

## This is the final notice!

\*\*\*

They have been doing it for **40** years! Yes, the East Penn Traction Club has presented their biennial National Trolley Meet for that long a time. This one could prove to be one of the best. Over 60 dealers of all kinds of trolley memorabilia, photos, models, and modeling supplies are registered and will offer their wares. Clinics on model building and modular design and operation are being readied.

The evening presentations this time will be special! Thirty years ago Joe Boscia and Russ Jackson were involved with the design and testing of the Kawasaki cars that still run in both the City of Philadelphia and the western suburbs. These cars were the last transit vehicles designed "in-house" by a transit agency and have an unequalled record of performance. Joe's presentation will be on Friday evening and will provide inside information not previously available. To close out the Meet on Saturday, Bud Breslin will reminisce with illustrations about the Nearside cars (the theme of the Meet). An avid Nearside fan, Bud went out of his way to know anyone who had first hand knowledge of the Nearside cars; and it didn't hurt that his father and grandfather worked on those cars. 1500 of these cars ran on Philadelphia streets for almost 20 years and the last car was almost 45 years old when it was retired.

An innovation for this year on Sunday will be layout open houses at the homes of several East Penn members. Sign up at the Meet and they will provide maps and directions. As the club has done for the past 20 years, they are holding the registration fee at the door to \$20 for yourself, your spouse and your minor-aged children. Please join the club for their premiere traction event!

## Transit Classics New San Francisco Muni Class B Streetcar!

\*\*\*

On March 30th, the USPS delivered a small package to Custom Traxx containing the latest offering from Greg King. Greg gave us those marvelous San Francisco Class K and L kits a few years back. We obtained a few and they were gone rather rapidly.

This model is perfect for the new BullAnt belt drive so we obtained the correct one (4' 10" wheelbase and 33" wheels) from Geoff Baxter. The BullAnt used was the 16.5mm gauge, 1020 motor, 58" wheelbase, 22:1 Belt, 33" disc wheels model. Both Greg King and Geoff Baxter are also talented model railroaders who make so many great products mainly for the love of it. Despite the huge time differences between California and Australia, we often make use of Skype to talk to Greg King and discuss the hobby and related topics. During one of these conversations, Greg told us that the amount of work (including research, pattern making, mold making and casting) to produce a kit such as the Class B could make such a kit cost commercially as much \$1,000.00. Research to produce the correct kit is very time consuming. Granted, the internet makes things a lot easier but still you have to love this to do it.

The Class B kit comes with six pages of detailed, professional set of instructions complete with photos. Greg collaborated with Bruce Battles, a seasoned expert San

## Another Fun Traction Supplier!

\*\*\*

Due to some of the rancor that continues to present itself on some of the leading traction chat groups, the Trolleyville Times deemed that it was high time to devote space to traction modelers and suppliers who do things mainly for the love of it, enjoy doing what they do, are fairly good at it and are a pleasure to deal with. The best part of this hobby is the pleasure of interfacing with other modelers and suppliers who love what they do. Our last edition mentioned one such traction supplier, Eric Courtney, in Busby, Alberta, Canada, who markets fine products and is a pleasure to deal with. In this edition, we have already mentioned Greg King and Geoff Baxter, so we would like to familiarize yourself with Rich Eaton, founder of [Eaton Custom Engineering \(ECE\)](http://Eaton Custom Engineering (ECE)), [richeaton4@aol.com](mailto:richeaton4@aol.com). 120 Ness Road., Castle Rock, WA 98611 (603) 998-7176.

Rich has just been a model railroader his whole life. He can hardly remember a time when he wasn't fascinated with trains. He grew up in Long Beach, CA, "Pacific Electric Country". His grandmother lived close to the spot where Pacific Electric's Seal Beach line crossed Anaheim Street in Long Beach. He was fascinated with all the trains he saw on the line.

Rich served with the United States Air Force during the 1970's. When he re-entered civilian life, he studied Aeronautical Science in college and then became a commercial helicopter pilot and helicopter flight instructor.



He became interested in HO traction back in the 1980's while visiting a club in Norwalk, CA. Although he had always been an avid HO railroader there was something very intriguing to him about traction. It required a whole different set of skills, hardware and equipment. The variety of equipment found on traction lines was stunning. This opened up a whole new world and he began to study everything he could on the subject.

Like many new traction modelers, he looked high and low for items such as line poles, contact wire, switch pans, etc., but parts were far and few between. (Please remember that this was before the Internet). So, he figured that if he wanted to do traction he was just going to have to make what he needed. Starting with making brass line poles for the club, he was encouraged to manufacture them on a commercial basis. This was followed by contact wire frogs, working Eclipse fenders, operating brass trolley poles and so forth. So then, his company was born. He has been manufacturing these items since 1988 and ECE ships all over the world.

Now, retired from aviation, he has devoted all his time to manufacturing products for HO traction and for 1/8th scale live steam. This is something that Rich does purely because he loves it. Profit is not his main motive in manufacturing these items. It's purely a labor of love, something he looks forward to doing each day. It's very satisfying to make products that make other people

Francisco modeler to develop the instructions. In the next photo, at right, is a shell partially assembled by Greg King, and provided to the Times to allow a speedy evaluation. In the center is the BullAnt belt drive obtained from Geoff Baxter (Hollywood Foundry). At left is the shell as normally supplied in the kit. In the instructions, Greg relates his method of removing the flash from the windows. Since removing the flash from windows is one of the real irritants in using resin shells, we tried his method and removed one window in the shell at left using his method. It seems to work really works well.



The kit requires you to make your own floor. This is an internationally distributed kit and there are many means of powering it. We obtained an old 125160 pewter floor that had been marketed by Custom Traxx for the Transit Classics Muni Class K/L kits back in 2007. We removed the ends, installed our new super-quiet belt-drive BullAnt and mounted the floor to the sides of the body. In the next photo, our modified floor with BullAnt mounted is shown in the foreground and in the background is the original 125160 floor.



The layout for underbody equipment was inadvertently omitted from the copy of the instructions sent to us. So we are [providing that layout here](#) if there are any other modelers who require it.

Before the car was even painted, it was assembled and taken to the Southern California Traction Club for testing. Two brand new Bowser #12600 trolley poles with pivots were installed on the car. Both poles were shortened by 1.5 feet and Miniatures by Eric HT-C4 shoes were installed. Two ounces of weight were added to the car, bringing the total weight of the car to 6.5 ounces. The car was run for about fifteen minutes, lubricated and then run for another 60 minutes. The car certified at 23.1 miles per hour at 7.0 volts.



The BullAnt belt-drive has demonstrated that it is quiet, smooth running and well worth the investment.

In the final photo, San Francisco Class B 162 passes Class D Double End 1006 with Class K 181 and Little Ten 1024 in the background. Both the Class B and Class K are powered with the Bullant Belt Drive.

happy. This in turn makes him happy and he finds it very fulfilling.

His other great model railroading interest is 1/8th scale live steam. He began building his backyard riding railroad in 2003 and completed the main line in 2010. His railroad, The Ophir Mines Railway, has about 1000' of track and features a tunnel, steel bridge, two stall engine house, structures, signals, a yard and numerous other features. Engineer Eaton is shown with a passenger operating an engine on his railroad.



While traction is his first love, it sure is nice to get outside and go for an actual train ride through the woods whenever he desires. Next is a picture of the ECE 1/8th scale diesel locomotive assembly line.



Many old timers are familiar with ECE products, but we have found that there are many people out there who are newer to HO traction who may have never heard of EATON CUSTOM ENGINEERING. This is because ECE does very little advertising. Word of mouth has always kept them very busy. In the early days, they were known as "Rich Eaton Models", but as their manufacturing capabilities grew, they changed the name to EATON CUSTOM ENGINEERING to reflect the expansion of their business into larger products, such as 1/8th scale locomotives, steel wheels, axles, rail benders and other heavy items for the live steam market. In short, if you can imagine it, they can build it.

Returning to the topic of HO traction, in addition to their standard line of operating trolley poles, contact wire frogs, etc, they also do a pretty big business in custom items (hence the CUSTOM in Eaton CUSTOM Engineering). They often have customers who request variations on their standard trolley poles, i.e. they may need longer poles, shorter poles, shoe-type collector castings, pin-type bases, 10 mm bases, 2-56 bases, wheel-type collectors, smaller yokes, etc. Making HO trolley poles to customer specifications is something ECE enjoys doing.



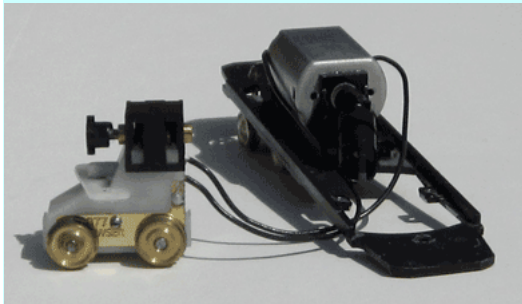
## Bowser Begins Development of New Power Truck!

\*\*\*

Many HO scale traction modelers, who have Pennsylvania Scale Models/Bowser Brill Suburban trolleys have been uncomfortable with the 6' 6" wheelbase trucks commercially available with those cars. These Brill/American Car Co 1906 Semi-Convertible streetcars tended to use shorter wheelbase trucks such as the Brill 27G or Standard O-50, among others.

The Bowser team had discussed making a conventional car and many cars were on the list. Using the same criteria that led to the development and production of the F-line PCC cars, no standard cars made the list. Of course, the 1906 Brill Semi-Convertible was very widespread in the early part of the 20th Century, some lasting into World War II in some areas. Bowser had already been marketing this car in metal for some years since acquiring Pennsylvania Scale Models and Bachmann also had a similar car in injection modeled plastic.

The new power truck and trailing truck are currently under development. Effort is being made to ensure that these trucks will be able to be used with the current Bowser Brill Suburban floors. Taking the current Bowser traction truck design and it's proven rugged design, Bowser's Lee English employed a 3D program, designed the 4' 10" wheelbase truck and by the end of March 2011, a first article had been fabricated using SLA (Stereo Lithography) and sent to Custom Traxx for evaluation. The actual truck being evaluated is shown in the next photograph.



The test power truck with new bolster (white plastic) was mounted on a Brill Suburban floor for the testing. The trailing truck shown is a standard Bowser PCC trailing truck as the design of the trailing truck has not been completed.



When this project is completed, owners of HO scale Chicago Pullmans, New Orleans 800s and other brass streetcars imported many years ago, will now have a reasonably priced rugged replacement drive for these cars. This drive will work for the San Francisco Muni Class B, Class K and Class L HO scale cars made in resin by Transit Classics.

We knew Rich years ago when he operated P.E. Model Supply and started manufacturing some very nice overhead wire frogs that comply with NMRA Recommended Practice 5-2. As is the case with Eric Courtney (Miniatures by Eric), the ECE office/workshop is a separate building exactly ten steps from the main residence. At the end of the day Rich's wife will often quip "How was the commute today, dear?"

The office has three sections, the main office, the production floor and the materials room. The office is the nerve center of the operation. Rich is shown here with a stack of orders waiting to be shipped.



This office is where orders are processed and shipped and where they have their HO demonstration layout.



They use it to showcase their traction products so customers can see everything in operation. It runs through the wall into the production shop then cuts through the wall again back into the office. The demonstration layout also goes into the production room via two tunnels cut through the wall. The layout is always running during business hours and this makes it convenient to test HO traction items without coming into the office. The layout has controls available in each room.

The production room is where all of the machinery and tooling is kept humming. ECE has two vertical milling machines, drill presses, metal bending brakes, soldering and welding equipment, bench grinder, sanders, two band saws, a twelve-ton hydraulic press, a smaller three-ton arbor press, a 48" metal lathe, etc. They perform all electrical wiring in this area. This is where ECE manufactures and packages products, large and small.

The materials room contains stocked racks of steel, aluminum, brass, bearings, bushings, Grade 8 and stainless steel hardware, all at-the-ready for any possible production need.

So if you want something traction-related, and you can't find it, contact ECE. We can vouch for the overhead line frogs shown in our last edition. They are the best. Visitors are always welcome to stop by, see the demonstration layout and go for a live steam train ride (weather permitting)!

## Bowser celebrates 50th Anniversary!

\*\*\*

On May 1, 1961 Bowser was purchased by Lewis and Shirlee English and moved from Redlands, California to their basement in Muncy, PA. Over the years the company grew as they acquired parts of the Penn Line brand as well as Cal Scale, Cary Locomotive Works, Selley Finishing Touches and Pennsylvania Scale Models (PSM). The company also acquired tooling for various Pittman motors & selected Varney items. Finally, in 2004 Stewart Hobbies was acquired.

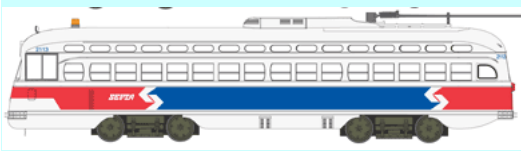
## The Next Streetcar Models from Bowser!

\*\*\*

Bowser's latest five model PCC streetcars arrived in March and one of the cars, the Toronto version, was sold out before the cars arrived. Due to the many quality inputs and data that were received from knowledgeable traction modelers, Bowser will next introduce PCC cars in the liveries of Philadelphia (SEPTA Phase 1), Cleveland (CTS), Detroit Street Railways (DSR), Minneapolis/Saint Paul (TCL) and Toronto (TTC). This Toronto car model, shown next, will be the ex-Cleveland, ex-Louisville series 4675-4699 with the full length roof fan. The advance light will illuminate when the appropriate DCC decoder is installed.



The SEPTA car, shown next, will be the Phase I light gray/off-white scheme first applied to the 110 PCC cars that were rebuilt/rewired with Federal funds in the 1980s.



These cars, totally unappreciated by SEPTA management, have found their way all over the United States with 14 of these so called "worn out" cars just finishing 15 years of additional service in San Francisco. Two of the cars are in San Diego and nine are in Colorado. The model SEPTA car, like the "Gulf Oil" car previously released, will have a working emergency beacon and subway light when the proper DCC decoder is installed. Of course, while the Train Control Systems (TCS) M4T is the decoder recommended for all Bowser cars, the SEPTA cars require the TCS T6XT. TCS developed these decoders specifically for the Bowser PCC cars and they work extremely well with those cars. There will be two road numbers available for each car. Unfortunately, as most of you know, there has been considerable inflation in China recently, resulting in drastically increased wages paid to workers, including those who fabricate Bowser trolleys, so there will be price increases from previous cars.

We are still hopeful that Tsunami sound will be available in these cars.

The other three cars to be released are shown below:



Cleveland, Ohio (CTS)



Detroit, Michigan (DSR)



Minneapolis, Minnesota (TCL)

In 1965, having out grown their basement location the business was moved to Montoursville, Pennsylvania where it continues to thrive today under the careful hands of its current President & CEO, Lee English, son of Lewis and Shirlee English. Bowser continues the great American tradition of multigenerational small business ownership and operation.

Bowser continues to make a varied array of products to include HO Rolling Stock in both Kits and Ready-To-Run (RTR), HO Diesel Locomotives in both Basic and now in a Super Detailed version known as the Executive Series. They also continue to produce detail castings for locomotives under both the Cal Scale & Cary Brands as well as details and scenic castings under the Selley brand.

When Bowser acquired PSM, they acquired three HO scale trolley cars, the 1945 model PCC Streamlined Trolley (125210), the 1906 Brill Semi-convertible Streetcar (125220), and the Indiana Railroad Lightweight Interurban (125230). They also acquired the partial molds of a Lehigh Valley Transit 800 series Jewett Interurban. Bowser completed the mold and introduced it as the Liberty Bell Interurban (125240). On or more of these four cars found their way on almost every HO scale model trolley layout.

In the 1980s, it became obvious that the original PSM drive, state-of-the-art in the 1950s had become out of date, so Lee spearheaded an effort to update or replace it. The result was the 1999 drive, which has become a staple in the HO scale model traction hobby. Custom Traxx collaborated with Proto Power West / A-line's Joe Delia to develop a very low cost upgrade flywheel kit easily retrofitted to the 1999 drive. Some of these features were later incorporated in the drive used for the RTR PCC cars introduced later. Originally available only with 26", 30" and 34" wheels, eventually 28" and 33" wheels were available with the 1999 drive. Nickel silver wheels replaced the brass wheels beginning with the 26" wheels were added and the other brass wheels will be replaced with nickel silver as stocks become exhausted.

In 2009, an all new RTR model of the famous ex-Philadelphia 1050-1063 class San Francisco 'F' Line PCC Trolley. This model featured an injection-molded body with flush window glass with an upgraded 1999 drive train which included a dynamically balanced flywheel and increased motor vibration and noise isolation. All fourteen of the San Francisco cars were modeled. See next photo.



At the current time Bowser is releasing models of the 'Post War' PCC Trolley in the colors of the other cities that ran them. These cars are featuring increasing wheel and truck details and windshield wipers.

Recently, as reported elsewhere in this edition, Bowser started development of a 4' 10" wheelbase power truck using the knowledge and experience gained from the 1999 drive.

Currently Bowser is collaborating with Soundtraxx and Custom Traxx to produce the first Tsunami-Sound-Equipped PCC car and if all continues on schedule, the prototype should be available for examination at this month's East Penn Traction Club meet at the Greater Philadelphia Expo Center. Check it out at the Custom Traxx booth adjacent to the MTS Imports, Inc display.

We have many more new projects in the works for the future and are looking forward to the next fifty years of serving the model railroading hobby.

### To All Trolleyville Readers!

\*\*\*

In the last few months, due to the current state of affairs with traction-related publications, we have received many requests to carry advertisements for traction

---

## Progress on Another Heritage Trolley Project!

\*\*\*

January 7, 2011 was a red-letter day for the volunteers of the San Diego Vintage Trolley Project. For the first time since the restoration project began, car 529, shown below, had power from the pantograph and ready for a test run. There are three ex-San Francisco, ex-Saint Louis PCCs on the property: 529 (ex Muni 1122), 530 (ex Muni 1123) and 531 (ex-Muni 1170). There are also two ex-Philadelphia PCCs on the property, 532 (ex Philadelphia 2186) and 533 (ex-Philadelphia 2785). All cars are slated for operation on the downtown city loop.



From the photo, it even appears that a digital destination sign has been installed on the car!

suppliers. Trolleyville does not intend to become a commercial publication and, therefore, does not intend to carry paid advertisements. Our mission is to notify readers of excellent traction products and suppliers that meet normally acceptable business standards. However, we will always carry articles submitted by professional traction manufacturers that feature their products and services. Such articles, if submitted electronically, will always be published free of charge. As has already been the case, Trolleyville features, and recommends only manufacturers with excellent products, that are backed with quality customer service and support, are easy to contact and as a rule swiftly resolve product-related issues.

To that end, we request any of you who have ideas, hints, modeling tips, prototype information and any traction related ideas that could be interesting to other modelers to please share them with us.

This magazine is predominately HO scale but we are interested in the other scales also. All it takes is for you large scale, O, S and N scale modelers to contact us. We will print your items at no cost to you with only editorial corrections which will be discussed with the author prior to final release.

Help us help you!

THE TROLLEYVILLE STAFF!