



San Diego Electric  
Railway Association  
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July 2006

Check us out at our  
web site:  
[www.sdera.org](http://www.sdera.org)

## Historic Trolley Expert Visits SDERA Trolley Cars at the National City Depot

Paul Class, originally commissioned by the Old Spaghetti Factory Restaurant chain to supply their sites with trolley cars, came to see what happened to the one he overhauled for the San Diego store. On June 17, 2006, he arrived with his traveling partner, Wesley, to inspect our 357 car. He met with Dave Slater, SDERA project lead for the Birney, and offered a lot of insights about what can be done for car 357 in the near-term to make it more useful for our group.



Paul Class (right) and Wesley, (left) visit "Ernie" and offer some history and advice on our Bellingham, WA Birney Car.

—Photo Jeff Trimble

Mr. Class has access to parts that would enhance the car and make it a more complete display. His knowledge of the materials used in the car brings us a number of possibilities and opportunities. Among the things Dave Slater will be looking into is the purchase of proper doors for the old Birney, and the installation of a controller, bell, and seat at one end of the car. Other projects on our plate include replacing out the temporary ceiling on the car that currently has a hole for the restaurant air conditioning ducts.

Thanks to Dave and Jeff Trimble for giving our visitors a great tour of the Birney and the Vienna Cars. Dave has presented a report to the Board to consider many of Paul's great recommendations. Jeff has done quite a bit of research into this car and learned of Paul and his work.

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SDERA operates the historic National City Depot museum which is open every Saturday and Sunday from Noon to 4 p.m. Phone 619-474-4400.

### San Diego Electric Railway Association

- Jim Price, President
- Jim Papulas, Vice President
- Chris Higgins, Secretary
- Tom Matson, Treasurer
- Directors: Gene Calman, Tom Carnes, Jim Roamer
- Chris Higgins, Webmaster
- George Geyer, Bookstore
- Jim Price / Chris Higgins, Newsletter Editor(s)



## SAN DIEGO VINTAGE TROLLEY, INC.

### SDVT and SDERA Join Efforts!

San Diego Vintage Trolley, Inc (SDVT) and San Diego Electric Railway Association (SDERA) have agreed to work together to help SDVT meet its goal of restoring vintage PCC cars and running them in the San Diego Centre City loop. Both groups are pooling their talents and effort to get these cars running in time for August 2008's American Public Transit Association's meeting in San Diego.

SDERA will offer our member's support in the restoration effort and offer space on our website and in our newsletter. In return, SDERA gains the experience of restoring vintage cars that can be used later in our own projects.

### Andy Goddard Retires from MTS / SDVT

Andy Goddard, long time San Diego Trolley employee and one of the driving forces to bring streetcars back to San Diego has retired and will be leaving town. Andy was working with the Trolley as it was constructing its first line to San Ysidro and finishes his career just after the system completed the Mission Valley East extension and we celebrate 25 years of Red Trolleys in San Diego.

Though Andy was the Senior Safety Manager for the system, he was also the initial Project Manager on the Vintage Trolley project for MTS as negotiations began to bring the ex-San Francisco Muni cars from their home in Lake Tahoe. He evaluated the cars to determine their suitability to this project and helped select the candidates that were eventually selected.

Despite his move, both organizations expect that he will visit and check in on our progress from time to time!

### A Great Start and a Strong Team!

With the departure of Andy Goddard, Johnny "Chooch" Tarantino was selected as Restoration Project Manager. Working this along with his normal job managing Special Event Operations, he has

## What's Happening At San Diego Vintage Trolley?

brought a collection of MTS employee volunteers and SDERA members and has made significant progress on car 1122. Joining the effort, SDERA member Dave Slater has taken on the Assistant Project Manager role and worked a documentation miracle. He contacted Jan Lorenzen from Brooklyn, New York and was able to obtain prints, schematics and manuals for PCC cars. Dave organized the procurement of these items, and paid the costs for reproduction and shipping without request for reimbursement. These items in concert with a previous donation of descriptive parts lists and diagrams from Karl Johnson in San Francisco form a great reference library.

### ...And Then There Were Three!

Muni Car 1170, the very last of the 1100 series has joined SDVT and is now at the MTS yard waiting for restoration. The car arrived about a month ago along with a spare set of trucks.



### Recent Activities

- John Tarantino worked with Roy Horn and Dave Slater on the center doors. Roy removed the two rear windows for summertime ventilation, and Ron Sutch did a nice job wrapping them, and the front windscreens, in thick butcher paper so they won't get damaged while in storage.
- Our air tool guru, Nancy Dock, removed the rest

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of the skirting with much noise, dust, and fanfare.

- Chuck Bencik did more window work and later moved on to help with the battery compartment. We removed our new batteries, tore out the old battery shelf, and cleaned out years of rust and debris. Next time, we will spray some baking soda solution to neutralize the remaining acid, remove the remaining shelf hardware, and prep for paint.
- On May 20th, cars 1122 and 1123 were brought out into the bright San Diego sunshine while we swapped the order of the cars on our barn track. This enabled us to put 1122 off of the pit area and on solid concrete to lift it up and remove the trucks. Our crew made a custom tow bar that connects PCC cars to a forklift, and that is how we moved the cars. Although all the volunteers got to do was watch and document due to safety concerns, all this was accomplished in less than four hours.



Harry Mathis and SDVT volunteers look over the trucks from car 1122.  
-Photo John Tarantino, Jr.



Lunch was provided for the May 20 Work Party by another Tarantino—John Tarantino (Johnny's Dad). The name should be familiar to San Diego residents... maybe a restaurant with a similar name?  
- Photo by John Tarantino, Jr.

- Salvador Rivera was on hand May 20th from KGTV Channel 10 News, and did a really nice spot for us that aired on that evening's newscasts. Our most vintage volunteer, Marjorie McLaughlin,

the last female PCC Car operator from the original San Diego Electric Railway, was with us to reminisce and enjoy the cars.

- The trucks from 1122 were removed, and the motor vents covered. The trucks are waiting for a time slot for the washing bay. We could do some work now they are extremely dirty. We are considering options for reworking the traction motors (GE 1220's), electric drum brake release actuators, magnetic track brakes, and all cable replacement.
- Dave Slater came up with an idea for a hybrid pantograph / trolley pole so the cars won't need to use the larger pantographs that the current Light Rail Vehicles use. The team is working with MTS staff to determine the suitability of this concept. A mockup has been created to demonstrate the concept.

**Upcoming Work Party Dates: July 8 and 22, August 5 and 19.**

Due to security requirements, please contact John Tarantino ([jtarantino@sdera.org](mailto:jtarantino@sdera.org)) for authorization to be on the Trolley grounds.

## Ernie the Birney Gets Ready for the Big Event

There has been an incredible amount of progress made in the last few months on the Birney car. After the successful birthday party in May, it was decided that we should bring the car closer to the Depot. Jacinto Gonzalez from our neighbors at Chula Lumber helped us move the Birney and snaptrack around in a car swap exercise with a Vienna car. Huge "Thank You's" to Dave Slater, Charles Smith, Jim Price, and Bob Recks for assisting in this event. This new configuration gives us easier access to the "Ernie" during events and showcases



Jacinto Gonzalez' from Chula Lumber make it look easy as Car 357 takes to the air. - Photo by Jim Price



"Move Team" Bob Recks (top), Dave Slater, Jacinto Gonzalez, Jim Price, and Charles Smith pose with Ernie in his new home.

- Photo from Jim Price

this unique car. Dave Slater also arranged to get the electric lights connected so evening events can be supported. At the same time, additional outlets were added with the help of Bob Recks so we can easily use a vacuum and power tools in the car. The Board has also asked Dave and Tom Carnes to investigate getting the necessary wood and supplies to properly restore the ceiling.

Thanks to all of this effort, we are ready for the Dedication on July 8th!

## South Bay VW Does It Again!

Yet again, Herbie has found a best friend in South Bay Volkswagen. When we needed to have some service done to our 3/5th scale VW Streetcar-on-wheels, South Bay surprised us by donating their labor and giving us the parts at cost. Herbie now has a gas gauge and starts much better than before. Herbie will be in the Coronado 4th of July Parade and the August 6th National City Car Show.



# *Dedication of "Ernie the Birney"*

## *July 8, 2006—5:00pm*

Come join us at the Dedication and Naming Ceremony for SDERA's Birney Car. As you may recall, our Bellingham Birney was originally in the Old Spaghetti Factory in downtown San Diego. Thanks to the substantial generosity of Sam Judd, the Birney car is part of the San Diego Electric Railway's collection here at the National City Depot. He has asked that we dedicate the car to the memory of his father Lyle Judd. A plaque commemorating the generosity of Sam and the legacy of his father Lyle supporting historical preservation efforts will be placed on the car.

At the same time, the winner of the Name the Birney car contest, Ethan Lindsey and his father Ted will be on hand as we name this car "Ernie the Birney." Thanks to our friends at Trains Are Good in Point Loma, Ethan will get a \$25 gift certificate to their store.

We will be having a dinner at 5:30pm (after the Dedication) catered by National City's Barbeque Pit restaurant with either their delicious beef or chicken BBQ—and their signature sauce—with beans, fries, and salad. Please select your choice on the form below and return the form quickly so we have enough for everyone to enjoy! You may mail it to the address below by Wednesday, July 5th or fax your form with a credit card number to (858) 452-8040 by July 6th. (Attendees outside of San Diego County are urged to fax their response.)

Feel free to stay afterward for our monthly meeting starting at 7:30pm as Dave Slater updates us on the progress of the San Diego Vintage Trolley. We look forward to seeing you there!

**RESERVATION FORM — BIRNEY DEDICATION BBQ — JULY 8, 2006—5:30pm (after ceremony)**

Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ seats at the Birney Dedication Dinner

at **\$8 each for members** = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ and **\$10 each for guests** = \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Dinner preference (how many):

Address \_\_\_\_\_ **Chicken** **Beef**

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

You can also renew your membership (or join) at the same time! Check the mailing label for the expiration date.

Regular \_\_\_\_\_ \$25 Family \_\_\_\_\_ \$35 Senior \_\_\_\_\_ \$15 Life \$400 \_\_\_\_\_

Donation (tax deductible) to SDERA \$ \_\_\_\_\_ I enclose my check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make Checks Payable to **SDERA**, and mail no later than July 5 for SD County residents to:

**San Diego Electric Railway Ass'n, PO Box 89068, San Diego, CA 92138 or fax to (858) 452-8040**

Credit Card? Card #: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp \_\_\_\_\_ Type?: Visa—M/C—AmEx—Disc

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_



San Diego Electric Railway Association  
PO Box 89068  
San Diego, CA 92138

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**PAID**  
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**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

SDERA is at the historic National City Depot,  
off I-5 at Mile of Cars Way — take Bay Marina  
Drive West to Marina Way, then right.

Open every Sat. and Sun., 12 noon — 4 PM.

Depot phone: call (619) 474-4400

We're on the  
Web:  
[www.sdera.org](http://www.sdera.org)

**Attention Members: Please look carefully at the mailing label. If your membership has expired, or will expire soon, please send your dues, and your tax deductible contribution, to SDERA, PO Box 89068, San Diego, CA 92138-9068. Thank you.**

Life: \$400, Regular \$25, Family \$35 (please include names), Regular \$25, Senior (60 +) \$15, and Juniors 17 and below \$15.

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## Upcoming Events

**Monthly Meetings** are (normally) held at 7:30pm on the 2nd Saturday of the Month at the National City Depot. Join us at 5:30 (except for July) for an optional no-host dinner at Keith's Restaurant—3rd and National City Blvd. Plan to arrive by 7 p.m. to chat, and peruse the bookstore.

### **July 4—Coronado Parade**

Herbie (our 3/5th scale VW Streetcar-on-Wheels) will drive down Orange Ave as a joint entry with the Coronado Lions Club.

### **July 8—Birney Dedication BBQ / General Meeting**

Ernie the Birney Dedication Dinner at 5pm followed by the monthly meeting at 7:30pm. Dave Slater will present details on recent activity with the San Diego Vintage Trolley

restoration efforts and what you can do to join the Restoration efforts.

### **August 12—General Meeting**

SDERA Member Norman Johnson who will show Los Angeles and San Francisco Streetcar Movies in Regular 8 from the 1960's and 1970's. Norman Johnson was an Los Angeles Transit Lines (previously LA RY) streetcar operator during the last few years they were in operation until March 1963.

### **September 9—General Meeting**

Local historian Bruce Semelsberger presents Electric Rail Transit—1st San Diego Streetcars in 1887 and the horsecars of San Diego County.

We are always looking for a few good docents for the Depot. If you are interested contact Tom Matson ([tmatson@sdera.org](mailto:tmatson@sdera.org)) or (619) 275-0216.