The Trolleyville Times

October 2014

Did you miss getting a New Orleans 900 series streetcar?. The

New York City Trolleys!

(A Little Bit About Them!)

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Edward Havens

August 21, 1948, was a date with oblivion for New York City streetcars. As of this year, it's been 66 years since the last streetcars of Bronx-based lines were operated by Third Avenue Railway System [TARS]. TARS had an extensive street railway network in Manhattan (conduit powered) and the Bronx (trolley wire). The only exception in the Bronx to the August 22, 1948 busing of the final car lines were those that extended a short distance south from Yonkers. In the suburbs, TARS Mount Vernon cars ended in 1950 and Yonkers cars in 1952. Manhattan cars were replaced in 1946 and 1947 by diesel buses of the TARS subsidiary Surface Transportation System. The last four TARS trolley lines in the Bronx were Boston Road, signed "B," Southern Boulevard, signed "S," Williamsbridge, signed "V," and Tremont Avenue, signed "T."

Only a few TARS cars were spared. Here's a double-ender built in TARS shops as part of the 626-685 series and in the group that wound up in both Vienna, Austria, and Bombay, India, after World War II. It was purchased by Shore Line Trolley Museum, East Haven, Connecticut, and was returned from Vienna. Cars numbered 646 and up in the number sequence were equipped with trolley poles for the Bronx. The others were conduit-equipped cars for the 59th Street line in Manhattan:

TARS also built Peter Witt style cars known as Huffliners that wound up in Sao Paolo, Brazil. They were numbered 551 to 625. Here's an HO scale model of a Huffliner, so named after TARS President Slaughter W. Huff:

[Yes...we are aware that the wrong trucks are on this car!]

Here is a Huffliner in Sao Paulo, Brazil, where trolley poles were added.

Another view of a former Huffliner in Sao Paulo:

The TARS cars lasted until 1952 in Yonkers because of the difficulties of obtaining a bus franchise:

National Capital Trolley Museum in Maryland has TARS No. 678. The next two photos are of that car:

During the 1930s and 1940s, the New York City municipal administration, led by Mayor LaGuardia himself, was hostile to "old fashioned" streetcars and wanted a free wheeling, rubber tired surface transit system. Without money for PCCs, TARS responded by reconditioning secondhand cars from abandoned U.S. traction properties and also by building cars in its own shops. No. 685, outshopped in 1939, possibly was the last conventional steel streetcar built in the United States in the 20th century. In case you wondered, the sloping sheathing added to the dashes on the car ends by TARS were intended to prevent youngsters from hitching free rides on the rear end of the cars by standing on the end sills. This gave the cars a "buck-toothed" look which is somewhat in tune with today's light rail vehicle industrial design.

White River Productions Acquires Railroad Model Craftsman and Railfan & Railroad magazines from Carstens Publications

According to a news release issued last month, White River Productions has acquired Railroad Model Craftsman and Railfan & Railroad magazines, effective September 1, 2014. The asset purchase agreement between Carstens Publications and White River Productions was completed Thursday, August 28, 2014. Carstens Publications had previously announced that they closed their doors permanently on Friday, August 22, 2014.

Carstens Publications' final issues of the two titles were the June 2014 issues, and future issues will be produced by White River Productions. Staff assignments for the two publications have not yet been determined. Included in the agreement is the Books Division of Carstens Publications, which will continue under White River Productions. Not included is Flying Models magazine.

"We are excited to welcome these two Carstens titles to our family of White River Productions publications," said Kevin EuDaly, president of White River Productions. "These magazines are an important part of railroad publications and White River Productions looks forward to continuing their legacies."

Subscribers will be pleased to know existing subscriptions are to be honored and fulfilled by the new ownership. Fulfillment will be based on the number of remaining issues in existing subscriptions. Due to the need to get the magazines' cover dates current, a combined issue scenario will likely be employed, but the number of issues owed to each subscriber will be adjusted accordingly.

"If you have six issues left on your subscription, you will receive six issues," EuDaly said.

A Traction Club Starts to Adapt to the Future!

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There is not a lot of good news in the model railroad hobby lately and we hate to be reporting these types of events. But since we believe that those who ignore history are bound to repeat it, we feel that it should be addressed along with possible remedies. In this issue, we reported the closing of Carstens Publications. Last issue we discussed was the closing of Franciscan Hobbies (San Francisco).

On the plus side, there are so many great models being produced in the hobby and they continue to get better. We just saw a video from Broadway Limited showing an HO scale model of a Pennsylvania H10 2-8-0 pulling what looks like five or six bricks. If these bricks were not made of styrofoam, this is an interesting engine.

Regardless of your feelings about manufacturing in China, there are so few of us now that if it were not for China, there would be few if any ready-to-run models at all and those that would be around would be very expensive.

The Board of Directors of the Southern California Traction Club (SCTC) in concert with one of the original founders found itself earlier this year in the predicament of not having enough members show up for set-ups and tear-downs. So they have shelved their large DC layout that they displayed for years until further notice and at the end of this month they will debut their DCC operated city streetcar layout. This layout has a visible subway train under one of the modules which operates New York City and Philadelphia subway-elevated equipment. The club will also display a 26 square foot Light Rail Vehicle (LRV) layout dedicated to the most modern electric transit equipment available.

The Board had noted that as of mid-summer, the club had not acquired a new member for some time. So it was time to do things differently. One member noted that the definition of insanity is to *"...do the same thing over and over again and expect a different result..."*

The club noted the continuing hobby shop closings and wondered what a potential traction modeler would do if interested and there was no hobby shop or club available for miles. At a gathering of club members, one member made a comment about how much fun it was when he had operated his first electric train. He remembered how at one time, he was in the hospital for some long forgotten reason but he vividly remembered someone bringing a model train to the hospital and allowing all the kids to take turns running it. All the train would do then is go forward and backward and vary the speed. Fast forward over half a century later and trains now have all the increased functionality of DCC. So when was the last time you saw any hobby shop or club allow the kids to try running a train under DCC. They all are computer savvy and would catch on in seconds. On the other hand, we know of a hobby shop that has two trains in the windows that are not operated because the "...noise annoys the employees..." So they sit there gathering dust and wasting space instead of attracting customers.

It was not long before the club decided to embrace DCC and to find a way to let the public enjoy today's model trains. This was going to be harder with the closing of many hobby shops and the reduction in the number of model trains shows nationwide and especially in the Southern California area. So after some consideration, the SCTC decided on a three-prong program:

The first would be to try and establish communications with potential modelers who had no access to a club or hobby shop.

The second would be to encourage the development and production of a ready-to-run light rail vehicle similar to the F-line PCC project that Bowser Manufacturing started in 2007. Those cars are on the streets today and are well known by the public.

The third step would be to develop a way to demonstrate to the public the fun of running model streetcars.

So the club developed an *Emember* category for modelers who could not attend sessions at the clubhouse due to geography or physical limitations. These members get access to the club newsletter along with members contact data to discuss their traction interests including building a small layout, painting, lettering, etc. *Emembers* are not voting memberships but are invited to share in the club meetings and appearances when and if they happen to be in the vicinity. The club has added *Emembers* since this category of membership was added in August.

The club is aiming it's message to the new generation of electric transit users in the local community, not existing model railroaders. Existing modelers are already modeling the equipment, locomotive and scenery that they have chosen. Club officers have decided to try and find those potential modelers out there. So club members started talked to people who may have similar interests. One of then got on an Expo Line (Los Angeles area) train and started talking to the operator while he changed ends at the Culver City Station. He revealed that he had a huge G-scale train layout in his back yard, and there were videos of the layout on You Tube, and that his father was one of the original operators on the Blue Line when it opened on 1990. Within days, the club had a new member. This new member's train passes within one block of the SCTC clubhouse twice each shift.

Today in the car-dominated Los Angeles area, there are three light rail lines stretching from Long Beach to Pasadena and both the young and the old are being treated to really great fares. Until September 15th, a senior citizen could ride all day for less than $2.00. School-age riders also get a break. Some of these riders could be tomorrow's model railroaders, if they are approached with some respect. We have all heard the stories about young people being treated badly when they visit local model railroad clubs and hobby shops. The Southern California Traction Club's newest member has experienced some of this personally and related his experiences to the club. Despite the fact that the only growth area in railroading right now is urban transit and commuter transit, the current group of model railroad manufacturers are so busy trying to make steam locomotives, first generation diesels and pre-Amtrak passenger cars for one group of people (who are *shrinking* in numbers). At the same time they are totally ignoring another group of people (who are ***growing*** in numbers) that are interested in the "today" equipment (including all those light rail vehicles that have been servicing our urban areas since 1981). So it is hard to get their attention. They may run out of money doing what they are doing serving and fighting over their diminishing market. By then it will be too late.

During an informal conversation with a former senior executive, he stated that he felt that many of those who are talking about getting new blood into the hobby really do **not** care about it. They have the models they want and the layouts that they want and the clubs that they want. They are pretty much satisfied with the way things are.....this is why things are the way they are! He went on to say that new blood in the hobby would most likely bring the dreaded word, "change", which many current hobbyists despise. Look at the resistance to DCC that existed in the hobby until sound evolved. We hope that these feelings are not as universal as he believes. If you agree with this, suggest that you contact the SCTC and maybe become an Emember. I am sure that we will hear from those of you who disagree.

In pursuit of the club's second objective, the club will continue to try and get some modern traction models made but they anticipate an uphill fight. Based on the Bowser PCC and New Orleans car sales, they feel that an LRV would be a winner. We anticipate that there may have to be a new distribution system required as the now disappearing hobby shop will no longer be the center of that system. The club is gathering data on the many light rail vehicles now used in the United States starting with San Diego's fleet of Siemens vehicles along with those made by other manufacturers such as Nippon-Sharyo, Bombardier and Breda to find one that has the most marketability nationwide. Meanwhile the club will be stressing the newer items that they have available in their displays. Such will include models of Philadelphia's Kawasaki LRV and PCC-II cars, San Diego Siemens LRVs, San Francisco and Boston's Boeing LRVs and Toronto's CLRVs. If we can ever get current manufacturers to produce some of the other vehicles, we will run them too!

The club was founded by six traction lovers in 1995. They began meeting in another now defunct hobby shop called All Aboard Model Railroad Emporium in Torrance, CA and since that time more than one or two members have made significant contributions to the HO scale traction hobby. These achievements include participation in the design of the Bowser PCC and New Orleans 800/900 series streetcars; evaluating all upgrades to the 1999 Bowser traction drive; recording sounds for both the Bowser PCC and New Orleans 800/900 series streetcars; participation in the design of the first DCC decoder designed for a PCC streetcar, The Train Control Systems M4T; assisting in the design with Soundtraxx of the first sound decoder designed for a streetcar and providing data to Bachmann and Con-Cor concerning their trolley projects. All this came from the twenty-three different members that have participated in the club over the years. These members are:

Byron Brainard, Laguna Beach, CA (1998 to present);
Friedrich Burg, Lawndale, CA, Founder (1995 to 1999);
Bret Crane, Apple Valley, CA, Founder (1995);
Pete DeBeers, Pasadena, CA (2002 to present);
Michael DeGhetto, West Los Angeles, CA (1997 to 2003);
Dave Garcia, Downey, CA (1997 to present);
Fred Gurzeler, West Los Angeles, CA (2003 to present);
Charles Hepperle, Torrance, CA (1995 to 2003);
Bob Hill, Hawthorne, CA, Founder (1995 to 2003);
George Huckaby, West Los Angeles, CA, Founder (1995 to present);
Fred Hutchins, Venice, CA, Founder (1995 to 1998);
George Jones, Culver City, CA (1997 to present);
Bill Kift, Long Beach, CA, Founder (1995 to 2003);
Dave Lyman, Castaic, CA (2009 to present);
Bob Maitino, Saugus, CA (2010 to 2012);
Toshisuke Matsumoto, Tokyo, Japan (Life Member);
John McWhirter , Ladera Heights, CA (2005 to present);
Jan Podganski, Hawthorne, CA (1997 to 2001 and 2006 to 2008);
Akihisa Saitoh, Los Angeles, CA & Kyoto, Japan (1998 to present);
Joe Shink, Valencia, CA (2004 to 2005);
Dick & AJ Staley, Diamond Bar, CA (2012 to present);
Warren Stockton, Los Angeles, CA (2014)

The club recognizes that they must have new blood to survive. The modules seem to get heavier every year. So the club is looking in different areas. Any new members acquired might be interested in the history of electric railway transit as soon as they can see models of the items with which they are comfortable. That is how most of us got started.

In pursuit of the club's final objective, they have reserved a portion of their display layout where the public will be invited to operate a DCC-controlled streetcar. They will be told the rules of the line and given opportunity to become an "Honorary Operator". At press time, a certificate was planned to be given to successful graduates of the program. The club will be demonstrating at shows in Rancho Palos Verdes (Los Angeles area) on October 24-25, 2014, Anaheim (Orange County) on January 10-11, 2015 and Del Mar (San Diego area) on February 14-15, 2015. They will be letting the Times know how this works out.

The Real Story of the Bowser Ready-To Run PCC Trolley

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The Bowser Ready-to-Run PCC evolved when Lee English realized that the ready-to-run phase in the HO model-railroading hobby would eventually be a dominant force. Not being a trolley modeler himself, Lee was trying to find a trolley-knowledgeable individual with which he could have sufficient synergy to develop that type of partnership to decide the next step. George Huckaby of Custom Traxx initially met Lee English, Bowser Manufacturing CEO in May 1997 just prior to the East Penn Traction Club meet. Richard Bale, then the editor and publisher of Rail Line News, arranged this meeting. Custom Traxx had been modifying the Bowser metal-bodied PCC into models of the F-line PCC cars obtained from Philadelphia and they were selling most of them through Franciscan Hobbies. Franciscan Hobbies was a well-known, long established hobby dealer in San Francisco that unfortunately closed their doors on January 31, 2014. Richard thought it was time for Custom Traxx to become a Bowser dealer since they were a legitimate decal manufacturer.

During this initial meeting, which was attended by both George and his wife Anne, Lee revealed that he had been notified that the oval shaped magnet (See Exhibit A below) used in the power truck of the long manufactured trolley mechanism was no longer going to be available. He was trying to mount a can motor into the same mechanism. George told him that he thought that a vertical motor without a flywheel would not improve performance and that Lee should think about a new mechanism with a flywheel and eight-wheel pickup. Lee stated that he felt that since it was going to cost about $30,000 to change the motor, it just might be prudent to consider alternatives.

Exhibit A – Bowser 1966 Traction Mechanism with 30” wheels.

By the National Train Show in Saint Paul, Minnesota in 1999, Lee had developed the prototype new trolley mechanism and it was called the “1999 mechanism” to distinguish it from the earlier original mechanism now dubbed the “1966 mechanism”. One of the first drives is shown in Exhibit B below:

Exhibit B – Bowser 1999 Traction Mechanism with 30” wheels on Brill Suburban Floor.

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Two prototype power trucks were given to George Huckaby for testing. One was placed into a resin-shelled model of a Philadelphia 1981 Kawasaki 9000-9111 series LRV and that truck is still on that car today running strong. The only thing that has been changed is the wheels, nickel silver being substituted for the original brass wheels.

The incorporation of a flywheel into the baseline Bowser traction mechanism had been temporarily suspended due to the inability to get an economical dual-shafted motor but incorporation of a flywheel into the traction mechanisms was almost immediately available using using Stewart components. One of the first attempts is shown below in Exhibit C.

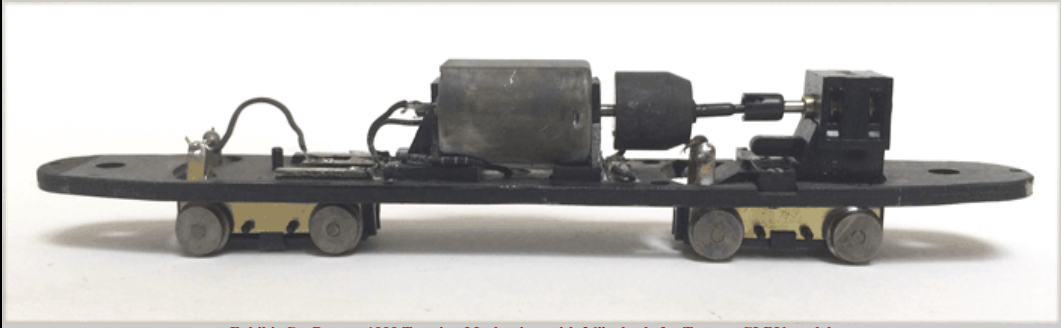

Exhibit C – Bowser 1999 Traction Mechanism with 26” wheels for Toronto CLRV model.

The mechanism shown above was mounted on a floor designed for use with a Miniatures by Eric shell of the Toronto CLRV:Eventually, a flywheel retrofit kit was developed with collaboration with Joe Delia of A-Line/Proto Power West as part #20-040 and was highly recommended for use with the Bowser trolley mechanisms .

The next few years were spent promoting the new 1999 mechanism, especially for the scratch builders and powering resin shelled models. The mechanisms were molded, manufactured and assembled at Bowser’s Montoursville, PA facility. Custom Traxx, in concert with Bowser, developed several pewter cast side frames for the new mechanism including several for HO scale Pacific Electric interurbans. Trolley mechanisms were eventually made available with 26”, 28”, 30”, 33” and 34” wheels. NorthWest Short Line offered 36” wheels for the same mechanism.

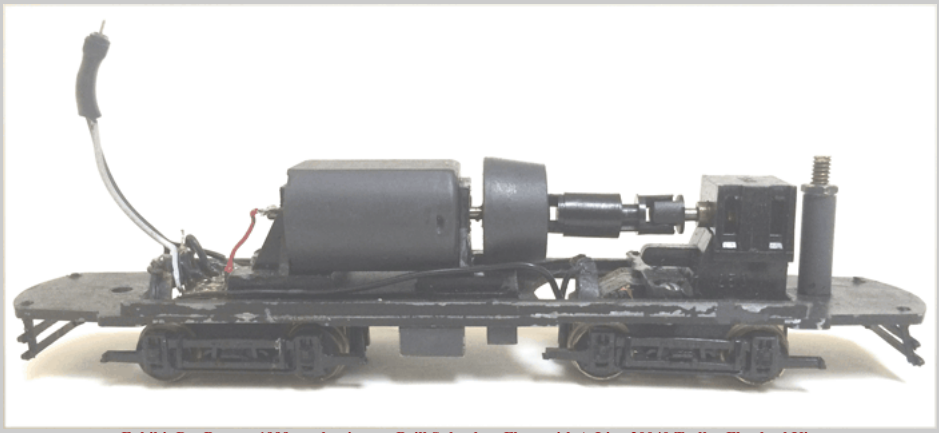

Exhibit D – Bowser 1999 mechanism on Brill Suburban Floor with A-Line 20040 Trolley Flywheel Kit.

A few years later during one of the biennial Custom Traxx trips to Bowser, Lee English told George that he feared that the unpainted trolley kits had come to the “end of the line”. Lee wanted to consider making a ready-to-run trolley but needed some input as to what car to make. George started working with Lee on this concept but it would be some time before the final choice would be made. Lee felt that the car would have to be available in up to ten road names and be as prototypically correct as possible.

Although Lee was not knowledgeable in trolleys and their modelers, he strongly believed that a minimum of ten road names had to be available for any model built. This limited our choices to a Birney Safety Car, the air-electric PCC or the all-electric PCC. The Birney required a brand new power truck while the PCC cars could use the 1999 trolley mechanism with 26” wheels, which by this time (circa 2007) was a proven product. So after a long evaluation, the all-electric PCC cars

were chosen as the first project. The ex-Philadelphia F-line cars were chosen as there were fourteen almost identical cars in different road names including cities such as Baltimore, Boston, Brooklyn, Chicago, Cincinnati, Kansas City, Los Angeles, Louisville, Newark, Philadelphia and San Francisco. The drive was already made and tested and Custom Traxx, due to their involvement in making decals had access to not only the paint schemes but also the plans and specifications of the cars. The older metal-bodied PCC kit that Bowser and its predecessor Pennsylvania Scale Models has marketed for years was essentially a model of 12 of the 14 Philadelphia PCC cars then running in San Francisco's F-line. Lee also stated that he wanted the cars to be DCC ready and eventually have sound.

So in May 2007, George Huckaby prepared a 21-page PowerPoint presentation, titled "A Forward Step" and presented it to Lee English over breakfast in the Hampton Inn in downtown Montoursville, PA. About page 15, Lee stopped George and said, "…Let's do it…" The presentation was never completed and the partnership was officially formed.
With the joint venture underway, Custom Traxx was responsible for the paint schemes; car plans, getting a DCC decoder and recording sounds for the cars. Two Southern California Traction Club members using cars 1059 and 1063 in San Francisco recorded sounds within three months. George Huckaby started working with Train Control Systems for a decoder that would give the realistic PCC brake lights, an automatic passenger stop and would control extra lights such as the SEPTA "Gumball", the SEPTA Subway Light and the Toronto "Next Car" Light in addition to the interior lights.

The F line was a great hit with the tourists who were tired of long waits to get to Fisherman's Wharf on the Powell Street Cable cars. It had become an even greater hit with the local public than expected. The estimated 7 to 9 cars for the line quickly became 20 to 24. The same local residents who clamored to get the old "green" PCCs off the streets in the late 1970s were streaming to the F-line in huge numbers, preferring it to the new subway, which they also wanted so badly. Of course the problems with the Boeing LRVs and the signal system inside the subway did not help either. The F-line exacerbated a trend for more "historic" streetcar lines in other cities.

On the other hand, many railfans denounced it, citing all sorts of "prototypical" reasons. We were on hand the first day of operation in September 1995, listening to all of this aboard Muni car 1040. We listened while two obnoxious locals were berating a Muni official on the car. It got so bad that this writer finally put them in their "place" and they left the car. As recently as June 2014, almost 19 years later, one of the more famous yahoo traction groups had a conversation going about San Francisco car 1053. The conversation and the resultant comments by the moderator were ridiculous. Perhaps they were confused since the number 1053 was actually a Brooklyn air-electric PCC car. If there is to be any future in the traction hobby, it will have to come from the general public not old railfans wishing it were still 1950. The effect that the F-line has had on the preservation of and the interest in heritage streetcars in the United States in unquestionable. To deny or attack it that is just plain idiotic and we will have no part of it. Thank you, Muni and the local San Franciscans that made it possible. And better yet, the E line may be coming which will require double end cars and the pole changing ritual.

The first four F line cars were due during 2009 with models of Muni 1052 (Los Angeles Railway), Muni 1055 (Philadelphia Transportation Company - 1955), Muni 1061 (Pacific Electric) and Muni 1063 (Baltimore). Although many of the drive parts were still made in Pennsylvania, the manufacturer in China developed a dynamically balanced motor-flywheel combination for the cars. One of the first complete PCC drives with circuit board is shown in Exhibit E below:

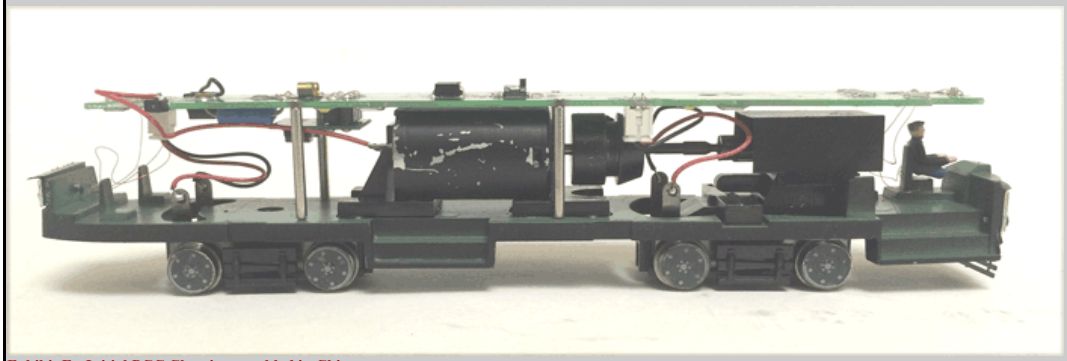

Exhibit E - Initial PCC Chassis assembled in China.

John Forsythe of Train Control Systems, Blooming Glen, PA jumped right on this and created the M4T, a plug in decoder, designed specifically for the Bowser Single-End PCC. All F line models were equipped with an NMRA-compliant eight-pin plug. There would be a jumper plug placed on the circuit board within the car that permitted straight DC operation. Removing the plug and replacing it with a decoder yielded the user full DCC operation. John has since made the trolley features available in every one of his decoders.

Getting a sound decoder was more of a problem. Our first run was projected at less than 2000 pieces but many of the companies at that time wanted quantities much larger. After initial stubbornness, we eventually got Soundtraxx (Tsunami) to use the sounds previously recorded by the SCTC and produce sound for the PCC car. Unfortunately by the time they were ready, all of the San Francisco F line PCC Cars had already been produced.

One of the issues surrounding the production of models of the F-line cars were the actual PCC cars represented by the San Francisco Cars. Some companies or paint schemes, which were now represented by the F-line all-electric PCC cars, never had all-electric PCC cars, such as 1052 (Los Angeles Railway), 1053 (New York City Transportation Authority), 1054 (Philadelphia Rapid Transit), 1061 (Pacific Electric) and 1063 (Baltimore). One car, 1062 (Louisville) never operated PCC cars in that city although five PCC cars did make it to Louisville, they were hidden behind the barn before they were sold to Cleveland. We were confident that the addition of a front trolley pole would enable railfans and the public to distinguish the San Francisco cars from the cars that they represented. The general public seemed to get this. But some of the railfans/trolley fans seem to never understand this. These railfans continuously dwell on other differences such as the "shade" of this color versus the actual color of the cars in their various locations to the point that they would actually spoil the enjoyment of others. To this day, we have to tell some of those people to "Get a life!"

The decision to follow the F-line PCC cars with cars of other cities was a no-brainer, especially after all the howls from the so-called traction fans. Several hobby shops and railfans would order these cars, clearly advertised and marked on the boxes as San Francisco F line PCC cars and then get upset because the cars had San Francisco destination signs or two trolley poles. Since the F line cars were designed for the general public, they had plastic trolley poles. The cars of other cities, now dubbed the "single pole" cars, would have working trolley poles.

The cities where the model PCC cars had the greatest demand were Philadelphia, Los Angeles' Pacific Electric Car 1061, Toronto and Boston. Boston was a surprise since almost all their PCC cars were built by Pullman-Standard and look

different from the Saint Louis Car Company built cars. Boston only had 25 all-electric PCC cars anyway.

Process improvement was always a factor. At first, the team wanted an overhead/track power switch but it had to be initially placed inside the car requiring the user to remove the shell to access it. This will be changed with the next run of PCC cars due in late 2014. The power switch will now be under the floor, easily accessible. This feature was started with the New Orleans 900 series streetcars introduced to the public in June 2014. Another feature unique to Bowser trolleys is when the power switch is changed to overhead power, all eight wheels pick up power from the track. In all other recently released HO scale trolley cars, only half of the wheels pick up track power when running under live overhead wire. When Alan Houtz wrote about the F line cars in Model Railroad News, despite a glowing review, he noted the scant truck detail, so the next run of PCC cars had simulated super resilient wheels, B-2 truck detail and windshield wipers as shown in Exhibit F.

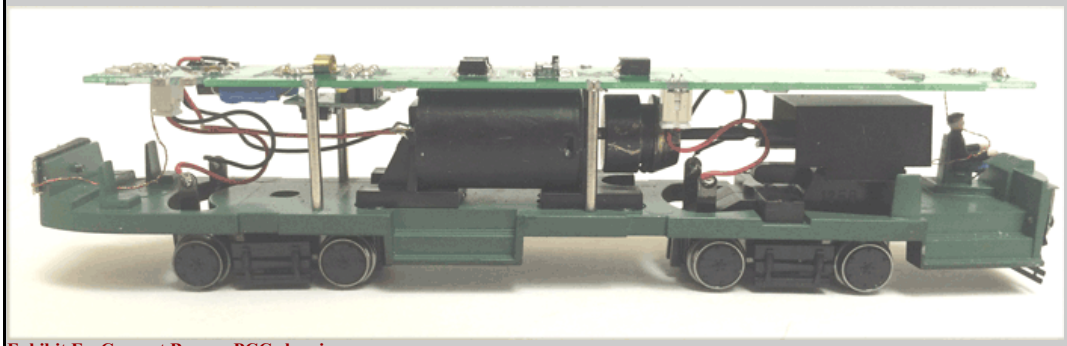

Exhibit F – Current Bowser PCC chassis.

The PCC car project was successful enough to allow the New Orleans 900 series streetcar project to move ahead. This would require a new 4'10" wheelbase power truck and it would use as many components from the PCC power truck as possible. Test power and trailing trucks were made and sent to the Custom Traxx facilities for testing. Custom Traxx placed the test units in a Bowser Brill Suburban and Bachmann Brill and literally ran the pants off them. With very little problems discovered, the go-ahead was made. The production New Orleans 900 streetcars were finally made available to the modeling public in June 2014 and is shown in Exhibit G:

Exhibit G – New Orleans 900 Chassis with 4'10" wheel base trucks and ESU LokSound.

If the general public continues to support the Bowser trolley projects, more are coming. The Bowser Custom Traxx team welcomes intelligent suggestions for and discussions concerning possible future products. Although the market can change, we are aware of the past and current markets and do not wish to argue with those who have no idea of what the market is.

The Bowser Custom Traxx team can feel the model railroad hobby moving to some middle ground in the "scale" vs. "tinplate" controversy that used to sharply divide modelers. This seems to apply to most restorations and representations for financial, cosmetic and sometime legal reasons. Nothing that is represented turns out exactly as the historical records but they do get the "flavor" of the past. The F-line cars in San Francisco; the Canal Street streetcars in New Orleans; the PCC-IIs in Philadelphia, and even Pacific Electric Car 717 restored at the Orange Empire Railway Museum, all attempted to "represent", not exactly recreate the past and the general public give them a high degree of acceptance and in most cases loves them and it is about time that the aficionados let everyone else enjoy them. The sales of the Bowser trolleys seem to support this idea. The June 2014 released HO scale New Orleans 900 series trolley sold out practically within weeks of introduction.

Brookville Equipment Corporation to Perform End of Life Rebuild of 16 PCC Streetcars for San Francisco!

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On September 24, it was announced that Brookville Equipment Corporation and the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) had come to an agreement for the rebuild of 16 PCC cars. These cars include the 13 1947-1948 era ex-Philadelphia 1050-1063 series cars (minus 1054 which was wrecked) and the 1948 era original San Francisco double end PCC cars 1007, 1010 and 1015. All of these cars had been upgraded for service on the F-line prior to its opening in 1995. The rebuild will begin almost immediately at the Brookville, Pa facility and includes the installation of new propulsion systems, with the exception of traction motors and foot pedal assemblies, both of which will be rebuilt. The truck sets will be rebuilt and upgraded to include a new Brookville designed disc brake system.

Remember folks, these are the same streetcars that the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) management stated in 1992 that were just too "...worn out..." to continue operating on Routes 15 (Girard Avenue), 23 (Germantown Avenue) and 56 (Erie Avenue) in the City of Brotherly Love when they suddenly yanked them off of the streets during the summer of that same year. Here they are over 20 years later, still hauling happy passengers.

I guess that is why when the question is asked when do you know an official is lying, the answer is that "...his/her lips are moving..."!

Next Month's Issue:
Eric Sitiko shows how to convert the 21-pin plug in Bowser streetcars to use with 8-pin plug decoders!

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