The Trolleyville Times

May 2014

We have been notified that the Bowser HO scale New Orleans Streetcars are on t

The Number of Outlets for Modeling News Is Expanding!

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There's some exciting changes out there when it comes to outlets for information pertinent to the traction modeling world. You already know about the Trolleyville Times, and what it brings to the hobby. For over 15 years, the Times has been your one-stop shop for all sorts of news about the traction modeling world and pertinent, related developments in the model railroading world in general. Five years ago, one of the businesses featured on the Trolleyville website, Custom Traxx, started a Facebook page, which has become a valued extension of the Times. But recently, the Trolleyville team realized that it was time for a similar presence dedicated to the strictly to the traction modeling hobby. This is why we would like to announce the opening of the Southern California Traction Club's (SCTC) Facebook page. What does this mean for the Trolleyville Times? The Times will continue to provide content in exactly the same manner it always has. However, by maximizing the relationships between the Times, Custom Traxx, and the SCTC, we now are able to provide coverage in media not previously possible. Specifically, this means while you will see the content on the Trolleyville Times you have come to expect, there will now be extended coverage available exclusively on Facebook. Custom Traxx will focus on developments in the business end of modeling, where SCTC will be the home of news from the traction world. When there is exclusive bonus coverage available, stories in the Trolleyville Times will feature links taking readers to that content. It is our intention by using these three outlets, we can continue to bring you all the news relevant to the traction modeling community, strengthen our relationships with the model railroading world in general, and expand the audience of both. Click here to visit and subscribe to the Custom Traxx Facebook page. Click here to visit and subscribe to the Southern California Traction Club Facebook page.

[Note: If you have difficulty opening any of these Click Here links, your browser likely does not support frames. You can either right-click on the links and select "Open link in new Tab/Window" (Windows) or "Open Link in New Window" (Mac). Or you can copy and paste one of the following URLs into your browser"
https://www.facebook.com/SoCalTractionClub
https://www.facebook.com/customtraxx]

As part of the growing interest in the hobby, subscribers to the SCTC Facebook page can post pictures and videos of their work to share with the traction modeling hobby. The same can be done on the Custom Traxx page with any news or information applicable to traction modeling, the model railroading hobby in general or to technology used in that area. If you've seen what the Times has done before, you will definitely want to stay tuned for what is coming!

The HO SEPTA (Philadelphia) Kawasaki Single-End LRV model, our final look!

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This is a very well done scale model of the 112, originally called Light Rail Transit, Light Rail Vehicles (LRV) that have provided base service on Philadelphia's Routes 10 (Lancaster & Lansdowne Avenues), 11 (Woodland Avenue), 13 (Chester Avenue), 34 (Baltimore Avenue) and 36 (Elmwood Avenue) since 1982. At several times in their service lives, they have seen service on surface route 15 (Girard Avenue/Richmond Street). As we pointed out in our previous article model is

Train Control Systems - An old friend of Trolley Modelers!

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When Bowser Manufacturing Company decided to embark on the HO scale San Francisco F-line project, the decision was made to include the capability for DCC and eventually DCC/Sound. Meanwhile, Train Control Systems was there for us by designing the M4T decoder. This decoder gave us the automatic braking function while operating the interior lights and the brake lights. Since the PCC's of the F-line had rear tail lights, the M4T give the modeler that function also. When Bowser started making models of original PCC cars that did not have rear tail lights, the decoder allowed that feature to be turned off.

Bowser had Custom Traxx record sounds of PCC cars in San Francisco in 2007 but it took several years to acquire a sound decoder company to use those sounds. TCS had made a business decision not to pursue sound at that time so the initial sound decoders were produced by Soundtraxx (Tsunami).

TCS has since incorporated the trolley features in all of their decoders produced since 2012 but you must activate them with a unique factory reset.

To activate the trolley features in the newer post 2012 decoders, you must set **CV8=11**. When CV8 is set equal to 11, the car will act as a single end PCC with brake lights that activate when the motor voltage starts to reduce or the brake function is activated. To activate the tail light feature in addition to the brake light feature set CV61 equal to 137. Remember that CV8 will never read back any other value but the manufacturers ID number, which in the case of TCS is 153.

Because CV8 will never read back 11, it is virtually impossible to tell whether this feature has been activated. To really understand this, we are providing a list of CV values that should be present after CV8 has been set equal to 11:

CV3 should be 5: *This is the minimum acceleration rate required for the automatic stop function.*
CV4 should be 5: *This is the minimum deceleration rate required for the automatic stop function.*
CV34 should be 16: *This remaps the yellow wire, rear headlight, to button three.*
CV49 should be 32: *This makes the headlight non-directional.*
CV50 should be 32: *This makes the rear headlight (tail/brake lights on the PCC car) non-directional*
CV61 should be 9: *This enables the automatic stop/brake function.*
CV64 should be 5: *This establishes a dim value of 5 for the tail lights.*
CV126 should be 5: *This establishes the pre-set brake deceleration rate.*
CV139 should be 128: *This remaps the brake function to button 6.*

Note: When tail lights in addition to brake lights are desired, ***CV61 should be set equal to 137.*** *Rear tail lights are used on all San Francisco F-line era PCC cars and some other rebuilt PCC cars.*

We have been told that setting ***CV8 =12*** *is for double end PCC Cars. Since there have been no RTR double end PCC cars at this time, the only time we have used this feature were on some resin shelled kits that we obtained a few years ago. We have a model of San Francisco Municipal Railway "Torpedo" 1008 that had a TCS KAM4 decoder installed under TCS supervision with operating headlights, tail lights and brake lights. The car yielded the following CV values via DecoderPro:*

CV3 = 5; CV4 = 5; CV33 = 1; CV34 = 2; CV35 = 4
CV36 = 4; CV49 = 0; CV50 = 16; CV51 = 30
CV52 = 14; CV61 = 137; CV64 = 6; CV126 = 0
CV139 =128

Note: Using factory resets CV8=11 and CV8=12 does not change the address of the car. For a complete factory reset including address reset set CV8=8.

Visit the Southern California Traction Club at the Los Angeles Central Library!

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only the second injected-plastic, USA-prototype LRV to be produced in HO scale. These models are factory painted and assembled, and made to a high degree of quality, accuracy and finish.

On the evening of April 17, 2014, IHP announced that they could provide powered models. No mention was made at the time of the original announcement as to any possible lighting, DCC, sound or any other features.

The announcement:

IHP HO SEPTA Kawasaki LRVs - Powered Models Now Available!

IHP is now able to offer our new HO SEPTA Kawasaki LRV models powered with the Bowser drive and our 3D frame for those who would rather get their models ready to run and don't want to do the work themselves.

We will produce powered models on a custom-order basis. MSRP is $350.00 per model plus shipping. You get the models powered with the Bowser drive installed in our 3D-printed frame, and a Bowser working trolley pole mounted on the roof. They will come weighted and wired for 2-rail DC operation.

A deposit of $100 is required on all models. Allow 2-3 weeks for delivery, but this may vary depending on the availability of some parts or our schedule. All custom-powered Kawasaki LRVs are available direct from IHP only.

Contact Mike at IHP if you are interested in powered, ready to run custom Kawasaki LRV models.

Thanks!

MIke Bartel
IHP

This post was followed by one below with similar sentiment to that voiced by Jonathan. Since publication, this thread was removed from that venue, and since we are unsure of the nature of that removal, we will keep the commenter's identity anonymous at this time.

The post was:

Wow that's really high, for that same I can get two Lrv's with everything they need 2 floors, 2 poles and 2 Bowser powered mechanisms..I hope your powered ones have lighted head lights as well..

While we at Trolleyville were wondering what the modeler got for his $350.00, IHP posted the following that did nothing to explain the features of the powered car:

Note that this option does NOT replace the DIY option, so you can still do the powering work on these models yourself if you like. Just letting y'all know that we're here for you if you don't want to do the work yourself.

Thanks!

Mike Bartel
IHP

Until the middle of last month, the model was only available from the manufacturer or the SEPTA Store as an unpowered (souvenir) model. While the Trolleyville team was in agreement that this newest version of the Kawasaki LRV was by far superior to any previous resin-cast versions of this model, it was Custom Traxx Director of Procurement Jonathan Werner who raised an interesting question not about the model itself, but about how it was marketed and priced. “I just couldn't understand where the $350 original price point for a custom-ordered powered car came from,” Mr. Werner said. “I've got to be careful about how I say this because I'm on record in the past of being harshly critical of that particular manufacturers products and business practices in the past, and I don't want this to be perceived as another criticism. I think this is a outstanding model, and I would include one in my own collection, but to me $350 with an up-front deposit of $100 prices it out of the market, especially given the fact I can put a Bowser drive in an unpowered version for far less than that.”

Custom Traxx sent one of their Kawasaki LRVs to Matt Herman of ESU Lok Sound for installation of a sound decoder and lights, including prototypically operating flashing brake lights. We had sent the car for ESU to use as a learning device. ESU decoders are very advanced in the DCC field as they contain over 2700 possible CV's. Effects are possible with ESU decoders not available with most others. One of the noteworthy items is their use of Button 8, Mute. In

Currently, the Los Angeles Center Library is running an exhibit dedicated to spotlighting the history and the importance of the railroads to the growth of Southern California. Titled "No Further West: The Story of Los Angeles Union Station," this exhibit features various model railroading clubs operating vehicles on their displays in the Central Library's Getty Gallery on selected dates. The roster of clubs invited to participate in this exhibit includes the Southern California Traction Club.

The SCTC will be appearing at the Los Angeles Central Library on the weekend of May 17th and 18th. For details, visit this event on the Southern California Traction Club Facebook page.

Orange Empire Railway Museum Unveils their Perris Connection Team!

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The Orange Empire Railway Museum was founded in 1956 along the abandoned AT&SF Riverside - San Diego line. The Museum also received title to the Perris AT&SF depot from the AT&SF in the 1970s. One of the main projects of the museum was to secure the ability to operate to that depot. First the main line was extended to 7th Street which was just three blocks from the Perris Depot. That last three blocks was going to be difficult. First there were two main streets to cross, one being a state highway. Next the AT&SF sold the Perris Valley Line to the Riverside Country Transportation Commission (RCTC) and then the RCTC arranged for Metrolink to operate commuter service from Perris to Los Angeles. Naturally the usual litigation from NIMBYs dragged the project out for years but finally during 2013, the project to get Metrolink to run trains on what is now called the Perris Valley Line began.

For some time the Museum had been working with all these agencies to secure the rights of the museum to run to the Perris Depot and maybe even beyond. The project was called the Perris Connection and a team was formed under the direction of Thomas N. Jacobson, who was the President & CEO of the museum at the time. At the 2014 Annual Members Meeting on March 2, 2014, Mr. Jacobson's Perris Connection team was introduced to the membership by the current President & CEO, Joseph Fuller.

Shown above from right to left are: Philip Palmieri, Paul Dieges and the Team Leader, Thomas Jacobson. They will be spearheading not only the completion of the Perris Connection project but also the aggressive fund raising project to raise the amounts needed to complete the project which is now projected to be in excess of $800,000.

Surprise, Surprise - A resurgence of old time "Girder Rail"!

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On April 16, Edward Havens, a trolley modeler from Tucson, Arizona reported that he had seen some remarkable new rail being used in Kansas City for their new streetcar line. The rail reminded him of the HO scale ORR track currently marketed by Custom Traxx. He posted two photographs on the hotractionmodeling yahoo website. He reported that Kansas City had just received their first shipment of this unusual rail which is the first time we had seen rail designed for installation in paved streets shared with automobile traffic.

an ESU decoder Button 8 must be used to initially turn on the sound. This feature will be welcomed by traction modelers with many sound equipped cars sitting in the barn when they power up their model railroad pikes.

When Matt Herman of ESU Lok Sound heard of the Philadelphia LRV, he decided that this would be a great opportunity to demonstrate all the things that ESU decoders can do for a traction model, so Custom Traxx offered to send him one of their models for that purpose. All we hoped for was a headlight, taillights and some sounds. We were fortunate to get our Kawasaki model back from ESU with their decoder and lights installed on April 26th and we began testing and were we surprised!

The car not only had the headlights that we expected but also the following features:

F0 - Front Headlights / Rear Taillights.
F1 - Bell.
F2 - Resilient Wheel Groan (only when car is moving).
F3 - Front Subway Light.
F4 - Horn.
F5 - Dimmer for Headlight
F6 - Air Conditioner Fan.
F7 - Emergency Beacon (not yet functional).
F8 - Interior Lights - Running Sounds.
F9 - Rear Back-Up Light.
F10 - Door Opening/Closing Sound
F11 - Left Turn Signal.
F12 - Right Turn Signal.
F13 - Rear Brake Lights.

We learned that ESU had cut their installation time short so that the car could be sent back to Custom Traxx for evaluation in time for this edition. Matt wants the car back to repair the emergency beacon light but to show more features of their decoder. From what we saw (and heard), this confirms the decision that Bowser made to switch to ESU for their DCC/Sound decoders. We can not tell you how impressed we were with both the operation and sound of the car.

The car was taken to the test track of the Southern California Traction Club on April 27th and test run. We can only say we were impressed:

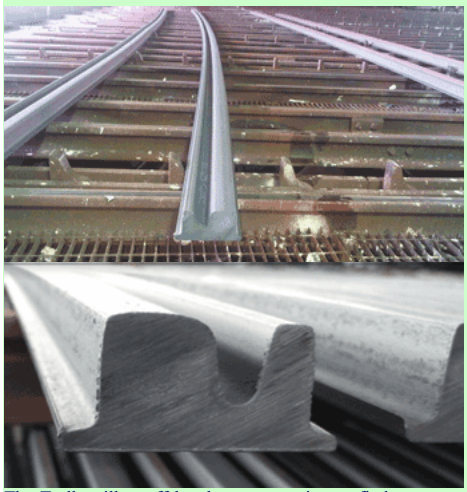

This may might indicate the beginning of the end for older DCC Master Control Systems that only access ten functions. We really like the turn signals and we also feel that there will be more features that will be able to be added to this vehicle. So you might want to look for the system that allows the easiest/fastest access to more than ten functions. Remember that at this time, $250.00 can get you an HO scale Bowser PCC car with lights and sound. We probably would pay $350.00 for this car.

BONUS COVERAGE FOR FACEBOOK SUBSCRIBERS:

Click here to see a video showing exactly what the ESU LokSound V4.0 can do!

Even more surprising is that this rail was rolled in the United States at the ArcelorMittal plant in Steelton, PA. Steel has been made at the Steelton location since 1867. This facility uses a former Bethlehem Steel Plant. After Bethlehem Steel was America's second-largest steel producer and largest shipbuilder until it declared bankruptcy in 2001. The assets were sold to the International Steel Group (ISG), which merged with Mittal Steel in 2005, ending American ownership of the former Bethlehem Steel assets. Mittal later merged with Arcelor to form ArcelorMittal.

Girder rail was designed to eliminate the up and down motion of rail that played havoc with street paving. It most locations, girder rail was stronger than that used in the neighboring steam railways. The 112 pound rail is shown below:



The Trolleyville staff has been attempting to find out more about this very interesting rail so more information may be forthcoming in later issues.