

The normally fantastic East Penn Traction Club Meet will be held

## Another Successful Trolley Preservation Effort

\*\*\*

The Times is always pleased to hear of new --- and successful --- trolley preservation efforts. When a Birney car, originally from Asheville, North Carolina, was offered on eBay, we were concerned that it would be bought by some greasy spoon diner that would display the hulk out front where it would be ravished by wind and rain until it collapsed. Fortunately, it was spotted by Rocky Hollifield, a North Carolina resident, who quickly formed a new non-profit group --- the Craggy Mountain Line, raised \$5,000 to win the auction, and had it moved to three miles of track in Woodfin, a town near its original home of Asheville. The non-profit group is planning to use it as the basis for a railway museum after they refurbish it.

The trolley car is a Birney Safety Car built by J. G. Brill in 1927. The car is in fairly good shape, apparently needing only some repairs to its roof. This Birney, a classic, was originally offered on eBay by a 19-year-old youth, who plans to pay his college tuition with the proceeds of the sale. He had acquired it about 10 years ago from his grandmother, who in turn had gotten it as part of the purchase of a home in Asheville, where it had been used as a residence for some time before that. It's back where it started and where it belongs, which is greatly to be desired. It had operated as a streetcar in Asheville, on a system which had begun service in 1888 on one of the earliest trolley lines in the United States. That system ceased operation in 1940.

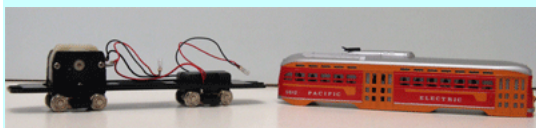
Interestingly, there may be three other trolleys still in the town of Asheville, although the Museum's acquisition is cosmetically the best of the bunch. Asheville, in the Blue Ridge Mountains, is a town noted for being the site of the Biltmore House, a tourist attraction which was featured in the classic 1979 film "Being There" starring Peter Sellers. It appears that the town really cares about preservation on a grand scale.

## New Bachmann PCC Drive!

\*\*\*

For some time now, Trolleyville has been hearing reports of a changed Bachmann PCC drive. During the National Train Show in Anaheim in July 2008, we saw several new paint schemes that were going to be introduced on the Bachmann PCC and these would have the new drive. We kept hearing about the new drive on the various chat groups but could not locate one. Finally in March 2008, we obtained one in the Los Angeles Transit Lines "fruit salad" paint scheme.

The next photo shows the original drive that we have had with us for years.



Shown next is the new drive which features a horizontally mounted 15mm by 12mm can motor and a completely enclosed drive. It appears that the trailing truck has not been changed. The interior light bar is basically unchanged but red taillights have been added. Be careful when removing the chassis. The screw which attaches the chassis to the body shell

## A Comfortable and Inviting Model Train Store in Anaheim Hills, CA!

\*\*\*

In late February, two Times reporters were returning from a club swap meet when they decided to check out a model train store by the name of Milepost 38. The shop is located at 5757B La Palma Avenue in Anaheim Hills, just off the Imperial Highway exit of the Riverside (CA 91) Freeway. We kept hearing good things about this store but had never had the opportunity to be in that neighborhood.....

**Milepost 38 MODEL TRAINS**  
5757-B E. La Palma Ave. (La Palma & Imperial) - Anaheim Hills  
Across the street from KENO'S Restaurant. Operating Layouts in N - HO - O & G

**New LARGER Location!**

**OPEN 7 DAYS**  
**100% MODEL RAILROADING!**  
(714) 970-3751 / www.Milepost38modeltrains.com

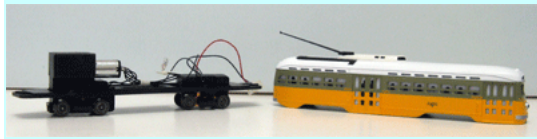
.....Until last month and we were surprised at what we found. Almost everything about this store was incredible. It was a well stocked store with quite a variety of model trains in all the major scales. There were operating layouts in both HO, N and O (Lionel) scales with a large scale train running on a track suspended from the ceiling....and they were open seven days a week.

We were so impressed that we returned in March for another visit. This time we brought our cameras to share the store with our readers. This store has areas dedicated to the very beginners with a Thomas Area where the youngsters can play without disturbing the rest of the store patrons. This Thomas Area is extremely complete and worth viewing by anyone, even those much older.

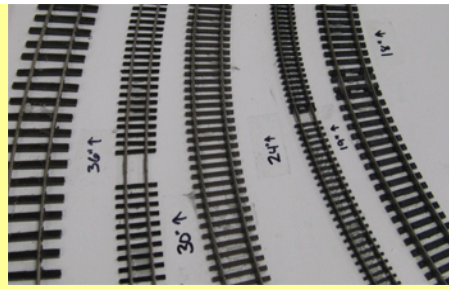


Then there is the dedicated DCC section for very advanced train enthusiast. This very well designed area includes easy access to the many decoders and electronic parts needed for the installation of DCC in model train equipment. We noted not only Digitrax, NEC and MRC Prodigy Systems on display but also test tracks in various scales with various curves to answer that annoying question of will a loco take 18" radius curves. A close up of the various 90 degree curves is shown below:

strips very easily. We test ran both chassis on the Southern California Traction Club test track.



We noted that the new power truck is quieter, runs at about .1 ampere while the older unit runs at about .2 ampere. The new unit is also slower and smoother. Both units would take the club 12" and 9" radius curves with ease but would not take the 6" radius curve. However, the newer unit appeared to need less modification to handle the 6" radius as it nearly successfully traversed the 6" radius curve. The unit is definitely an improvement although the car still sits too high on the trucks. A PCC car bottom step should be only 12" above the top of the rail head.



While there are not a lot of traction items at Milepost 38, our main interest in the store is the Electronic Center for those wishing to install their own decoders.

## Trolley News from Tucson, Arizona

\*\*\*

Old Pueblo Trolley (OPT), the non-profit operating museum at Tucson, Arizona, will be returning ex-Brussels four-wheel car 1511 to weekend heritage service within a few weeks. Its electrical problems are mostly resolved. The single truck car is needed to replace ex-Kyoto, ex-Osaka double-truck trolley 869. It will be sidelined for a least a month for installation of trolley poles on both ends. The tower-mounted pantograph on 869 will be removed. The pantograph will not fit through the new Fourth Avenue underpass. The street below the Union Pacific railroad tracks will have double track to access the new downtown on-street loop for OPT heritage cars and the modern streetcars expected to be operational in 2011. The new underpass being built by Sundt Co. under a \$27 million city of Tucson contract has limited clearance for its two auto traffic lanes which will be shared with the street railway. A tower-mounted pantograph won't fit through the bridge structures that will carry the railroad tracks above and neither will oversized loads of highway trucks or those with tall freight compartments. The contractor is working on a way to prevent them from damaging the bridge if they try unsuccessfully to squeeze through, ignoring the expected warning signs. Protruding metal bars will be placed on the bridge structure at approximately the height of the trolley wire. Any oversized truck attempting to pass through will be stopped. These safety devices will be located on both the north and south sides of the underpass. Short segments of easily replaced trolley wire will extend for a few feet on both sides of the bridge structure. That way, the car line can be back in operation quickly if wire powered by 600 volts DC is felled by a wayward trucker. The system is designed to shut off within milliseconds if the substation detects a break in the current.

OPT will have a loop, now constructed and flanked by bracket arm line poles, around the city block where historic Hotel Congress is located. It's the same hotel where Tucson police caught the infamous John Dillinger bank robbery gang. But the ex-Toronto all-electric PCC now sitting under a tarp at OPT's disconnected storage yard one block from the car house won't be using the new loop – or any of OPT's track. That's because of two reasons: there will be no loops at either end of the 4-mile modern streetcar line, which will have stub ended terminals, and OPT officials decided a PCC is unsuited to the desert environment because of dust. During a heritage transit conference in Philadelphia, they attended a trolley maintenance session and learned that PCC's are particularly sensitive to dust. There is no way to keep it out of the operating system so the ex-Toronto PCC is to be sold. There are no buyers yet but some trolley museum or heritage line in a more hospitable climate may have an interest.

To provide heritage service in the future, OPT needs a reliable double-ended, double truck car and a deal has been made for



In this area are located all the lights, shrink tubing, resistors and LED's for the advanced modeler. Milepost 38 even packages some of these components for use by the modeler (see below left) and provides information to assist the modeler (see below right) in such electronic endeavors. The Times is a proponent of DCC operation and this store has everything that one needs to get into, operate under and enjoy the aspects of DCC. Some examples of items packaged by Milepost 38 are shown below:

| CURRENT | 10 VOLTS | 12 VOLTS | 14 VOLTS | 18 VOLTS |
|---------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 15mA    | 560      | 680      | 820      | 1K       |
| 20mA    | 430      | 560      | 680      | 750      |
| 30mA    | 270      | 330      | 430      | 470      |
| 40mA    | 220      | 270      | 330      | 330      |

| Value | Band 1 | Band 2 | Band 3 | Band 4 |
|-------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 120   | Brown  | Red    | Brown  | Gold   |
| 150   | Brown  | Blue   | Brown  | Gold   |
| 180   | Brown  | Gray   | Brown  | Gold   |
| 220   | Red    | Red    | Brown  | Gold   |
| 240   | Red    | Yellow | Brown  | Gold   |
| 270   | Red    | Violet | Brown  | Gold   |
| 330   | Orange | Orange | Brown  | Gold   |
| 330   | Orange | Orange | Brown  | Gold   |
| 430   | Yellow | Orange | Brown  | Gold   |
| 470   | Yellow | Violet | Brown  | Gold   |
| 560   | Green  | Blue   | Brown  | Gold   |
| 680   | Blue   | Gray   | Brown  | Gold   |
| 750   | Violet | Green  | Brown  | Gold   |
| 820   | Gray   | Red    | Brown  | Gold   |
| 910   | White  | Brown  | Brown  | Gold   |
| 1K    | Brown  | Black  | Red    | Gold   |

Courtesy of  
**Milepost 38 Model Trains**  
5757-B East La Palma Ave.  
Anaheim, CA 92807  
714 970-3751

one at Bendigo, Australia. The R-W2 has the same body configuration as Melbourne's historic W2 cars but is different electrically, hence the designation R-W2. The Tucson group has struck a deal to acquire one for \$150,000 including ocean shipping to Los Angeles. OPT now is trying to raise the needed funds and has donations and funding totaling one-third of the cost already. The car is in tiptop shape and "ready to run." It's equipped with trolley poles.

Car 1511, the revenue service car while 869 is shopped for a month, is unique in several ways. OPT reconfigured it as a double-ended streetcar by placing trolley poles at both ends and adding a second controller and headlight on what was the rear of the single-ended car. It has doors on one side only. As a result, when the modern streetcar line is constructed with center boarding island platforms between double track, 1511 will be useless for passenger transport. But for now, it will work for weekend service despite its limited capacity. 1511 has a unique controller on the front end. Because it came from Brussels, the car was equipped for regenerative braking in order to haul an unpowered trailer. The front end controller uses metric hardware of an unusual type. In order to get some replacement parts, an OPT member who originally lived in Brussels was able to use Belgian contacts to get the appropriate parts. The big problem with 1511 is that when it was configured as a double-ended car at Tucson, no diagrams were made of the revised electrical system. The current membership has been able to trace most of the alterations. But the car has two other issues: in years past, it was involved in a slow-speed collision with OPT car. 869 and apparently hasn't been right ever since. In addition, the years have taken their toll on 1511's woodwork. Some wooden parts have shrunk so the fit of the car body isn't as tight as when it was built for Brussels. The only way to access the interior of the car sides, sheathed on the exterior with sheet metal, is to remove all the seating to get to the wooden bracing.

The ex-Aspen, ex-Lisbon single-truck deck-roof closed car, resembling a Brill semi-convertible, is sitting in OPT's open air storage yard next to the maintenance shed and progress is being made in its restoration. Volunteers were busy on the car roof March 7. It's being electrically rewired and wooden components are being replaced as needed. It rides on a standard gauge four-wheel truck. As used in Lisbon, these were meter gauge cars.

The modern streetcar line will have its maintenance and storage facility one block west of the OPT facility on East Eighth St. The modern streetcars will be serviced in a new facility to be built near the Union Pacific railroad tracks. A city street will be abandoned to make room for the car house.

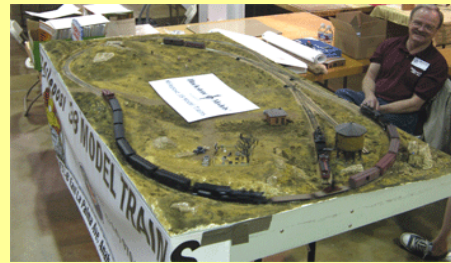
It also will make use of a triangular tract of land where OPT's ex-Toronto PCC and two double truck California style trolleys, car bodies only, are stored. They will be moved by flatbed truck to a city maintenance facility a few blocks east where an OPT heritage bus currently is stored. That will clear the land which will be part of the modern streetcar facility.

OPT has long-range plans to acquire the former El Paso & Southwestern Railroad roundhouse just south of Cushing Street and southwest of the municipally-owned Tucson Convention Center. The roundhouse would be used for a transportation museum with the heritage streetcar maintenance facility remaining at its current location just north of downtown.

El Paso & Southwestern was a copper-hauling railway through southeastern Arizona and southwest Texas that more or less hugged the international border with Mexico. EP&SW was completed in 1902. It was sold to Southern Pacific Railroad in 1924 for \$64 million. The portion from Douglas, site of the Phelps Dodge copper smelter, to El Paso was abandoned by SP in 1961. In Tucson, a short spur remained just east of what now is Interstate 10 from a turnout with the main SP line between Tucson and Los Angeles and just north of downtown Tucson, and southward to the 1-square-mile city of South Tucson to serve a few industrial customers. The spur track now is gone but the former El Paso & Southwestern depot remains as an historic architectural artifact. Its last use was a restaurant. It's at the corner of Congress Street near I-10 and will be close to the site of the



Jerry Keys, shown above, owner of Milepost 38 along with his wife Cheryl, had retail experience prior to acquiring the store, so he knows how to display items and at what level to display items. This makes the store comfortable and inviting. We found it hard to leave. He also recognizes the value of name recognition. For years Allied Model Trains was known for their building, a replica of Los Angeles Union Station. So, Jerry made sure that he was represented at the Great Train Expo, held at the Orange County Fairgrounds on March 21-22. He displayed an eye and ear catching narrow gauge layout on which two locomotives were pulling a 12 car train using DCC and sound. One of the powered locos was a mid-train helper.



Every square inch of this store is somehow used for the benefit or enjoyment of the customers. On all the doors in the store is some type of artwork recognizable by a significant portion of the clientele. Naturally, Sir Topham Hatt is located in the Thomas area where the public restroom is also located.



Speaking of the restroom, to ensure the comfort of customers, Milepost 38 has a large immaculate rest room for customers but does not waste the opportunity to display items for customer appreciation. The next photo shows the display in the restroom.

new Tucson Convention Center 12,000-seat arena for sports and other events. That project is part of a downtown revitalization program which also will see a twin tower hotel built next to the current municipal Convention Center. The modern streetcar line will pass the hotel, after turning south next to the new Federal Courthouse onto Granada. Hotel and convention traffic is expected as part of the modern streetcar line's passenger base. The new car line will go south on Granada to Cushing Street where it will turn west, duck under Interstate 10 and cross the normally dry bed of the Santa Cruz River over a new bridge still to be constructed. From there it will turn northward past the planned Tucson Origins project museums to terminate at West Congress St. next to a retail-housing complex currently being developed. The museums will include University of Arizona Science Museum and its Flandrau Planetarium, Arizona State Museum which has archeological and historic artifacts and Tucson Children's Museum. The Science and State museums will be relocated from the university main campus; the Children's museum will vacate the historic Carnegie Library building downtown. It's anticipated that OPT heritage streetcars will operate over the 4-mile route on weekends, alternating with modern streetcars.

The loop next to Hotel Congress will be reconfigured to also provide downtown to westside short turns. It will also be possible to truncate service from the downtown loop to the University of Arizona Medical Center, via the main campus. The opportunity for short turns in either direction will come in handy during emergencies or special events such as the twice-a-year Fourth Avenue Street Fair which precludes access to North Fourth Avenue rails.

The stub-ended single-track terminal next to the medical center also could become an intermodal hub for Suntran buses coming from Tucson's eastside. Some routes may terminate there, providing a two-seat ride to the university main campus or downtown via modern streetcar. The medical center will provide a traffic base because of staff, faculty, patients and visitors to the university teaching hospital, College of Nursing and medical research labs.

The university is counting on the modern streetcar line to ease some of its parking problems. The route from Park and University Boulevard where heritage rails currently end will duplicate a horse-drawn street railway in the late 19th century. It operated from the university campus to what at the time was a country club in the open desert. The country club line was an extension of the street railway route from downtown to the university. It never was electrified and was abandoned sometime in the early 20th century so Tucson Rapid Transit Co. streetcars always terminated at Park and Third (now University Blvd.) outside the university main gate.

Track laying through downtown toward the city's west side is to begin in summer 2009 by the same contractor currently involved in beautification of Scott Avenue south of Broadway. The street leads to the Temple of Music and Art, where Arizona Theatre Company presents shows. After the street work and landscaping is finished, the contractor will begin relocating utilities for the modern streetcar line and lay trackage. The car line will operate with unidirectional single track on parallel streets through downtown: westbound on Congress Street, eastbound on Broadway.

Entertainment attractions along the downtown route will include Club Congress at Hotel Congress, the restored Rialto Theater and Fox Theater. The latter two are rehabilitated movies houses now used as concert and special events venues. Club Congress is one of the nightclubs that dot Congress Street and cater to the university crowd. From the streetcar line on Broadway, it only will be short walk on Scott Avenue to the Arizona Theatre Company venue.

The modern streetcar line will operate until 2 a.m. daily and will have 10 minute headways over the four-mile route. The city plans to buy seven modern streetcars – six to hold down the schedule, and one for running maintenance. That may prove to be insufficient if two or more cars are sidelined for accident repairs or other reasons. A parallel probably can be found at Philadelphia where Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority [SEPTA] only bought 18 re-manufactured all-electric PCC cars, reconfigured as state-of-



Cheryl takes great pride in the neatness and orderliness of the store and this pride has been adopted by all employees and it shows. Cheryl is shown placing some stickers on the restroom walls during our visit.



We have visited this store on three separate occasions. The last time was on a Sunday. Milepost 38 is open from 12:00 PM to 4:00 PM on Sunday and both owners were there when we visited. There were customers coming in up to the time the doors were locked. During that last visit, Jerry told us that he and his employees feel that they have the best model train store in Southern California. From what we saw, that statement is very hard to dispute.

## Another Winner Show in Bakersfield, CA

\*\*\*

Each year the Golden Empire Historical Modeling Society (GEHAMS) holds its annual train show. Up to 2008, the show was held on the second weekend in February. In 2008, a snafu in scheduling caused the show to be delayed until March. The delayed show was well received and was repeated this year on March 14-15.



This year, despite the gloomy economic news, over 2800 patrons visited the show during the two-day period.

While we were at the show, we found two outstanding models of Los Angeles PCC cars in display cases at the Custom Traxx booth.



We were told that Custom Traxx has several of these outstanding [Saint Petersburg Tram Collection](#) models for sale. As is usually the case, Custom Traxx was demonstrating model trolleys with overhead wire operation but this year, the cars were operated with DCC.

the-art PCC-II cars by Brookville Equipment Corp. A total of 14 PCC-IIs are needed for peak service leaving only four as spares. If more are out of service, SEPTA has to mix diesel buses into the 8.2-mile Route 15 rail service over the Girard Avenue corridor. The same situation could apply to Tucson.

A knowledgeable transit source familiar with street railway operations suggests Tucson really needs seven cars to hold down 10-minute headways and two or three for spares. However, it's a matter of cost. The city is budgeting up to \$3.5 million per car, up from \$1.9 million in 2001 when Portland Streetcar bought its Czech-built Skoda Astra cars.

It remains unclear who will operate Tucson's modern streetcars --- the Suntran bus system, which is municipally owned but operated by a private firm under management contract -- or by the city Department of Transportation. Suntran drivers and mechanics are unionized, represented by Teamsters Local 310. Whether the streetcar employees will be unionized or non-union is uncertain. However, it's expected the new cars will be delivered in the blue and gray livery being applied to new buses for transit marketing "branding."

The streetcar line has \$88 million in voter-approved sales tax funding and \$25 million was allocated in federal funding in December, \$75 million short of what the city requested in matching funds. However, the omnibus spending bill of \$410 billion that cleared the U.S. House in early March contains earmarks from Tucson's two congressional representatives for the modern streetcar and the city hopes to patch together the missing \$75 million from various federal grant programs.

With Phoenix now running Kinki Sharyo light rail vehicles over its 20-mile starter \$1.2 billion light rail transit line, OPT expects greater state oversight on safety. Phoenix, like Houston before it, has experienced various motor vehicle -- LRV collisions caused by motorists not used to driving in an urban environment that features a street railway. Phoenix's last streetcar ran in 1948; in Tucson, the end came in 1930.

Old Pueblo Trolley will be updating its operating rules for volunteers at the controls of its heritage streetcars to assure safety. Protocols already have been set up with Tucson Police and Fire departments for emergencies.

OPT has two ex-San Francisco PCCs and a single-truck Birney car body stored off site on Tucson's southside in a desert area. One PCC is being scrapped for parts. The other may be sold. Restoration of the Birney to replicate Tucson Rapid Transit car 10, bought second hand from Douglas, is a low priority -- probably many years off. OPT began its heritage service with an ex-Pacific Electric Birney from Orange Empire Railway Museum at Perris, CA. The Tucson volunteers restored the car to operation but at the end of the 10-year lease, the museum insisted it be returned. [HNP]



Shown in the photo on Custom Traxx' nine square foot demo module are two San Francisco Municipal Railway (Muni) PCC cars. The green car is a model of car 1050 obtained from Philadelphia in 1992 for service on now well-known F-line. This car was modified from the Bowser PCC and uses Bowser power with the A-line 20040 flywheel kit. It also has a Train Control Systems Z2 decoder, intended for Z-scale application. The red car is San Francisco car 1183. The model is Bowser powered with the A-line flywheel kit, with a Train Control Systems M2 decoder. The car body is a reworked resin shell. The operating trolley display provided by Custom Traxx always has the interest of younger show attendees.



As is normally the case, the club builds a layout and raffles it off during the show. This years module is shown in the next photo.



Another feature of this show is the riding train for the public. They seem to expand their trackage every year.



The Golden Empire Historical & Modeling Society is one of the fun clubs in the state of California. They have an active program encouraging recruitment of younger modelers and it seems to be working well. On the Saturday evening of the show, the club holds an open house at its huge layout located at 19th & Eye Streets in downtown Bakersfield. There are two large layouts on separate floors. The N scale layout is on the second floor and the HO scale layout is on the third floor of the building. Both layouts are operated with Digitrax DCC. One of the trolleyville reporters obtained his own Digitrax Radio Throttle (DT400R) and ran one of his locomotives with a 20 car coal drag on the layout. It took more than one hour to make one complete round trip. He was heard saying that "...this is the only way to go..." We also noticed that there were several younger modelers running

trains with various Digitrax hand-held radio throttles. We sure liked that!

---

[Trolleyville](#) | [Factory](#) | [Trolleyville Times](#) | [Info Center/Real Estate Office](#) | [School](#) | [Library](#) | [Clubhouse](#) | [Downtown](#)

Copyright 2009 Custom Traxx