

Keep up to date with events in our hobby! - - -

The Annual Golden Empire Historical & Modeling Society Model Railroad Show!

The Golden Empire Historical & Modeling Society normally holds its annual model train show over the Martin Luther King holiday weekend. This year, a scheduling snafu forced the society to reschedule its show to the weekend of March 8-9, 2008. The society spent considerable effort in advertising the show. Normally over 2,500 local residents attend the show and they usually enjoy themselves with the model train layouts in almost all the major scales to view along with the bargains offered by many of the vendors at the show. Parking is free and the walk from the parking lot is not very long!

Ardent fans started lining up an hour before the show opened.



The show opened promptly at 10:00 AM and in the first twenty minutes, 200 patrons had already entered the hall. Attendance reached 1,000 before 1:00 P.M. and there were a steady stream of visitors all day. By the time the show closed, over 3,000 persons had attended.



The Trolleyville Times was at this show along with Railway/Traction Miniatures, Holland Traction Supply and Custom Traxx. Two Southern California Traction Club members, Pete DeBeers and George Jones acquired tables at this show and they both sold and acquired some very collectable items.

Custom Traxx displayed the first of their new resin shells for the San Francisco ex-Milan Peter Witt Cars. The shells will be available shortly. There is a complete decal set available for the car along with aluminum floors made to accept the Bowser 125100 mechanism or the Hollywood Foundry BullAnt drive. The shell caught the attention of Doug Wagner, one of the show promoters and he had a long discussion with George Huckaby about [resin traction shells](#).

There was the usual riding train directly in front of the hall which featured two diesels and two steam engines.

The Orange Empire Railway Museum March Swap Meet!

Last month provided Southern Californians with a second quality model train gathering. The Orange Empire Railway Museum traditionally holds a swap meet every March and September. At the same time that buyers are searching for bargains, prototype streetcars are being pulled out of the barn for the days runs. Unfortunately, there was a heavy mist lingering over the site as the vendors began to set up at 7:00 AM and the sun never did appear during the event. That did not seem to dissuade the public and the vendors who made the trip.



As usual, there were several bargains and hard-to-find items were available for purchase at this meet. One vendor had several of those nice "Images of Rail" publications that have become popular within the last few years.



Another real find was an Original Whistle Stop model of the "Valley 7" Hollywood Cars. These fourteen cars were modernized in 1938 for service from 6th & Main through the subway to the San Fernando Valley (Van Nuys). Of the 160 cars then in service (series 600-759), cars 738 through 749 were speeded up and given a striking new paint scheme using cream in the window areas. When our reporter was told the price, he went to get his checkbook. By the time he returned the item, was already sold and removed from the meet. All he was left with was the photo.



There was much more traction brass available at the swap meet, and at very reasonable prices. Also several Trolleyville vendors were present at this show.



So if you are a traction modeler and live in Southern California, this is the swap meet not to miss!



San Francisco Car 162 The long way back!

Car 162 was built by the Jewett Car Company in Ohio in 1914. After a 44 year career in San Francisco running on almost every Muni streetcar line, Class B car 162 had cheated the scrappers torch and earned peaceful retirement in 1958 at the Orange Empire Railway Museum in Perris, CA. But with the masterful minds of MUNI now running at full speed, car 162 was purchased in 2002 from the museum for return to service on the now famous F-line. The car, although basically intact, needed considerable work as when it arrived at the Mint as the below Peter Ehrlich photo shows.



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After some work had been done by Market Street Railway volunteers to make the car safely movable, it was moved to Geneva in 2004 partly under its own power to complete the restoration. The car is shown in early March 2008 during shakedown runs after restoration was almost totally completed.



Editor Comment: While we can't give enough credit to San Francisco Municipal Railways shop forces, who continue to work these miracles despite being extremely short of manpower and resources, we must recognize the "gritty" decision of the Orange Empire Railway Museum to "de-access" this car from their collection and to allow Muni to get this treasure regardless of the price paid. Obtaining these now recognized treasures was not at all easy during the 1945-1965 era. The object of the transit agencies at that time was to ensure that these cars were destroyed, never to return again. In some circumstances, we know of people threatened with losing their jobs because they tried to save certain streetcars. We can only hope that those responsible for the saving of car 162 are still around to realize the dream of seeing their car not only saved but returning to the very streets that it once ran under friendly, supportive riders and transit management.

Sunday was another gorgeous day, weather wise, and the visitors started walking in as soon as the doors opened. We hope that the club seriously considers keeping the show in March as the weather is much more pleasant then and there is slim or no chance of bad weather in the Tejon pass making it difficult for Southern Californians to attend the show as is possible when it is held in January.

A Tip for renumbering the Bachmann Peter Witt

The Southern California Traction Club has fallen in love with the Bachmann Peter Witt and in the process accumulated fourteen of them. One member has one of each of the finished cars (Baltimore, Brooklyn, Chicago, St. Louis, Los Angeles) and two undecorated. Another member has three Baltimore cars, one Brooklyn car and two undecorated cars. This presented a problem with not only DCC addressing but also distinguishing among the cars. So the obvious solution is to renumber the cars. First the search for similar black numbers were found in a Custom Traxx CN-5200 set using the black numbers intended for PRT orange cars. Removing the 9 of the 6119 was accomplished by gently scraping the number from the car with an Exacto knife. Any black residue was removed with a little Floquil Paint thinner on the end of a Q-tip. There are five sets of numbers on the car and in four of the five cases, this was done without damaging the yellow paint beneath. However, in the front of the car, there was a rivet in the area of the numbers and the black plastic showed through. Not to fear, the Custom Traxx paint stock was examined and AccuFlex 16-112 Gloss Yellow was found to be a good match. A small dab of paint on just the offending area and that was it. after the paint dried, all areas to be decaled were masked and sprayed with Testor's Glosscote. Below is the factory lettered 6119 along with the renumbered 6112 and 6118 on the Southern California Traction Club test track.



Viewers with a sharp eye will notice that the 6112 still has the original Bachmann trolley pole. The original pole that came with the 6119 did not perform well and was replaced using the methods described in the [Trolleyville Schoolhouse, Lesson 6-8](#). The one with the 6118 had the wheel and harp assembly fall

New HO scale Streetcar Car Body Shells Coming from Custom Traxx

Custom Traxx announced in Bakersfield early last month that they will be offering some new streetcar car body shells in the near future. Custom Traxx was founded in 1992 with the goal of making decals for existing brass models. Such brass models

off during initial testing. The one with 6112 performed flawlessly on the club test track. If it were not for the rules of the Southern California Traction Club requiring a "pull-out" pole, this pole would remain on the car. The same member decided to renumber the Brooklyn car because the number chosen by Bachmann, 8454, was for a double ended car. Brooklyn had 200 single ended Peter Witt cars, numbered 6000-6199, which had been built by Osgood-Bradley and J. G. Brill in 1931-1932. These were the last conventional streetcars ordered by the B&QT. And car 6139 was used along with Chicago Peter Witt 3222 and Baltimore Peter Witt 6002 for field testing for PCC car development at the Brooklyn Ninth Avenue Depot. The member decided to renumber the car 6248, placing it in the single-end group of numbers, and used the same technique to remove the numbers from the sides. The numbers on the front and back had been placed in the multi-riveted belt rail area and could not be removed without exposing a lot of black plastic. PollyScale #404052 MEC Pine Green was found to be a close match.

East Penn Traction Club Traction Workshop!

by Mike Syilagyi

On March 8 and 9, 2008, the East Penn Traction Club held its second in a series of "How-To" workshops, for building HO-scale model traction modules. Aside from several East Penn members, the fourteen students included a delegation of three people from the Northern Virginia NTRAK Model Railroad Club. Starting at 10:00 AM each day, a total of 16 hours of instruction was given.

East Penn HO module coordinator and veteran modeler Tom O'Donnell explained the East Penn module standards, stressing the importance of an accurate interface. Weight-saving techniques were outlined, and students were provided with a "parts list" of types and dimensions of recommended lumber and fasteners.



With straight-edges and a beam compass, Tom demonstrated the fine points of designing trackwork. Tom recommends an 8-inch minimum curve radius, to ensure that everyone's equipment can run, including models "right out of the box." Tom showed both how to lay out and install ORR track, and PECO railroad track.

The club's sheet metal shear was pressed into service to cut printed-circuit board ties. Enough were cut for two new modules, and epoxied into place. 60-minute epoxy was used, so that adjustments could be made easily. Once cured, the ties will be ready for tinning and the soldering of ORR girder rail.

Thanks to the generosity of Tom O'Donnell, and the added experience of Bob Dietrich and Larry Loyko, beginners were provided a wealth of guidance and practical know-how. The next workshop will be scheduled in coming months.

had been made in the 1960-1980 era by Fairfield, Model Tramway, Soho and others. The brass bodies made for the first part were very accurate with the most glaring problem being oversize headlight openings. But even that is correctable. By the late 1990s, computer technology had made it possible to make accurate decals, including multi-colored heralds for some of these cars. So now Custom Traxx will be offering some unique carbody shells complete with accurate decals designed for the particular carbody. Some of the bodies will be offered with a Bowser mechanism. More information is coming in future editions.

Bowser Mfg Testing Revised Operational Trolley Pole

When Bowser Manufacturing introduced their revised traction mechanism in 1999, they made the decision to equip their four trolley kits with dummy trolley poles in an attempt to provide the lowest prices possible. The #1250 trolley pole, designed over fifty years ago by George Stock, needed some work, and when current stocks were exhausted, the units became unavailable. A new more durable collector was needed for those who wished to operate trolleys from powered overhead wires and then there was the higher contact requirements of DCC.

Bowser sent two of the new poles to be tested by the Southern California Traction Club and Custom Traxx. The 2mm base used by Bowser to too large for the 1mm mounts used by both the SCTC so the poles were equipped with a 1mm pin base and an NMRA S-5 compatible collector and testing began.

The first car chosen for testing was an S. Soho model of a Los Angeles Railway Class M Peter Witt car. This car is equipped with a Train Control Systems M1 decoder and the test was conducted using a relatively new NCE Power Cab.



Then the same pole was tested on a Bachmann Peter Witt on the SCTC test track for several hours.



This pole, when used on either car, gave the most reliable performance under DCC that we have seen to date. Another old Bowser pole that we modified to a 1mm base and new stronger springs, gave the second best performance. The stock Bachmann pole, still installed on Baltimore 6112, shown behind the Brooklyn car, performed less than either modified Bowser pole.

