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SEPTA spells a word - Philadelphia's Route 15 trolley returns!

Give a monkey a typewriter and sooner or later, it's bound to spell a word. The Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) managed to spell a word over twenty years ago when they designed and obtained the Kawasaki Light Rail Vehicles back in 1981 that are still used on the five Subway-surface lines in West Philadelphia. Their luck came up again. Despite their best shots to kill the project, they managed to spell another one. Trolleys returned to Route 15 after an absence of 13 years. Ron Carson of Carson Home Video was on hand early Sunday, September 4th when the first cars rolled out of Callowhill Car House and provided these photos.



Just after midnight on September 4th, PCC-II 2323, shown above at 63rd and Girard, made the first run. So after a year of mindless inactivity, wrangling and outright inept management by the transit authority, local politicians and some vocal but ignorant local residents, PCC-II streetcars began polishing the rails of the Girard Avenue line for the first time since PCC cars ceased operation on the line in September 1992. Later in the day Car 2332 loads at Richmond & Allegheny.

Trolley Talk Resumes Publication

On September 6, 2005, the Times received issue 276 (January-August 2005) of Trolley Talk. This is the first issue published by Peter Weiglen since he purchased the magazine from Drew Sack.



Cincinnati, Georgetown & Portsmouth "The Dustless, Smokeless Route."



The image of the classic midwest interurban, typified by car No. 105 of the Cincinnati, Georgetown & Portsmouth Railroad. No. 105 was built by St. Louis Car Co. in 1902, as part of a series of ten cars, numbered from 100 to 109 by ST. But this electric railroad was more than an "interurban," as it had narrow-gauge tracks and a steam railroad tradition. Car 101 stayed on the CG&P until the 1935 abandonment.

This issue of the magazine contains 16 pages plus a 10 page advertising supplement. To get back on schedule, Peter has published the following schedule for release of the next few issues:

- Issue 277 - Sep-Oct 2005 - October 6, 2005
- Issue 278 - Nov-Dec 2005 - November 21, 2005
- Issue 279 - Jan -Feb 2006 - January 21, 2006

So you should check your normal hobby shop sources for Trolley Talk after those dates. Allow for the snail mail service of our Post Office.

Central Coast Trains

A hobby shop you don't want to miss!

For those of you who drive the beautiful highway 101 between San Francisco to Los Angeles, you pass through Atascadero which is about halfway between those two cities. Just north of the Curbaril St Exit is Central Coast Trains. Bill and Anita Walter opened their 1800 sq ft store in September 1995 using proven successful business techniques. Do not pass it by anytime you are motoring by. You will be very pleasantly surprised. We stopped on September 23rd on our way to the San Jose Great Western & Atlantic Train Show. Central Coast Trains specializes in special orders. They pride themselves on following up on other manufacturers and dealers who have "dropped the ball" on their customers.



Most of the original PCC cars that ran the line in 1992 escaped the second-class citizenship that they suffered under SEPTA and ten years ago became cherished residents of San Francisco. They are painstakingly repaired, maintained in almost immaculate condition and are revered by the tourist and local population. The PCC-IIs are largely rebuilds of cars that spent most of their initial operational lives (1947-1968) on Route 23, Germantown Avenue and later (1968-1981) on the Subway-surface lines. Route 23 was the second of three lines that SEPTA promised to restore to trolley service with new vehicles by 1996. SEPTA paved over three blocks of this line earlier this year and destroyed half of the final line, Route 56-Erie Avenue last year. Meanwhile, Girard Avenue shines with PCC-II 2332 heading westbound to 63rd Street after passing the Girard Avenue Frankford Elevated Station and 2325 heading eastbound to Richmond Allegheny:



The interiors of the cars are quite nice. The cars are fully air-conditioned with cushioned seats and ADA compliant! They ride really well!



The shop address is 7600 El Camino Drive, Suite #3, Atascadero, CA 93422. Just exit Curbaril drive eastbound to El Camino and turn north. the hobby shop is in a strip mall to your left about one block north. and spoke with Anita Walter who was in the store that day. Call 805-466-1391 if you need more directions.



The store is well stocked with ample supplies of the newest Athearn, MDC and other model railroad items. There is a large thomas the Tank Engine section for the real young beginners. Central Coast believes in taking the model railroading message to the public so when there is a train show in the California area, Central Coast is usually there with a nice professional display. Bill Walter had a display at the Great Western & Atlantic Train Show in San Jose and had left about four hours before we arrived. Trolleyville was able to talk to him there.



Central Coast always does well at model train shows, even marginal ones and the San Jose GWAATS was no exception . They have a well arranged and illuminated display with clearly marked prices which catch the customers eye and retains their attention. So keep an eye for Central Coast Trains at Northern and Central California train shows and if they are not coming to you. Go visit them in Atascadero. You will not be sorry!

The IHP Pre-War PCC - A clarification!

We have discussed the model Pre-War PCC car in the last two issues of the Trolleyville Times and we have had a lot of input from many readers including Mike Bartel of Imperial Hobby Productions and Joel Lovitch of MTS Imports, Inc.



Of course, in true SEPTA fashion, hardly had two weeks of operation been completed when the first accident happened. Car 2322 hit 2332. The accident happened at 60th & Girard in West Philadelphia.

New Decals from Custom Traxx!

On September 29th, Custom Traxx released two HO scale traction decal sets and announced one in development! The first decal set is for the Philadelphia Suburban Transportation (Red Arrow Lines) 80 series, 1932 Brill "Master Units" and the 1949 St. Louis Quasi-PCC cars. The set contains all details for all pre-SEPTA paint schemes and the Philadelphia & West Chester Traction Company. The set, CN-077 is \$12.95 and is now available in limited numbers.



Custom Traxx announced the re-release of the upgraded Toronto PCC set, CN-4300. The set has been upgraded at no increase in price by adding black striping for the belt rail and letterboards and doubling the number of destination signs. The set still retails for \$9.95 and is also available now.



In active development is a decal set for the 1930 Brill Master Units as imported by Northwest Short Line in 1972. Details will be provided for Lynchburg (Virginia) Traction & Light, Portland Traction Co., Roanoke Railway & Electric Co, Virginia Electric Power Co (VEPCO), Yakima Valley Transportation Co. The set, CN-111, should be released next year.

In our next issue:

In our July issue, we stated "...In the opinion of the Times, there has not been a brass HO scale PCC model produced that captured the correct front and/or rear curves of the PCC car. So this shell inherits some of those deficiencies..."

In the August issue, we also reported "...there have been white-metal kit versions [of the Air-Electric PCC] (i.e. BEC), urethane shells (Q-Car), and at least three brass HO scale models (Soho, WP Car, MTS) of the 1936 Pre-War Air-Electric PCC car in the last twenty years and all of them had inaccuracies, some minor, some major. So this is in no way meant to be a criticism of the IHP model. Because of the resin casting, any inaccuracies in IHP model may be easier to correct. The widest part of the St. Louis built PCC car is at the belt rail. Although most models replicated this feature in the sides and rear ends, they missed out a little on the front end next to the front door..."

The first statement and the last sentence of the second statement is incorrect as far as the MTS Imports Pre-War PCC model is concerned. That model DID have the correct curvature at the front door and was the best of the brass HO scale Pre-War PCC cars that we had seen, but there were other inaccuracies in the front end of that model.

Although few models are 100% accurate, we stand corrected and apologize for the incorrect statement.

Points of Trolley History-4

The following item appeared in the Los Angeles Times some years ago. We thought it might be interesting considering today's political climate.



Ernest Ackerman, 65, a Cleveland motorman, was first to collect under Social Security.

A revealing conversation with Dave Swanson, founder of the Great American Train Show - Don't miss the November 2005 Trolleyville Times! (On-line Nov 1!)

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