

Upgrading Bowser "Souvenir" F-Line PCC models!

The Bowser San Francisco F-line PCC cars are available in two versions, the powered version, 125XX and the souvenir versions, 127XX. The souvenir versions have the same body shell and windows as the powered version but have a plastic floor and wheels. The wheels are HO scale but do not swivel so the souvenir versions can only be set on straight track.

At the request of one Custom Traxx/Bowser customer, we have developed a method to upgrade the units with essentially two Bowser trailing trucks which will swivel. When these are installed the two versions are almost indistinguishable.

To accomplish this, you need the following items:

Two Bowser 1320 trailing truck assemblies,
Four Bowser 1270 track brake assemblies,
Two Bowser 256031 2-56 screws.

To do this, carefully remove the plastic floor from the souvenir unit by spreading the four clear window tabs that hold the floor to the body.

Then using an Exacto or similar knife, gently pry the plastic truck cover from the floor. Note that it is held / glued to the floor with four small tabs. With careful and slow prying with the blade, the cover will be removed without cracking the floor.

When the cover is removed, four wheel supports will remain, these must be removed and filed or sanded flush with the car floor to prevent interference with the soon to be installed trucks.

At this time, you may want to airbrush or touch up the bottom of the floor with flat black paint.

The next step is to cut off the tabs of the brass power pickups, part #1256. You may find it advantageous to paint the sides of this part with either dark gray or weathered black paint to enhance the appearance.

There are two holes already provided for mounting these trucks. Using a 2-56 screw, simply insert the screw through the bottom of the truck into the hole provided and secure the truck to the floor.

Custom Traxx has arranged to get all the parts that you need. Just notify them that you wish the Souvenir PCC Upgrade Kit (#12700). It is priced at \$29.00 and includes all the items listed above.

Also for those of you who have broken the trolley poles on either version of the cars, Custom Traxx has replacements, now made in Delrin, for \$1.00 each.

Modifying the Bowser F-Line PCC models!

It did not take long for modelers to find interesting ways to make the Bowser F-line PCC into the model of their choice. First of all, when the undecorated (#12549) was used as the basis for a SEPTA GOH model, it was found that all the front trolley pole and all the remaining hardware, the roof walks, and the antennas can be gently removed if steady but

World's Greatest Hobby on Tour Revisits Long Beach!

The World's Greatest Hobby on Tour revisited Long Beach, California on February 13-15, 2010, returning to the same location they attracted over 28,000 visitors in 2005. This was the 26th WGHOT since December 2004.

The very successful World's Greatest Hobby on Tour Shows are the creation of Dave Swanson, a man whom we have called the "Walt Disney" of Model Train Shows. Dave was featured in the February 2010 issue of United Airlines, in-flight magazine, Hemispheres with the photo shown below:



Dave and his staff created the Great American Train Show (GATS) in the early 1980s and that show grew to become a major force in the model train industry. GATS was revered by some, hated by others but recognized by all as a major force in model trains. Unfortunately GATS was sold in 2001 to an individual who single handedly almost wrecked the entire model train show business. But that did not stop Dave. Dave and his former staff reunited and from the still smoldering ashes of GATS, created the Great Train Expo, rejuvenated Greenberg Shows and the World's Greatest Hobby on Tour. Dave is currently President of Competitive Intelligent Advertising (CIA). CIA is responsible for the advertising campaigns of not only the World's Greatest Hobby on Tour Shows, but also the Greenberg Shows and the Great Train Expo shows. Two of the World's Greatest Hobby on Tour shows had over 40,000 visitors.

The people responsible for these excellent shows are: Randy Bachmann (owner), Virginia Goeglein, Frank Hicks, Curt Jablonski. Recognizing good talent is rare, Nick Zorn of the Great Train Expo, who has been featured in previous Trolleyville Times articles, is also part of the staff. Dave Swanson still holds the title of Chairman Emeritus at WGHOT shows and you will find him actively involved in most shows.

Randy is a hands on owner, who is involved in all aspects of show operations. No ivory tower management here. Randy is shown actually running the Thomas train at the show:

persistent pressure in placed under the roof walk with an Exacto or similar knife blade. The large hole for the trolley pole is simply filled along with several much smaller holes with body putty. Removing the front trolley catcher is a little more tricky. Simply cut the majority of the catcher from the car and sand or file slowly and carefully to preserve the bottom of the belt rail.

An unidentified modeler in Toronto converted the car in the photo below to represent a Toronto PCC.



Custom Traxx converted another Bowser F-line PCC to a SEPTA General OverHaul (GOH) car. The GOH program included a complete rewiring of the cars, which made the cars so attractive to the magnificent minds of Muni when implementation of the F-line was decided.



Caution: The lenses used for the taillights and rear roof marker lights are very small and can be lost easily. The headlight lens is a little larger but can also be lost if you are not careful. It takes much skill to replace them without losing them.

This latter car just might serve as one of the prototypes for another Bowser PCC.....stay tuned!

Bachmann Displays their Cleveland and Toronto Peter Witt Streetcars

When Bachmann announced their HO scale Peter Witt Trolley a few years ago. The model was based on the Baltimore 6000 series Peter Witts built by J. G. Brill in 1930. It was expected that in addition to Baltimore, that the car would be available in Cleveland, Toronto and Philadelphia liveries, all cities noted for their extensive use of the Peter Witt streetcar.

It was assumed that due to the extraordinary stupid and malicious actions of SEPTA two decades ago against Bachmann's SEPTA PCC car, that additional Philadelphia liveries would not be available from this company for a very long time.

But it was with great pleasure that we noted both pre-production cars at the Worlds' Greatest Hobby on Tour Show in Long Beach, CA on February 13-15, 2010. Cleveland is shown at left below and the Toronto version is to the right!



George Huckaby (Custom Traxx) was also trained to operate the Thomas Train and took his turn as Mr. Conductor as he was already dressed for the part.



The show routinely spends large amounts in advertising. This show had advertisements everywhere, magazines (\$20,000), radio (\$5,000), newspaper (\$18,300), television (\$44,172), in addition to email (\$500) and direct mail (\$7,018). Such a complete program brings out people from all walks of life. The minimum attendance at any WGHOT show presented during the peak model train season has been around 20,000. Stevie Wonder visited this show in Saturday afternoon. Naturally, he had quite an entourage with him. Eric Bruskotter, his wife Tami and their son Adrian George visited the show and posed with George Huckaby. George had been introduced to them at Allied Model Trains just a few days previously.



If Eric looks familiar, he played the part of Rube Baker in both Major League II (1994) and Major League: Back to the Minors (1998).

Over 23,000 train-lovers visited this show and, from what we saw, most of them had a great time. Considering the state of this nation's economy and employment status, this is a great turnout.

At this show, we got to see the latest Con-Cor Pre-War PCC car, a representative model of Los Angeles Railway 3012. Jim Conway not only allowed the car, to be removed from his display but also to be photographed on one of the modules of the Southern California Traction Club. The next photo was taken on still incomplete General George S. Patton Memorial module. In the background is the Bowser F-line PCC 1052, which wears the same 1937 Los Angeles Railway colors.



These cars were reported to be in the Bachmann warehouse now and we know of trolley fans who have already purchased them. An example of the O-scale Peter Witt, in Saint Louis colors, was also displayed.



It will be available in May according to a Bachmann spokesperson. We did note that the O-scale trolley pole appears to follow the same design as the HO-scale trolley pole.



In the next photo, the Bowser PCC is shown in the foreground with the Con-Cor PCC in the background.



The Con-Cor PCC features an interior with a row of seats adjacent to the windows for the entire length to the car. The car also has a largely under floor drive with all eight wheels powered, with the interior workings largely hidden behind a long mirror-finished box. We did not have the opportunity to run the car but we have asked for a test car to evaluate. We have not received one as yet. We can not wait to track test this one under live overhead wire!

-- Product Review --
**The Woodland Scenics HO scale Firehouse!
 Autoscenes Sparky & The Chief!
 Scenic Accents Down Hill Derby!**

Woodland Scenics has a line of scenery items, enhancements, personnel figures and structures for all levels of model railroading from the beginner to the master. Recently, the Trolleyville Times has had a discussion with them concerning the type of structures that are desired for model trolley layouts. With the coming of the excellent ready-to-run Bachmann, Bowser and Con-Cor trolleys, there will be many more urban style layouts scenery. Trolleyville has been asked to review some of their products as to their applicability to traction layouts.

Our first review is the Woodland Scenics BR5034 HO Firehouse. This can be a splendid structure for an HO scale trolley layout. The building represents an early 1900s firehouse which has not been modernized to accept the more modern and larger fire fighting equipment, hence the beautiful arched doors.

[Woodland Scenics, from Column 1]

Place these two items together and a ready made scene is quickly created for the modeler.



This firehouse makes a fine mid-block or corner structure and shows believable dimensions for a firehouse of that era. The details and colors used in this built-up structure are excellent and can be installed on any layout without any supplemental changes. Both sets of front doors open so that the appropriate fire-fighting vehicles can be staged in the openings. As often is the case, Woodland Scenics provides Scenic Accents and/or Autoscenes that enhance their structures and those of other manufacturers.

Unless you are a frequent hobby shop visitor or an avid on-line browser, you may not be aware of all the [various figures and scenes](#) now offered by Woodland Scenics. Some of these items can really enhance your model railroad layout. So when planning or enhancing your model railroad, it is a good idea to check out the latest Woodland Scenics offerings. You just may save yourself a lot of work!

In this case it is the HO scale Autoscenes AS5559 Sparky & The Chief.

Another nice touch was the Scenic Accents Down Hill Derby, A1952. This provided some action on an otherwise plain street.



[See Woodland Scenics, column 2]

The Southern California Traction Club has problems finding space for all the items made by Woodland Scenics as they are all so appropriate for their modules. At appearances, the public definitely responds to those little details. Woodland Scenics provides all those little touches that everyone wants to do but never seems to get done. But they really do make a difference and the public notices everything. All scenes shown here were taken on one of the Southern California Traction Club modules.