The Trolleyville Times

December 2014

Bowser will be releasing another run of New Orleans cars. If you missed out last time, suggest you reserve

Another Streetcar Coming from Bowser!

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The Times learned late last month that Bowser Manufacturing has committed resources for the development and production of another HO scale model streetcar. This streetcar will be models of the 27 Bicentennial Cars operated by the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) in Philadelphia in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

SEPTA car 2251, one of three decorated for Pennsylvania.

In 1954, the Philadelphia Transportation Company (PTC) was preparing to install PCC cars on the five subway Surface Routes, replacing the modernized 1923-26 Brill Peter Witt streetcars. They purchased 90 second-hand PCC cars. forty of these came from Kansas City. In the mid 1970s, twenty-seven of these cars, normally seen on Route 50 which passed Independence Hall, were painted in a very colorful Bicentennial paint scheme. Two cars were decorated to represent each of twelve of the thirteen original colonies but three were decorated for Pennsylvania. These cars were unique in their own right, being the only post-war all-electric PCC cars built without standee windows.

For comparison, below left is a typical post-war all electric PCC, 100" wide. In the center is the Kansas City all-electric PCC also 100" wide and at the right is a Los Angeles post-war all-electric PCC, 108" wide.

Kansas City Public Service (KCPS) had purchased 24 air-electric PCC cars in 1941. These cars were very similar to Philadelphia's 1940 cars, series 2501-2580. They entered service on July 20, 1941 on the 50-TROOST line. KCPS had plans for 371 cars but World War II disrupted those plans. The next order of PCC cars would not be made until April 1945 with the cars arriving during the spring and summer of 1946 but not without a great deal of discussion. The appearance of these 75 post-war cars, series 725-799, would be seriously altered due to the preferences of one man, Powell Groner, KCPS President. He stated that he would have "none of those little apertures" on his cars, referring negatively to the standee windows that normally distinguished the post-war all-electric PCC car. In December 1946, KCPS would make their final order of PCC cars. These 85 cars would arrive in December 1947 and were numbered 501-585. The unique Kansas City PCC body was never duplicated anywhere else. Some trolley fans consider them to be the most pleasing PCC design built.

These 160 cars were a durable lot, some of them running in three cities before retirement. In addition to the 40 cars sold to Philadelphia in 1954, 30 cars were sold to Toronto in 1957. 10 cars were sold to Tampico, Mexico also in 1957. 79 cars were scrapped with the control, trucks and motors sold to Brussels, Belgium in 1956 for use in constructing their 7081-7155 series of cars. The bodies were scrapped. The one remaining car, 795, was placed in display in Swope Park and you can guess what happened to it. In 1973, eleven of the Toronto cars were sent to San Francisco to help with increased running times required due to the building of the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) system. Eleven cars also went to Philadelphia to partially replace cars lost in the 1975 Woodland Car Barn Fire. One car came complete circle, beginning life in Kansas City in 1947 as 551, then to Toronto ten years later as 4752 and finally in San Francisco as 1190. The car returned to Kansas city a few years ago and is now on display concurrent with the building of their new streetcar line.

Bowser plans to produce at least one Bicentennial car in each of the thirteen colonies for collectors. They should be available in DCC Ready, DCC/Sound and souvenir versions. So look for cars marked Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, South Carolina, Pennsylvania (shown above), Rhode Island and Virginia. Traditional paint schemes for Kansas City, Philadelphia, San Francisco and Toronto may also be produced.

Philadelphia (PTC)

San Francisco (SFMRy)

Toronto (TTC)

Custom Traxx is serving as Project Consultant for this car. They told us that the cars are expected to use the proven PCC chassis now produced since 2009 and will have ESU Lok-Sound DCC decoders although other after market decoders, including sound decoders may also be available.

San Francisco Proceeds with Rehab!

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If has been reported by Market Street Railway that Muni is proceeding with their new $34.5 million dollar contract with Brookville Equipment Company for the rebuild of thirteen of the original ex-Philadelphia 1947/48 PCCs and three of the 1948 Muni "Torpedoes" that opened the line in 1995. These cars have had nineteen years of heavy use well beyond their anticipated service levels. The first four cars to leave for the Pennsylvania facility will be 1056 (Kansas City), 1051 (San Francisco 1960s) and 1060 (Philadelphia 1938) along with "Torpedo" 1015 (Illinois Terminal).

Exhibit 1A - Muni 1056 when PTC 2113 in 1948.

Exhibit 1B - Muni 1056 in 1995.

Exhibit 2A - Muni 1051 when PTC 2123 in 1948.

Exhibit 2B - Muni 1051 in 2011.

Exhibit 3A - Muni 1060 when PTC 2715 in mid-1950s.

Exhibit 3B - Muni 1060 in 1995 when representing New Jersey Public Service Coordinated Transport.

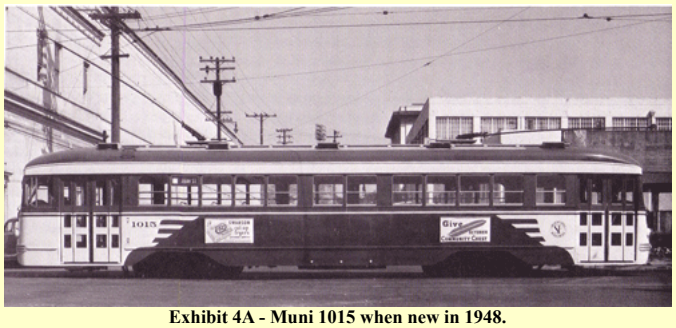

Exhibit 4A - Muni 1015 when new in 1948.

Exhibit 4B - Muni 1015 in 1995 when representing Illinois Terminal.

1056 has been out of service for some time due to a cracked bolster. 1015 will be the pilot car for conversion of the remaining Torpedoes to match the four (1006, 1008, 1009 and 1011) that Brookville earlier overhauled with Westinghouse type control equipment to replace the General Electric control equipment that was original equipment on the cars. All of the ex-Philadelphia cars are equipped with Westinghouse control equipment and Muni has decided to standardize on Westinghouse equipment for the PCC fleet to the greatest extent possible/practical.

All thirteen ex-Philadelphia cars are schedule to receive reliable, proven traditional electromechanical door motor assemblies instead of the computer-driven system proven to be unreliable. Those units are being replaced in other cars. It is also expected that the cars will return in the same schemes that they currently have except for maybe car 1050. In 1995, car 1050 was the only car available in the Muni 1950's "Wings" scheme. Since then cars 162, 1006, 108 and 1040 are in that scheme so it may be time to consider Pittsburgh and Saint Louis for inclusion since they are not represented currently and had considerable fleets of PCC cars. Also, some of the colors may find their way to be closer to the prototype during the renovation.

Watch also for multiple onboard cameras, hopefully as unobtrusive as possible to capture all the favorable and unfavorable activity that occurs on the cars. LED lighting may be used on the cars also. Regardless, everything will be done to recreate the original feel of a PCC car despite the modernization. Watch for the first delivery in October 2016 and subsequent deliveries every 1.5 months until late 2018. Never forget that these are among the very 110 cars that 22 years ago SEPTA's mendacious anti-streetcar management told the citizens of Philadelphia that they were just too old and worn out.

Delaware County Trolleys Roll On!

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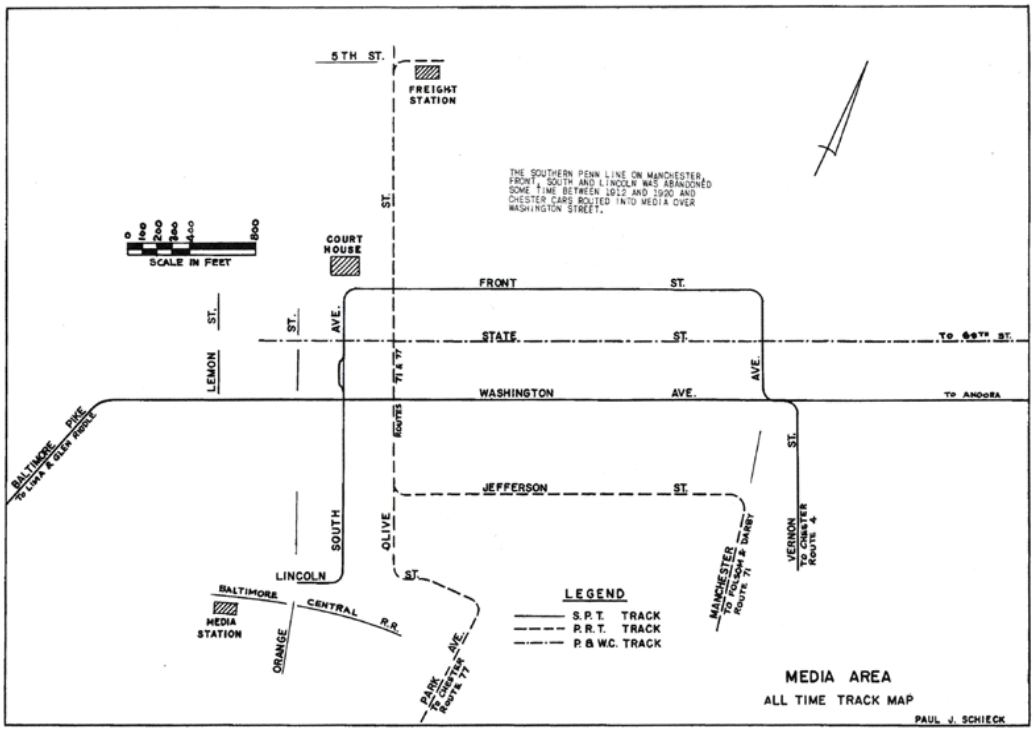
by Edward Havens

Today it's difficult to imagine that 70 to 80 years ago Delaware County west of Philadelphia was mostly semi-rural crisscrossed by single track trolley lines connecting small boroughs and townships. The legacy still is recalled by the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority [SEPTA] Route 101 car line to Media, the county seat, which veers into the woods on single track west of Springfield.

In addition to Philadelphia & West Chester Traction (P&WCT, later Philadelphia Suburban Transportation Co - "Red Arrow Lines") routes radiating from Upper Darby's 69th Street Terminal, Delaware County west of Darby was served by trolleys of Philadelphia Rapid Transit [PRT] and Southern Pennsylvania Traction [SPT] into the 1930s. Saturday, August 13, 1938 marked the final day of operation for PRT Birneys on the Folsom Division which by then amounted only to Route 71 - Folsom to Media and Route 72 - Folsom to Essington where it connected with PRT Route 37, the "Chester Short Line." To the left is a PRT Birney at State and Olive streets in Media where Route 71 crossed the single track of P&WCT:

This map shows the location of the crossing in Media:



Next, below left, is a rarely seen perspective of Route 71 at Brookhaven Road in Nether Providence Township, while below right is another view at Rose Valley and Providence roads (Palmer's Corner):

A single track line operated by SPT ran westward from the PRT Route 34 loop in West Philadelphia to Media, either in the center of U.S. Route 1, Baltimore Pike, or side-of-the-road alignments. Here is a deck roof car on Memorial Bridge over Crum Creek:

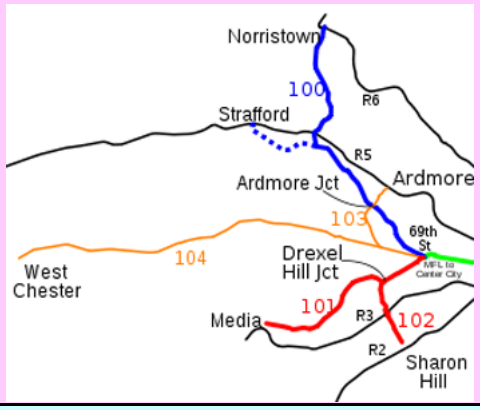
SPT trolleys for the Baltimore Pike line were based at a car house at Clifton Heights (see below left). The line operated until August 2, 1930 and was replaced by Aronimink Transportation Co. (P&WCT subsidiary) bus Route N from Angora to Media. PRT Route 76-Darby to Chester operated on Parker Avenue (McDade Blvd.) and met the P&WCT trolleys from 69th Street Terminal to Collingdale station, shown in a vintage photo, below right:

South of Baltimore Avenue and Swarthmore, home of Swarthmore College, PRT Route 71 Birneys crossed Crum Creek on a wood trestle with a steel Warren pony truss span. (See below left). When the trolley line was replaced, PRT and later Philadelphia Transportation Co. [PTC] buses used a parallel highway span on Yale Avenue. P&WCT trolleys were extended from Collingdale to Sharon Hill in 1917 where they met the SPT's Darby-Chester-Wilmington, Del., line at Chester Pike. There was no track connection there, unlike Collingdale where a track switch connected the P&WCT and PRT Route 76. Shown below right is a Route 76 Birney in Chester, Pa on 6th Street at Welsh St.:

The Red Arrow's Sharon Hill line was one of the routes where Brill Center-Door cars built in the 1920s operated. Some of them have been preserved in museums. A two-car train is shown below left. Note the Jewett interurban behind them. In the southern part of Delaware County closest to the Delaware River, the PRT-PTC "Chester Short Line," Route 37, ran until August 28, 1946 when the Crum Creek bridge sustained fire damage. Route 37 used Hog Island cars like those shown below right. An isolated trolley shuttle ran from Chester to the Baldwin Locomotive Works gate until Oct. 12, 1946 with bus service in between to Wanamaker Ave. Trolleys were cut back to Lester Nov. 24, 1946 after a new loop was built for the Route 37 cars from Philadelphia City Hall. Unfortunately, the last of the Hog Island cars was consumed in the Woodland Car Barn fire of 1975.

In northern Delaware County, Red Arrow trolleys from 69th Street Terminal ran to West Chester in neighboring Chester County until June 1954 and to Ardmore in Montgomery County until December 1966. Shown below left is a Brill 77-86 series car built in 1932 on the 19-mile West Chester line on side-of-the-road track along West Chester Pike. These cars ran for 50 years until 1982 into the SEPTA era. A few of them have also been preserved at museums. Today, SEPTA still operates the former Red Arrow Media and Sharon Hill lines as Routes 101 and 102, respectively, and each has sections of bidirectional single single track. Below right, one of their 29 1981 Kawasaki cars is shown in Media:

Today, SEPTA still operates the former Red Arrow Media and Sharon Hill lines as Routes 101 and 102, respectively, and each has sections of bidirectional single single track. Note the map:



Bowser Tsunami- Sound-Equipped PCC Cars!

(Do not be surprised if they sometimes do NOT run on DC!)

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Bowser Manufacturing introduced their first ready-to-run PCC cars in late 2009 with the first four San Francisco F-line PCC cars, 1052 (Los Angeles Railway Co.), 1055 (Philadelphia Transportation Company), 1061 (Pacific Electric) and 1063 (Baltimore Transit Co.). By 2011, all fourteen of the 1050-1063, ex-Philadelphia cars that started the now well-renowned F-line in 1995 had been released in HO scale. Unfortunately, due to many factors, sound was not able to be obtained for any of these cars although such recordings have been made by Custom Traxx in 2007.

Bowser has subsequently released models of cars 1050 (San Francisco 1950's) and 1058 (Chicago, original all-electric PCC scheme) with Soundtraxx-Tsunami sound and just recently released models of cars 1050 (San Francisco 1950's) and 1061 (Pacific Electric, 1950s scheme) with ESU Lok-Sound. As of this time, there are no plans to re-release any of the other Muni F-line PCCs with sound.

Several customers have by whatever means necessary obtained Soundtraxx-Tsunami-Equipped (TSE) sound chassis for retrofitting some of the earlier cars. During one of these retrofits, with a brand new chassis, something unusual was found. When the car was tested on DC, it made noise but would not run. A JMRI/DecoderPro run revealed that CV29 has been set at 34. Once it was set to 38, the car ran as expected on DC.

At first it was thought that this had happened during the readdressing of the car to a long address, (example 1059). So we took another new STE car from stock and subjected it to a JMRI DecoderPro Run. CV 29 was set at 6 and the address was 03 just as expected. So this car should have been able to run on DC.

So a brief review of CV29. CV29 is normally composed of the following additive values:

1 - Reverses the direction that the unit runs.
2 - Uses the 28/128 speed step mode.*
4 - Enable analog (DC operation).*
16 - Make the User Loadable Tables active.
32 - Make the decoder address 128 or higher (Four Digit or Long Address)

*These two values are normally set in new locomotives, that is why our test unit was set at 6.

So it appears that when we used JMRI/DecoderPro to change the address, CV29 got changed somehow from 6 to 34. Users should check CV 29 after changing to four-digit or long addresses to ensure that CV29 is set at 38 (that is **2**+**4**+**32**), *if they intend to occasionally operate the car on DC.* We took three Bowser-Tsunami-Equipped cars off the shelf, changed their address to long addresses such as 1059, 820 and 847 and noted that CV29 was changed correctly to 38 in all three cases. No other CVs were changed except that is one case CV212 went from 255 to 91. We do not know what that means or why that happened but perhaps one of the JMRI experts reading this article can enlighten us. We have learned in the last year how complex a program MRI/DecoderPro is.

Another tip: Almost all prototype PCC cars were originally delivered with brake lights but not tail lights. The Muni F-line PCC cars have been retrofitted with automotive type taillights in parallel with the headlight. On TSE cars, setting CVs 33 and 34 (default values) to 3 results in both operating brake and tail lights. Setting CVs 33 and 34 equal to 1 eliminates the tail lights leaving operational brake lights only. We have previously discussed how to do this with the Train Control Systems decoders. ESU has yet to provide such information, although it has been requested.

Modeler's Showcase !

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There are still plenty traction modelers with modeling skills. Just so no one thinks that traction model painting is no longer "alive and well", here are two photos from Bruce Battles of Menlo Park, CA.

The first one is of a Bowser New Orleans car.

Bruce waited a little too long to get one of those cars in the New Orleans colors, so he found them to be all gone by the time he was ready. This should tell anyone interested in a Bowser car to get theirs ASAP because each run keeps selling out faster even though the amounts imported are increased each time. *(Bowser is planning another run of the New Orleans cars during 2015!).* In desperation, Bruce asked Mitch Laird if there were any for sale down his way. He finally found one in Chicago colors, in a hobby shop in Costa Mesa. Bruce obtained the car and removed the paint from it, and decided to make it an 800, in the colors and markings of the 40s and 50s. Attached is a shot of car 812, with a black roof, looking like car 913 did while it was at the Orange Empire Railway Museum. It is stored in San Francisco currently under a tarp. Bruce lengthened the poles and put trolley wheels on it, instead of the shoes that came with the model. The destination sign reads "CANAL".

The second photo is a Pacific Traction San Diego 400, with some alterations made to it.

Bruce had the body sitting around, and once again Mitch Laird came to the rescue! He found a Bachmann Baltimore Peter Witt in a hobby shop that had some minor damage to it, got it pretty cheap, and sent it to Menlo Park. Bruce can't run single-ended cars on his layout, so he at first really didn't know what to do with the car, but then he thought of the San Diego body! It turns out that the truck centers on the Bachmann drive are about the same, the wheels are only slightly larger, and Bruce thought maybe he could do a "transplant" with the drive. His brother Bob is good at electronics, so Bruce sent him the drive to rework to fit the SDERy body. He cut off both ends, one of which contained a speaker, and the other contained a decoder, a switch, and some other parts. The parts were worth over $100 to him, and he was happy to get them. He shortened it to fit the brass body, "hard-wired" it for overhead operation, and Bruce was in business!

The car runs very nice - Bruce made some alterations to it for my operation. He removed the pole towers, the pantograph platform, and the roof sign boxes - it had pilots on it when he got it. When you're free-lancing it, you can do these things! (And if Bruce finds another Bachman Witt some day, he can kit bash a double-ended version, similar but not exactly like the two cars LA Railway had!).
