

SAN DIEGO ELECTRIC RAILWAY ASSOCIATION



Trolley Lines

April 2015

Car 530 Hits The Bricks



Richard Finch © 2015

Rain in southern California is a rare event, but so too is the unavailing of a pristine 1946 PCC Street car. An early morning rain storm could not dampen the spirits of about 200 people who were gathered at the MTS station at 12 & Imperial near downtown San Diego Monday, March 2, 2015. The new unit is the San Diego Vintage Trolley 530, formerly New Jersey Transit 10. Also on hand was 60 3rd grade school children who sang America. Since car 530 has been dedicated as part of the Balboa Park centennial celebrations, the children were reenacting part of the opening ceremony of the Panama California Exposition at the park in 1915.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Mike Reading

We have made some important steps forward this month, the seats in PCC 539 have been removed for reupholstering. Quickstitch Upholstery was chosen to do this job, they sent a crew to remove the seat cushions and were done in about an hour!

I have finally gotten everything together to take to the City to begin the permit process on our car barn, that will be used to protect Car #54, I will be taking the application to the city in the next week or so.

Congratulations to Vintage Trolley and the San Diego Trolley, on Monday 2, 2015, there was a dedication ceremony at the Jim Mills Building, under the clock tower for Car #530, the newest PCC car to enter service and its has been dedicated as the Balboa Park Centennial car. SDG&E was a major contributor to its restoration. Dave Slater, Jeff Trimble, Gary Johnson, Richard Finch and myself attended this dedication representing SDERA!

The Congress of History held their yearly conference in Balboa Park on March 6 and 7, 2015 and we were invited to participate. This year is the 50th Anniversary of the Congress of History Conferences and coincided very nicely with the 100th Anniversary of the Panama-California Exposition. Naturally, the theme of this year's conference was the 100th Anniversary of the Exposition!

Congratulations to the Congress of History on their anniversary.

Jim Price was originally going to make a presentation but due to a schedule conflict, I took on the job! I ran with his idea of using the San Diego Electric Railway to get to the exposition and thus the title of my program was "Let's Take the Streetcar to the Exposition".

I was allotted 20 minutes for this presentation. I followed Diana Hyatt, President of PSRMA, whose presentation was about the 1887 California Southern Depot and the construction of the new Santa Fe Depot, during its construction from May of 1914 to it's opening on March 7, 1915! So as not to give anything away, I was asked to present this same program for the April 11, 2015 meeting of SDERA at the depot! Please plan to join us for this program!

Also, another big milestone to mention, Saturday, March 7th of this year the Santa Fe Depot turned 100 years old and on Monday, March 9th a celebration was held at the depot.

About a week previous to this event, I received an email from Alfonso Hernandez of Gold Star Tours, a family owned company that runs bus tours around Southern California and Tijuana, Mexico from the depot. He had taken on the project of developing and hosting this event at the depot! He asked if SDERA could provide an exhibit for this celebration.



San Diego Electric Railway Association
DBA San Diego Electric Railway Co. Inc
922 West 23rd Street
National City, CA 91950
(619) 474-4400

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SDERA operates the historic National City Depot museum which is located at 922 West 23rd Street, National City, CA 91950 and is open Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Or visit us on the web at: www.sdera.org

San Diego Electric Railway Association, Inc

- ❖ Mike Reading - President
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- ❖ Jim Anderson - Curator of Special Collections Gift Shop Manager/
Facilities Director
- ❖ John De Lalla - Special Events/
Docent Coordinator/
Membership Director
- ❖ Bill Steinmetz - Groundskeeper



A Salute To Our Volunteers!

They are as follows:

Dave Slater
 Tom Carnes
 Chris Higgins
 Jim Anderson
 Jim Price
 Chuck Bencik
 Randy Butler
 Robert Butler
 Mitch Beauchamp
 Jeff Trimble
 Mike Reneau
 Richard Finch
 George Geyer
 Dan Kelly
 Gary Johnson
 Sergio Lopez
 Mike Reading
 Eddie McCann
 Jody Surowiec
 John DeLalla
 Robert Baxter
 Missy Cheeseman
 Anthony Carideo
 Sean McColgan
 Patrick McColgan
 Scotty Lewis
 Tim Lewis
 Tom Sapien
 "Pete" Pearson
 Mike Quigg
 Matt Zacharzuk
 Bill Steinmetz
 Conrad Gomez
 Hubert Jansen
 Steve Mitton
 Jason Ballard

WE COULDN'T
 OPERATE WITHOUT
 YOU!
 Thanks!

URGENT REQUEST FOR VOLUNTEER DOCENTS AND CASHIERS

Please consider sharing your interest in railroads and San Diego's historic streetcars with our visitors.

Our dedicated group of docents needs your help to ensure that the Depot is properly staffed. Sunday mornings can especially use your help.

Docents guide our visitors through the depot and the grounds.

Training and support are provided by our docent coordinator and other experienced docents. Reference material is on hand, including talking points for the tour, and general procedures for operating the depot. Shifts are for 3 hours: 10 AM to 1:00 PM, and 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM.

Please contact John DeLalla at: docents@sdera.org or 858-847-3138

for additional information and to join our group of docents.



HELP WANTED!

Currently, The following volunteer positions are available:

1. Assistant Treasurer- working with Treasurer, Jeffrey (Jeff) Trimble. Candidate should have an interest in learning accounting.

(I learned the program Quick Books at the depot, and this has allowed me to get a job, which I have now held for almost 2 years.)

2. Assistant Web Master- working with Web Master, Christopher (Chris) Higgins. We have a large website at www.sdera.org. Candidate should have this appropriate background.

3.Docents/Cashiers- A very pleasant way to work a 4 hour shift on a rotating basis. Training provided by Docent Coordinator/Trainer, John De Lalla.

4.Assistant Librarian- This candidate works with Librarian, Tom Sapien in our Reference Library at the Depot Museum Library.

5. A Welder- Works with Dave Slater on various projects as needed. This candidate should have their own welder.

Interested parties, please contact President Mike Reading at :
 619-971-1843
mike_czry@yahoo.com

*Come visit,
 and enjoy all the improvements
 in your Museum!*

PRIMAL ELECTRIC TRANSIT IN SAN DIEGO

PART FOUR

BY RICHARD DODGE

**THE
FOURTH
STREET
LINE**

The company had been going ahead with the building of the other two routes while devoting its main energies to the completion of the Old Town project.

Rails were ordered and grading was started on Fourth Avenue from G Street to C Street in July 1887. In that month it was decided to change the course to begin at the foot of G Street, thence to Fourth Avenue; to Palm Street; to Fifth Avenue. Rails were laid from G Street to Broadway.

The route as shown on the "Official" (real estate promotion) map was out Fifth Avenue to University Avenue to Cleveland Street, to Monroe Avenue, to Florida Street, to Meade Avenue to Boundary Street.

However the proposed Teralta motor line with which it was to connect is drawn on El Cajon Avenue. Teralta was located east of Boundary Street on lands formerly the property of Mission San Diego de Alcalá. The strip was about four blocks wide, between Polk and Monroe Avenues.



Downtown San Diego at the turn of the century with our own Car # 54 in the foreground

For the suspension of the trolley wires, it had been agreed to use nicely painted poles of uniform height in pairs opposite each other on each side of the street at a distance from the center as the City Engineer specifies, not less than 150 feet apart nor 20 feet high. (Posts on the Old Town line had been 180 feet apart.) This will be very different from Los Angeles ungainly layout with poles only 50 feet apart with heavy cross arms. They will not interfere with vehicular traffic. The City Engineer ruled that the poles be set near the curb stones.

Underground feeders will not be used as parallel overhead wires served the purpose on the Old Town Line. The first shipment of heavy feeder wire was received in August.

The crossing with the track of the San Diego Street Car Company at Fourth Ave. and Broadway was put in that month and the track was completed to Ivy Street.

A second crossing was

required at Fir Street.

Then the contractor laying the pipe for the City's new Waring Sewerage System came along in mid-September and tore up the track. It was relaid two weeks later.

An application was made in that month for a franchise for the Fifth Avenue route north of Palm Street, which was to be double track. But the San Diego Street Car Company already had a permit on Fifth.

Editor's note:

In the Last issue, Mr Dodge outlined in great detail the state of the art of electrical transportation around the beginning of the 20th century.

This month we continue with Richard V. Dodge's look at San Diego's early transit history from the operational side. All of the material and photos come from the November 15, 1960 issue 34 of the Dispatcher news letter courtesy of the Pacific Southwest Railway Museum.



In October 1887 an advertisement for the Teralta Sub-division read that work has been resumed on the electric motor road and it will be completed to Teralta. Following the Business Men's Special on the Old Town Line, bigger and grander plans were released. It was declared that the "franchise now covers 21 miles of track and will extend ultimately to El Cajon Valley."

"Another set of electric works will be operated by water power of the Flume Company in the vicinity of La Mesa, ten miles from San Diego." (An aqueduct was being constructed by the San Diego Flume Company, of which George D. Copeland was the organizer and President.

Crossings of the valleys were accomplished by constructing elevated wooden flumes. It was planned to tap the flume at a high point to make a waterfall which would turn wheels to drive the generators.) "It will be the cheapest power known."

By November 20, the overhead wires had been erected to the Florence Hotel at Fir Street. On December 15, the length of the line was set at four miles. Two days before, the grand opening of the University

Heights tract had taken place and \$100,000 in sales of lots were reported by noon.

From Normal Street and El Cajon Avenue graders were working on the extension to Teralta. It was boasted that the ties and steel had been ordered for the additional track through the College Hill Tract and University Heights.

Through Teralta the motor road would be a separate corporation



1907 the opening of the Adams Ave line. The wide open mesas north east of downtown. Whole lot of development in very few years.

and would extend for five or six miles east from Boundary Street.

A few days later the routing was revised. The Fourth Street track was extended from G Street down to the Pacific Coast Steamship Company's depot, and changes were made beyond Florence Heights. The plans to run on Palm Street and Fifth Ave. were abandoned and track and overhead were installed out Fourth to University Avenue; to Normal Street; to a terminus near Campus Avenue.

Rails had been "strung" as far

as the College Tract (Normal Street) and, according to a December 15 dispatch "it is actually constructed to the college campus."

An unexpected break in the wires at Fourth and Broadway delayed the trial runs. Then there was too much dirt on the track on unpaved Fourth Street due to teams driving over the rails.

OPERATIONS ON FOURTH STREET

The first motor car arrived downtown, as far as Broadway, on the afternoon of December 27, 1887. The clanging bell attracted much attention. Dr. Gochenauer was the only passenger. "Circuit difficulties were

encountered, dirt was cleaned off the track and a number of gentlemen made the return trip."

The first official runs were made on the 31st and regular service began on New Years Day, 1888.

The opinion was that "the Fourth Street Line is a success despite the croakers"

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EX-NEW JERSEY TRANSIT PCC CAR



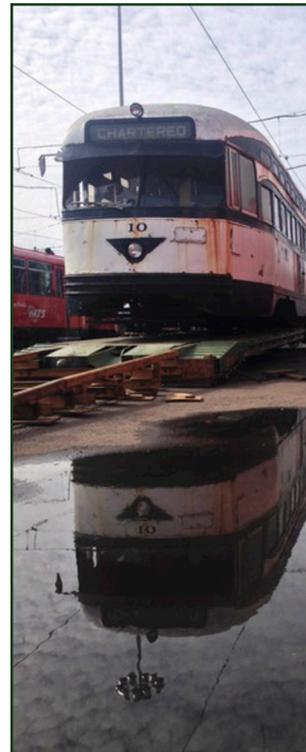
Harry Mathis and other local dignitaries

PCC number 10 on a fan trip in 1954

Jeff Marinoff collection



Car #10 sits outside the car shop at Rock Hill trolley museum in Pennsylvania
Bob Vogel photo



Delivery date at the MTS y
A

10's LONG JOURNEY TO SAN DIEGO



make it official with the ribbon cutting



Public service coordinated transport [ex-Minneapolis TCRT] PCC car number can at the Franklin avenue loop of the Newark city subway line in 1954
Jeff Marinoff collection



wards on March 3, 2014.
Andy Goddard Jr. photo



Richard Finch © 2015

Car 530 ; poetry in motion. Proof that public transportation can be classy

Car 530 history and a little behind the scenes look

By Jeff Marinoff

Ex-New Jersey Transit PCC car 10 is now operating as car 530, on the streets of San Diego, California.

The car was built by the St. Louis Car Company in 1946 for the old Twin City Rapid Transit Company in Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota. It was sold to Public Service Co-ordinated Transport in late 1953 and was used in the Newark City Subway until 2001. Newark PCC car # 10 spend 12 years in dead storage in New Jersey.

It was later sold to the San Diego.

After being sold to San Diego, it was transported to the Baltimore Streetcar Museum for temporary storage. Then it went to the Rock Hill trolley museum in Pennsylvania for some electrical work. From there, it was shipped to San Diego.

Now Completely restored, it has a third, charmed life operating in San Diego.

In answer to questions that I have been asked, yes car # 530 has a working GE back-up controller. San Diego re-upholstered the seats in car # 530 with what appears to be vinyl.

This replaces the cloth upholstery that N. J. Transit had on the Newark cars.

Also note in the photo that car # 530 still has Cats Eye stop light fixtures, the original bulls eye rear marker lights and the high trolley rope catcher. However, I'm not sure if the back windows still open.



I am pleased to see that the back of the car remains basically original in appearance. One nice thing is that San Diego didn't alter the front or rear original anti-climbers with those tow bar pocket extensions that the MUNI put on their ex-Newark PCC cars.

Car # 530 also kept the 'as delivered' anti-climbers with the tow bar pin built in.

I was informed by Harry Mathis that Siemens Duewag U2 doors were used on # 530 and that they fit perfectly. He stated that the lack of lower glass panels on the front doors won't be an issue for the operators line of vision because the wheelchair lift is in that location anyway.

The New Jersey Transit had placed stops in the window tracks of the PCC cars to prevent the windows from cranking open more than three inches. This was to protect the passengers in Newark from flying glass bottles being thrown by hoodlums along the line. I had advised the MUNI about those stops and they had Brookville

remove them, so the windows could be fully opened. I advised the SDMTS, but they decided 'for now' to leave the stops in the window tracks to prevent passengers from putting their arms out of the windows. I told them that the interior window guards on car 530 should prevent that and fully cranked open windows would provide much better ventilation on a non-air conditioned car. They said that if more ventilation is needed, they would address the issue of the stops. I also discussed with them the great benefit of having the back windows being able to open. That feature worked perfectly in Newark for decades.

I discussed with them the way the headlight is mounted on # 530 and they will look into that issue. Also of note is that car # 530 still has its original motorman's window. It also still has a trolley pole and pole shroud in the back of the car. The pantograph, used for power collection, is located in the front of the car.



PRIMAL ELECTRIC

Continued from page 5

This was a historic event. The Electric Rapid Transit has accomplished results never before achieved. The San Diego Union of January 4 described the feats “With their electric motor, they pull a heavily loaded train, consisting of a motor car and a passenger coach, up a hill having an 8 1/2 per cent grade.

In some places the grade is nearly 9% yet it averages 8 1/2%.

As stated no ordinary traction engine of any device ever overcame a grade as great. In going uphill the speed does not diminish appreciably and the motor is capable of starting a train when it is on the heaviest grade.

The cause of the superior efficiency of electricity to steam on heavy grades is not evident to those unfamiliar with electrical science”. •••• “ It is a singular electrical phenomena that when a current passes from the wheels to the rail or in any similar contrivance the tractive power of the wheels is increased probably more than 50%. For this reason, the driving wheels of the electric motors using rails for the return currents seldom, if ever, slip,

although the weight of the motor is not one-fifth that of a steam dummy of the same capacity.”

Others voiced the opinion that it was the phenomenon of a closed magnetic circuit.

As of December 23, 1887, the rolling stock on hand consisted of 3 motor cars, one of which lacked parts, 6 coaches (trailers) and 2 flat cars, 3 new motor cars



Excavating the road bed for new track in August of 1912

and 6 coaches were received then from Kansas City and a motor car of new design had been ordered from Hall Brothers of Stockton, California. According to the newspaper account: “The cars are painted a dark olive color and present a handsome appearance”.

Trains were run to Florence Heights every five minutes, so it was printed, competing with the San Diego Street Car Company’s horse cars on Fifth Street.

The running time to Upas Street was recorded as seven minutes. Three trains ran “clear through” to the college campus. Evidently many troubles were encountered and a January 4, 1888 paper dispersed the information that trains will run to Florence Heights in ten days.

Timetable Number 2 was issued January 19 listing four trains a day. “No electric cars tomorrow”, warned the San Diego Sun on January 23, reason: making repairs to the engine.

A cement foundation was needed under the dynamos. Operation was resumed on the 28th. Dr. Goohenauer gave assurances that the road will be running smoothly in ninety days. He resigned as President to devote

his time to managing the operations. The Doctor indicated that two new and larger motors had been ordered. These were” to be double truck, double deckers with locomotive type wheels with side rods.

The bodies were to be 30 feet long, half open and half closed, similar to cable cars. They will be finished in hard wood. The closed portion will be upholstered in plush.

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The windows will be heavy French plate. Power will be increased 50%. They will be finished in April and will run from the steamship wharf to El Cajon.

As the route on the mesa was sparsely settled, a speed of 20 miles per hour was expected, (No record has so far been found confirming the receipt of such contraptions.)

“THE SUBTLE FLUID”

“C. A. Wetmore was driving along Fourth Street. When opposite the Sun office (south side of the Plaza), his horse stopped and dropped to the earth as though he had been shot. It was soon discovered that he had sustained an electric shock.

A telephone wire had been stretched from the Faivre Building to the west side of Fourth Street and rested on top of the large wire that carries the current for propelling the Rapid Transit cars. As the horse passed along his head came in contact with the small wire. As an employee of the Telephone Company was pulling the wire across the street, the end touched the rail of the electric road, causing sparks to scintillate in all directions and burning the wire up as if it had been paper.

The horse got up, appeared greatly exhausted but was apparently uninjured.

(From the San Diego Sun, January 7, 1888)

LA MESA & EL CAJON RAILWAY

On January 24, plans for expansion were outlined. Since the operation from Fourth and K Streets to University Heights



“has proved entirely satisfactory, it has been definitely decided to push the track” to Teralta and El Cajon.

The distance from the College Campus to Teralta at Boundary Street was given as 3 miles (it could not have been more than 1 1/2 miles) and Electric Rapid Transit will build the track.

A new organization, La Mesa & El Cajon Railway Company, will continue from Teralta through La Mesa and on to El Cajon Valley terminating on the Hawley Tract.

Construction will be pushed as soon as the University Heights company shall have designated the route.

By this time interest in real estate had begun to wane. According to figures from Los Angeles the peak of the great land boom had been passed in August 1887. By then the professional boomers had taken over, tracts of land were subdivided and

the proposed town sites were given attractive names.

Auction sales were staged with brass bands and free lunches to draw the crowds. Grandiose plans were advertised, always including the building of a \$100,000 hotel, to be followed by other improvements such as cement sidewalks, street railways, water

and sewerage systems. Residents were urged to buy all the lots they possibly could and to hold them to sell to the land-hungry easterners who would rush to Southern California during the winter.

But didn't.

***Here ends part 4,
in a five part
series of Mr Dodge's
detailed look back at the
pioneering days of
electric rail transit in
San Diego***

HAPPENINGS AT THE DEPOT



Jeff Trimble photo

I put this sign on the fare box inside the PCC 539 to try and raise some money to upholster the seats. Note needy seat in the background.



Mike Reading photo

SANTA FE UNION DEPOT CELEBRATES 100TH ANNIVERSARY

The San Diego Electric Railway Association was well represented at the 100 year celebration of the Santa Fe Depot. Thanks to Mike Reading, there was a professional display showing scenes the depot being built, as well as scenes over the years. There were 2 stacks of brochures with information about the San Diego Electric Railway Assoc.

Mike was able to assemble photos for a display board and put it together in a couple of days, it was a hit with the public, Amtrak employees, depot volunteers and school kids from Sherman Elementary, who came for this event aboard the SD Trolley.

I even had an Amtrak Conductor view the exhibit and he personally thanked us for having this display there, even Amtrak did nothing for this 100th Anniversary Celebration!

SDERA was the only rail organization who had a display present for this event!

I will have this display at the April 11th members meeting for all to see!

I hope to see you at the April 11th program!

Thank you Mike!



Jeff Trimble photo

We still need \$1,500.00 more to reupholster the seats of our San Diego Trolley 539 PCC trolley, former Muni 1170. All contributions are tax deductible. We are a California 501 (c) (3) Non Profit, Tax Exempt Charitable Corporation, solely dependent upon the generosity of donors like you for our financial support. Please give generously, to make this reupholster job possible. Our Tax Exempt ID is: 33-0202834.

You can also go the web site www.sdera.org, and look for the donate button at the left.

Upon pressing the donate button, you can donate using PayPal, and designate 539 seat project.



San Diego Electric Railway Association
d.b.a. San Diego Electric Railway
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SDERA is at the historic National City Depot,
off I-5 at Mile of Cars Way - take Bay Marina
Dr. west, right on Cleveland, go one block and
left on W. 23rd St and straight into the Depot
Open Saturday and Sunday, 10AM — 4 PM.
Depot phone: call (619) 474-4400

To submit items to the Newsletter, contact : Richard Finch via e-mail (editor@sdera.org)
Items need to be submitted by the 10th of the month prior to publication. -- Next issue in June
Please send all photos in the largest size as possible. 2 or 3 meg file (about 1000 pixels on the longest side)
also include the names from left to right of people in the photos.

Attention Members: Please look carefully at the mailing label. If your membership has expired, or will expire soon, and you wish to renew your membership, or become a new member, we offer the following levels: Life, (for a single member) \$400; Family, \$35 (please include names); Regular (or Individual) \$25; Senior age 60 and up, \$15; Junior for ages 17 and below, \$15.

Checks can be made out to, SDERA and mailed to
SDERA, 922 West 23rd Street, National City, CA 91950

Upcoming Events

Monthly meetings are normally held at 7:30 PM
on the 2nd Saturday at the National City Depot.
Optional no host dinner at The Barbecue Pit
Restaurant - 920 E. Plaza Blvd, National City at
5:30PM about 1 block east of Highland Ave.
and Plaza Blvd.

Plan to arrive at 7PM to see the Gift Shop, chat,
and buy raffle tickets. The raffle starts at 7:15 PM.

April 11, 2015

SDERA president Mike Reading will present a
program titled "Let's Take the Streetcar to the
Exposition." The presentation starts by going
back to 1886, with the first
public transportation - horse cars through
early electric cars and cable cars (tie in to our
Car 54!) - serving both SD depots, moving
visitors and citizens to the exposition, the
Park trolley terminal and a few modern
connections to SDEry streetcars and routes.

YOU CAN NOW FIND US ON:



[https://www.facebook.com/pages/
San-Diego-Electric-Railway-Association/
241154262614173](https://www.facebook.com/pages/San-Diego-Electric-Railway-Association/241154262614173)

May 9, 2015

SDERA member George Geyer will present a
video covering the operation of the San Francisco
Municipal Railway from the 1950's through the
early 1980's.

Board of Directors Meetings

All members and the general public are invited
to attend the Board of Directors meetings at the
National City Depot. The meetings begin at 7:00
PM on the second Monday of each month. The
meetings for the next 3 months will be held on
April 13, May 11, and June 8, 2015.