Philadelphia. So this is the notice to other former Philadelphians. Just wait a while, great pieces of Philadelphia's past may be coming to you.

As of February 28th, we had not learned of any further action on this subject so we can still hope that good sense may have prevailed.

San Francisco SLRV decals coming from Custom Traxx!

Custom Traxx announced last month that they will soon market complete decal sets for HO scale models of the Boeing Standard Light Rail Vehicle as operated in San Francisco from the early 1980s to just a few years ago.



These decals will be made to fit the AHM/IHC/Mehano models which were available from 1979 until recently. The set will contain a complete set of destination signs based on an actual roll sign from San Francisco, courtesy of the Western Railway Museum. The California Poppy Gold and Sunset Red striping will be based on actual color samples obtained from the MUNI paint shop. The set will contain the MUNI "worm" heralds in both red and white, black numbers and other exterior markings. The decal set will enable the modeler to model the SLRV as first tested, as originally placed in service and as finally operated. Combine these decals with the new Bowser floors now available for these cars and you can have a modern light rail vehicle for your model railroad. For more information, check with their web site at www.customtraxx.com or call 310-990-5422 for more details.

Custom Painted Large Scale Hartland Birney Cars Coming!

The motor was mounted flat side down using aquarium sealer on a 1.0 ounce rectangular weight which substituted for the normally used A-line 12401 cradle. This kept the shaft approximately the same distance from the chassis floor as the open frame motor. The original motor with brass mount weighed 1.7 ounces, while the new motor weighs only .6 ounces so the 1.0 ounce weight helps make up the difference. We opted for the A-line 20006 flywheel, which forced the use of both bushings offered. The 10161-9 bushing had to be used for the flywheel and the 10164-9 bushing for the knurled pulley. Both bushings seem to be correctly made and fit as expected. All Custom Traxx/ SCTC cars are wired for trolley pole reverse so the Miniatronics connector shown on the chassis is connected to both trolley poles. When this conversion was completed, the car was certified on February 27th on the test track of the Southern California Traction Club at 37 scale mph at 7.0 volts.

This was much better performance than expected, so we recommend that this motor be considered for some repowerings where its size makes it the motor of choice.

This car will be running on the modules of the Southern California Traction Club as soon as the exterior is finished, but as of now, this NWSL 12271-9 motor looks like a winner.

This car is to be Conestoga Traction Company 66, one of five such cars (65-69) that once operated from Lancaster to Ephrata, PA, so the raised trolley pole bases have been added. Before this car is finished in the orange, white and dark red of the parent company, the upper sashes in the ends will have been removed, trolley retrievers will have been relocated and the fenders replaced with pilots. There is even a Custom Traxx decal set in the works for this car.

NOTE: There are two little items that modelers should remember when remotoring a streetcar, especially those with spring belt drives.

1. Always test the mechanism with the old motor, paying particular attention to the operation of the power truck assembly. This ensures that any problems with the power truck will be found and corrected before the new motor/flywheel combination is installed.



During the testing above, it was discovered that the power truck was had not been lubricated for a long time and was partially bound up. It was a different story after a thorough cleaning and lubrication.

2. Try to ensure that the shaft of the new motor is the same distance from the chassis floor as the old motor. This will help prevent spring belt slipping problems, which results in resizing the spring belt. This is a job not to be attacked with those with big fingers. Below, we are using some calipers to document the 14mm distance between the motor shaft and the floor.

In a boon to the fledgling large scale traction modeler, Custom Traxx in a joint venture with Light Rail Products and Transquip Company, will be providing custom painted Hartland Locomotive Works Single Truck Birney Safety Cars early in the spring. The pilot car, Sacramento 62 shown below, was completed in December and was shown at the Sacramento and Pomona GATS in January, the Model Train Expo in January and the World's Greatest Hobby on Tour show in Long Beach last month. More cars will be on display at the East Penn Traction Club meet in May. This pilot car sports modified destination signs, Light Rail Product US13 trolley poles with trolley wheels and fabricated pole tower and trolley pole hooks.



By the way, if you have not seen the LGB Large Scale New Orleans car, it is a beauty. The figures are included with the car. See below:

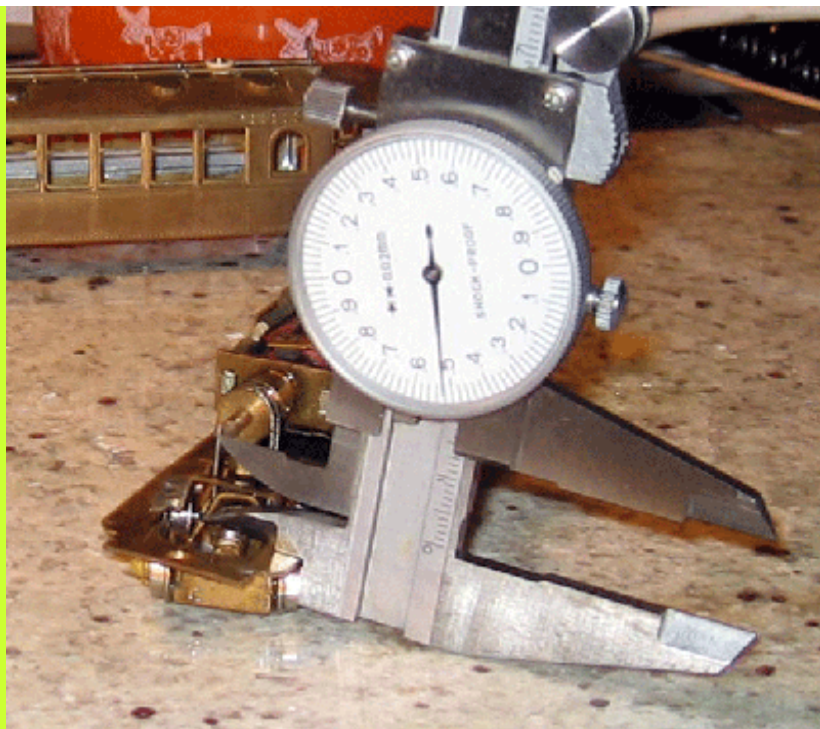


Corgi Releases a very colorful PCC Car!

Earlier this month, Corgi released their 29th in a series of PCC cars. This one was the Pittsburgh PA Transit 1730 in the psychedelic Mod Desire paint scheme that this car wore from 1972 until the early 1980s.



Collectors should order by contacting Transquip Company at 215-822-8092 and using the US55030 stock number. Trolleyville has heard that the next Corgi PCC car may be the Philadelphia (SEPTA) 2181 dressed in the 1970s colors of orange, blue and white. For a complete list of the produced cars to date, [click here](#).



We always recommend that traction modelers review the articles on [repowering in the Trolleyville Schoolhouse](#) before considering any HO scale traction repowering task