The Trolleyville Times

July 2016

100,000 people rode the Los Angeles to Santa Monica Light Rai

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CURRENT EVENTS.....

Atlas (Re) Enters the Urban Transit Modeling Field!
(With the NJ Transit Commuter Train!)

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Early last month, Atlas announced that it would be producing in HO scale models of NJ Transit's ALP-45DP locomotives, multi-level cab cars, and multi-level trailer coaches both with and without toilet facilities.

NJ Transit operates 35 of the Bombardier ALP-45DP locomotives (4500-4534). These are dual mode locomotives like the old EMD FL-9s that serves the New Haven for years. These locomotives can operate both as diesel-electrics and straight electrics for operation in the tunnels into New York City where internal combustion engines are prohibited. In addition to the Bombardier-built 62 cab cars (7000-7051) which are equipped with lavatories, they have 99 trailer coaches with lavatories (7200-7298) and 268 trailer coaches without lavatories (7500-7677; 7678-7767).

Atlas has gone the distance in this product line making train sets available along with additional cars and locomotives available plus DCC/sound in both engines and cab cars so they have considered that the model trains will be operated in the push mode also. They are going into this project in a big way.

According to data released by Atlas, ALP-45DP engines will be available in four road numbers, 4502, 4515, 4527 and 4532 in both DC and DCC/Sound versions with prices comparable to a Bowser RTR trolley.

Cab cars numbered 7001, 7012, 7029 and 7045 will be offered along with coaches 7201, 7224, 7249 and 7277 with lavatories. These cab cars will also be available DCC ready with headlights, ditch lights and red marker lights. A 21 pin plug will be present along with provisions for mounting a speaker. We can not wait to see what decoder manufacturer offers a plug in kit for this car.

Cab car with Lavatory

Coach with Lavatory

Twelve coaches without lavatories will be offered, 7510, 7527, 7538, 7544, 7555, 7570, 7582, 7594, 7612, 7626, 7660 and 7675.

Coach without Lavatory

Four coaches with slogans will be offered also; 7638 with "Stop and Look Both Ways For Trains", 7640 with "Watch the Gap", 7580 with " Trains Can't Stop Quickly, You Can" and 7283 with" Always Expect A Train".

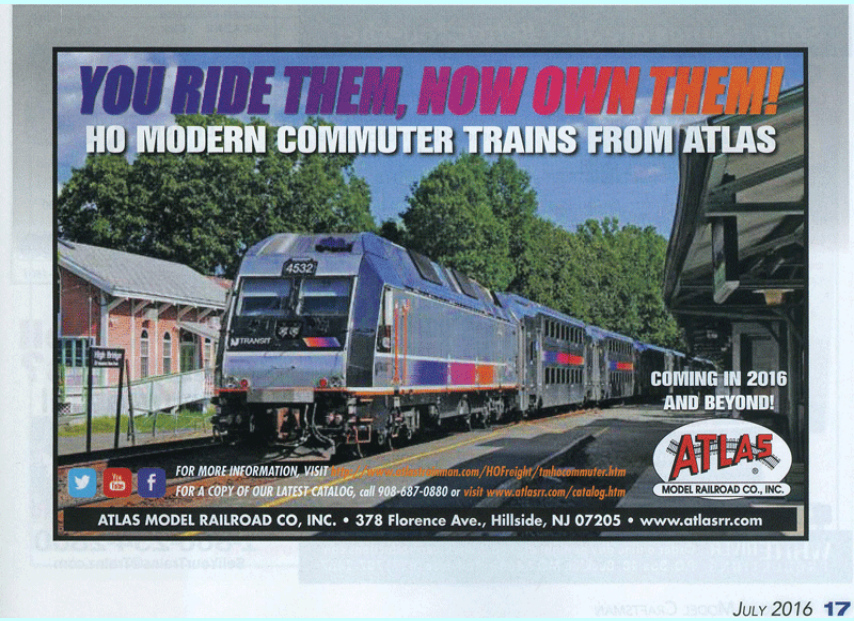
A modern Commuter Train Set will be offered with one engine, one cab car and a single coach. An add-on set consisting of a cab car, a coach with lavatory and a coach without lavatory for those who who like to model typical consists of up to eight cars. There will also be a True-Track Starter set consisting of 24 pieces of Code 83 track including 22" radius track and sufficient straight tracks to produce a 46" by 82" oval.

Over 300,000 commuters are carried by NJ Transit daily from New Jersey to New York City so this is an excellent project to begin modeling urban transit.

In our opinion, this could be a major part of the future of model railroading. These trains and other urban rail transit vehicles will be seen and used by a lot of tomorrow's modelers and the comfort and convenience becomes a huge plus! The next generation of rail fans may be riding or observing these trains right now.

Just before this issue went to press, we obtained a copy of the July issue of Railroad Model Craftsman, a publication that has drastically improved since White River Productions acquired it some years ago. It appears that Atlas is also agreeing with the Times on where the future modelers will be found. Take a look at their ad on page 17 for the NJT Commuter Train:

"You Ride Them, Now Own Them"



Also, it was announced on page 24 in the same magazine that in early 2017 Athearn will be reissuing the F59PHI in both HO and N scales in commuter road names such as Caltrain, Coaster, Go Transit, Metrolink (original and latest schemes) and Northstar. Sound from Soundtraxx will be available in both scales. Also being released are the Bombardier commuter cars in both HO and N scale in the same commuter road names. This will be one of those times when Athearn has released both the engines and the cars at the same time. Let's see what happens, folks!

Light Rail / Modern Streetcar News!

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by Edward B. Havens

The City of Atlanta, under fire from Georgia Department of Transportation for deficiencies in its modern streetcar operation, plans to hire a private firm to manage the 2.7-mile line under management contract, WAGA-TV reported June 9th. This announcement came in response to a state order to submit a remedial plan by June 14 or face a shutdown. Inadequate staffing and failure to implement proper maintenance and inspection procedures and also ignoring accident investigation guidelines were among the issues cited.

The City Council of Kansas City, Missouri's largest city, is divided over rival plans for expansion of rail transit, The Kansas City Star reported June 9. A citizens group wants to implement a new taxing district to extend the 2.2 mile starter modern streetcar line southward about 3.75 miles to the University of Missouri-Kansas City campus. The starter line opened to the public on May 6, 2016. And LRT advocate Clay Chastain is proposing a $2 billion plan to link the city and its international airport. Councilman Dan Fowler called Chastain's plan an improbable "dream." And some council member believe it's too early to extend the streetcar line and it needs to be give some time to prove its ridership.

Honolulu is building an automated light metro system on an elevated structure and the projected cost now has risen from $6.8 billion to $7.9 billion to build 20 miles with 21 stations, Hawaii News Now reported June 9. The City Council is capping spending for the rail transit project so it may be necessary to curtail the track and have bus connections. Japan-based Hitachi, through its new subsidiaries AnsaldoBreda and Ansaldo STS, will provide rolling stock and automation.

Miami Beach, which had a street railway system until 1939, is planning to build light rail on its coastal island and eventually link it with Miami to the west, the "curbed" site reported June 9. Three consortium groups are proposing to build the LRT line in the Florida resort city. One of them includes Spain-based C.A.F. which would supply "Urbos" trams, as depicted below. Another group includes Alstom which would supply Citadis LRVs, the first in the U.S. Its Citadis LRVs already have been ordered by Ottawa, Canada, for its starter east-west subway-surface line.

St. Louis television station KMOV reported June 9 that two former Seattle, Wash., waterfront streetcar line trams, ex-Melbourne, Australia, "W" Class cars, have arrived at the Missouri city for use on the Delmar Loop heritage trolley line being built at the inner ring suburb of University City. The two cars shipped directly to St. Louis will be used as backups for the new car line. One other "W" Class car from Seattle and two replica Brill semi convertibles from Portland, Ore., have been sent to Gomaco Trolley of Iowa for renovation work and these three will be the base fleet for Delmar Loop.

Houston Metro transit contractors reopened the Harrisburg Overpass to motor vehicle traffic June 10 and track now will be laid across it to span railroad freight tracks below so the Green Line light rail route can be extended eastward to its planned terminal at Magnolia Park Transit Center, The Houston Chronicle reported. If there are no complications, LRT service over the full route could begin before Christmas 2016.

The Toronto Transit Commission [TTC] launched its first new streetcar route in 16 years on June 18 to help relieve congestion on the busy east-west King Street car line, the "urban toronto dot ca" site reported. Bombardier Flexity#4421 is shown on that route in the next photograph. Route 514-

Cherry begins near Exhibition Place and ends at the new Cherry Street loop in the Distillery District. TTC says this will improve service on the central portion of the Route 504-King Street line, the busiest in the city.

The planned Milwaukee, Wisconsin, modern streetcar line has announced its fare and operating hours, The Journal-Sentinel reported June 17. The fare will be $1. Operating hours will be until midnight Monday through Saturday, starting at 5 a.m. weekdays and 7 a.m. Saturday. The Sunday schedule will be 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. The line will use Brookville Equipment Corp. dual-mode battery and pantograph cars because part or all of the Lakeside branch and extension to the Milwaukee Bucks' proposed new arena from the Inter modal Transit Center will be wire free.

El Paso Herald-Post in west Texas reported June 15 that the first rail will be laid soon for the 4.8-mile PCC heritage streetcar line linking the area just north of the International border with Juarez, Mexico, through downtown to the University of Texas-El Paso campus. Girder rail has been imported from Europe because the $97 million project is entirely state funded and "made in USA" rules don't apply. Six original El Paso streetcars, two shown in the next photograph, are being rehabilitated by Brookville Equipment for the service.

The U.S. Department of Transportation has authorized an $875 million loan for the Maryland Transit Administration Purple Line 16.2-mile light rail route to be built from Bethesda to New Carrollton in the suburbs just north of Washington, D.C. That's in addition to an expected $900 million federal construction grant, Bethesda Magazine reported June 16. The project to be built by a public-private partnership [P3] is expected to cost about $2 billion.

A New Subway and Light Rail Car Manufacturer For the USA !

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by A. J. Staley

Boston Transit System has recently clinched a deal for 284 cars for their Orange and Red Subway Lines. The contract was awarded to China Railway Rolling Stock Corporation (CRRC), which set its sights on the USA and has recently broke ground for a $60 million plant in Springfield, Massachusetts.

The cars will be replacing the existing cars on the Orange and Red Lines. The Orange Line runs from Forest Hills south of Boston, through Center City Boston and ends near Malden, north of the city. Orange Line Cars have been in service for more than thirty-two years. The Red line starts at Ashmont, south of Boston and also runs through Center City Boston and ends in North Cambridge, north west of the city. The Red Line cars have been in been operating for forty-four years. The public has been asked to vote on three different decorative schemes for each of the two lines. Those schemes are shown below:

Red Line Schemes:

Orange Line Schemes:

CRRC is the first Chinese rail car manufacture to win a major transit contract in the US. Their bid beat out competitors like Bombardier of Canada, Hyundai Rotem of South Korea, Kawasaki Rail Car of Japan, and China South Railroad. Their bid was the lowest price among the five competitors, and was a little more than half of Bombardier's $1 billion offer.

China Railway Rolling Stock Corporation has promised to build sixty percent of the value of its trains in the United States to earn the "Made in the USA" label. However, the design, engineering, steel work, and some manufacturing would still be accomplished in China. Another factor in securing the bid, was the fact that CRRC will be assembling the rail cars in Massachusetts on a 40-acre industrial lot in the former Westinghouse

Manufacturing Center and will be employing approximately 150 people here in the US. The Plant will begin operations in 2016 and the first cars are to be delivered in 2018.

Having a new rail car manufacturer in the United States will provide an additional manufacturer for other cities and states that are either in the process of modernizing or are in the process of establishing more Light Rail and Subway lines.

The China Railway Rolling Stock Corporation was formed on June 1, 2015 from a merger of the Rolling Stock Corporation, the China North Locomotive, and the China South Locomotive. They employ approximately 176,000 people at their Beijing headquarters.

In the recent years China has built more than 7,500 miles of high-speed rail tracks, which is 4 times as much as Japan. Under the direction of Mr. Yu Weiping of design and manufacture China has built high-speed trains in the world with an average speed of 218 miles per hour.

Here is an interesting question for toy train and model enthusiasts. Will any current company such as Lionel, MTH, Athearn, or Walthers take a page from the Atlas book and be first to offer models of the newest Boston Subway System Cars? Only time will tell!

Arnie's/Milepost 38 Annual Open House!

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One year ago, we told you about the annual Open House conducted at Arnie's Model Trains / Milepost 38 stores. These stores are located at 6452 Industry Way, Westminster, CA 92663 (714) 893-1015 and 6462 Industry Way 714--9471, respectively just adjacent to the I-405 freeway and just north west of the Westminster Mall. We told you not to miss it. We did not. This years' Open House was on Saturday, June 25th. Greg Arnold, owner of Arnie's Model Trains and co-owner of Milepost 38 with Matt Haynes spent considerable effort in planning this event. After coordination with all the other merchants in the area, they erect huge tents in the parking area and invited several manufacturers and model railroad clubs to participate. This has turned out to be one of the most enjoyable model train events in the area. Some of the manufacturers present were A-Line-Proto Power West (Joe Delia), Athearn Trains (Horizon), Soundtraxx (George Bogatiuk) and Bachmann Industries (Rich Janyszek). Several layouts and portions of others were present on all scales including, as promised, operating 3D-printed HO scale models of the San Diego Siemens S70 US partial Low Floor Light Rail Vehicles.

Friday, June 24th is the preparation day with the tents being erected in the parking lot and the setting up of the displays and layouts.

Both stores are "hidden" behind the tents.

Over 1000 people attended the event between 10:00 AM and 3:00 PM. Free pizza (not pizza sauce on cardboard) and drinks are available with purchases. The following photos show the level of activity:

Interior view inside Arnie's Model Trains just before official opening!

Interior view inside Milepost 38 during the event!

Bachmann (Rich Janyszek) at his display showing many new items from his company!

George Bogatiuk (Soundtraxx) at his display!

Long Beach residents, Kaili, her son, Jack, and her mother, Linda, were caught observing and approving of the San Diego LRVs in operation. This display was operated using the Roco/Fleischmann Z21 System!

San Diego LRV 4001, HO scale 3D printed with Halling Drives, equipped with head lights by Kevin Honda, Arnie's Store Manager, passes unpainted in-work model of Atlanta streetcar 1001. In the background is a three-car train consisting of 4053, 4012 and 4034. The last three cars use Bowser traction drives and all four cars are equipped with TCS Keep-Alive decoders!

This is a warning to all model railroad aficionados in the Southern California area. This was Arnie's 39th year of operation. Next year, 2017 will be their **40th**. Wait until you see what they do with that. DO NOT MISS IT ----JUNE 2017!

MODELLING .....

New York City Streetcars in N Scale!

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by John Wright

Some years ago, I was living in a small apartment in Brooklyn and only had room for a small shelf layout in N scale, depicting a New York harbor waterfront railroad. Tight curves, street running and urban scenery, plus a growing interest in New York City streetcar history, led me into traction modeling in N scale. At the time, I was only aware of the Bachmann PCC and Brill trolleys—oversize and rough runners but cheap and easy to upgrade and kitbash. After seeing the N scale Ttrak based modules of Phillip Cook and the Hyland family at a Rutgers model transit meet, I wanted to build some modules of my own. One scene that came to mind was a long vanished Brooklyn trolley landmark a few blocks from my apartment—the cut and tunnel that took the Church Avenue line under Ocean Parkway. A three foot long model of this scene plus a couple of balloon loop modules and I was a traction mogul, setting up and running at train shows! 3D printing is a real boon for N scale and I have a couple of Brooklyn 8000 Peter Witts and an air-electric PCC from GHB via Shapeways, both shown in the next photograph.

Two GHB 3D printed Brooklyn cars at Church Avenue and Ocean Parkway!

A move to Michigan five years ago took me away from my source of inspiration but also brought me in touch with the Detroit United Railway model traction club, a group that's been around since the mid 1950s. Despite the magnifying glass jokes about N scale, they're a great crew of mostly HO and O modelers that sets up HO modules at local train shows and travels to traction meets. We even have a couple of N scalers and I have learned a lot about traction modeling and enjoy the comradeship of monthly meetings and road trips to shows and trolley museums.

One thing I like about N scale traction is the ability to capture large scenes in a small space. Besides the Ocean Parkway module, I've built modules of the railroad ferry terminals at 23rd Street on the Hudson in Manhattan, a “plow pit” where Manhattan trolleys changed from underground conduit power to overhead wire, and a Brooklyn waterfront scene that recycles some of my old rail/marine watercraft. While I do some compression, these scenes are not far from true 1:160.

Action at the Plow Pit as Bronx bound conduit cars switch to overhead wire!

I enjoy fabricating trackwork, streets and buildings but love to build Third Avenue Railway, New York Railways, Brooklyn and other NYC streetcars, especially after discovering reliable, inexpensive scale drives from manufacturers in Japan. N scale traction is very popular in Japan, with makers like Kato, Tomix and others turning out dozens of Japanese trams in different paint schemes. Most of these models never see the light of day in the U.S. but can be easily mail ordered from Japan. My go-to chassis is the Tomytec TM-TR01, a double truck chassis that is perfect for any number of NYC trolleys and can even be adjusted to three different lengths. They're under $30 and are great runners with a flywheel. I cut up the frames, add weight, passengers to hide the motor and flywheel, and they still run for hours at a train show.

Queensborough Bridge trolleys were the last trolleys to run in New York City in 1957.

Of course that chassis needs something to ride on top of it, so I've been using a number of methods to make N scale streetcars. Pieces of Bachmann Brill kitbash nicely into TARS and New York Railways deck roof cars, and I've also scratchbuilt bodies from styrene and brass. A Czech maker called Modely Tramvaji has brass etchings for the Vienna Type Z streetcars that came from TARS, and I built up one into a conduit powered 600 car and kitbashed another set into a center door Huffliner.

TARS Cars from Modely Tramvaji etchings. The center door Huffliner took a lot of kitbashing!

23rd Street Railroad Ferry Terminals - Two kitbashed cars with cut down Bachmann Brill Sides and Roofs with scratch built ends!

Although it's 1:150 scale and doesn't exactly fit the scenes I'm modeling, I can't resist the well-made ready to run Japanese trams. Some of the older models are not that different from North American trolleys and the modern trams look like the shovel nosed streetcars appearing in more American cities every year. As much as I love historical accuracy and trying to get the New York period details right, I'll always give plenty of train show running time to my Kato Centram, a showstopper with LED lights and snaky articulation. Tomix makes a triple articulated tram that's in the ballpark for the Brookville cars planned for Detroit's new Woodward Avenue streetcar line, so when they settle on a paint scheme I'll get out the airbrush.

I still haven't taken the plunge of live overhead, although many others have done this in N scale. Many of my cars are Manhattan conduit powered so I would still need two rail power to run them. For now it's just two rail DC but I hope to get my electronics skills into the 21st century. While I want to get an HO DCC powered car to run on club modules, and enjoy my small G gauge garden railway, I've had a lot of fun with N scale traction in recent years and think it could be a real growth area in the hobby. The small size isn't really a problem when reliable cars and street trackage are available RTR from Japan and this could be the entry level “train set” that breaks through the steep learning curve associated with traction modeling and gives new modelers something similar to the prototypes they're seeing in major American cities. I hope I can inspire others to give N scale traction a try, whether with out of the box instant gratification or the challenge of prototype scenes and intricate scratchbuilding.

About the author: John grew up in Louisiana and has early memories of riding the Saint Charles streetcar line in New Orleans. He is a lifetime model railroader but a latecomer to traction modeling. Along the way he has been a writer, English teacher, stonemason and garden designer. He currently is living in Livonia, Michigan with his wife and son.

Ed: John provided some of theses photos to Custom Traxx a few weeks ago and they were so impressed with the quality of the modeling that they passed them to the Southern California Traction Club (SCTC). But the detail in those photos made it hard to accept that this was N scale to most of the club members. The SCTC, an HO scale club founded in 1995, was so impressed by the photos that they investigated N scale and as result recently expanded into N scale to model push-pull commuter trains. They are using a lot of the Kato Unitrack and Unitram items along with some of the Japanese equipment mentioned in this article along with some out of production Athearn Bombardier commuter cars, provided by Joe Delia of A-line / ProtoPower West. Reports from the club are indicating that this smaller scale is much more enjoyable than predicted once they learned some of the differences that are required due to the smaller sizes of everything.
