

SAN DIEGO ELECTRIC RAILWAY

ASSOCIATION



The Trolley Lines

June 2012

Car 54 Where are you ?



A bustling downtown San Diego at the turn of the century

Those of us that can remember black and white TV may remember a goofy sitcom by the same name.

The 1960s sitcom, was about the trials and tribulations of two New York policemen featuring Joe Ross and Fred Gwynn.

While black and white TV is now a distant memory. The police car has since been scrapped and is probably now a refrigerator in the midwest somewhere. San Diego's own historic electric railway car 54 wasn't put to the torch. It has been hidden behind another exhibit at the San Diego History Center in Balboa Park. The Historical Center has had the car on loan from the Railway Historical Society of San Diego Inc. since the early 1980s.

After it was retired in 1914, it had several homes. It went from Logan Heights to Old Town beside the Whaley

House and then to the San Diego Historical Center.

We now have a chance to add this priceless piece of our transportation heritage to our collection. More on this story is on page 3



San Diego Electric Railway Association
DBA San Diego Electric Railway Co. Inc
PO Box 89068
San Diego, CA 92138
(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 Thursday through Sunday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Or visit us on the web at: www.sdera.org

San Diego Electric Railway Association, Inc

- ❖ Dave Slater - President/GM
- ❖ Tom Carnes - Vice President
- ❖ Jeff Trimble - Treasurer
- ❖ Jim Anderson - Director
- ❖ Mitch Beauchamp - Director
- ❖ Tom Matson - Director
- ❖ Charles Smith - Director
- ❖ Mike Reneau - Director
- ❖ Chris Higgins - Director/ Web Master
- ❖ Sam Judd - Corporate Counsel
- ❖ Richard Finch - Newsletter Editor
- ❖ Chuck Bencik - Editorial Staff
- ❖ Jody Surowiec - Editorial Staff
- ❖ Tom Sapien - Librarian
- ❖ Ron Sutch - Staff Photographer
- ❖ Jim Anderson - Curator of Special Collections
Gift Shop Manager/ Facilities Director
- ❖ Tom Matson - Secretary/Special events
Docent coordinator/ Membership Director

PCC Car Project Update

Dave Slater

Restoration Project Manager

Now on the web at: www.sdv.com/



June 2012

Effective June 4, 2012, Compass Cards will be the method of paying the fares for PCC Car #529. The MTS employee passes will be accepted as well. We feel that this will keep the car filled with passengers. You may purchase Compass Cards at any Trolley stop. SDVTI volunteers ride for free. Just show your MTS Security Badge.

After this vetting process we plan to move forward by adding advertising space that we hope will be entertaining for our riders. The plan is for both inside and outside advertising. Once local businesses see that the car is running with full loads, and that many eyes could be looking at their ads this phase of the project will be implemented. This additional revenue stream will be used for the restoration of the next car, #530. Currently the occasional charter brings in much needed revenue.

For charter information and scheduling, please contact Judy Leitner at MTS. (619) 557-4521. Charter service is available at almost any day or time. Please consider this venue for your next gathering.



Shown from left to right, Paul Jablonski, CEO, MTS; Harry Mathis, Chairman of MTS and SDVTI; yours truly (I should have buttoned my jacket-Smile); Wayne Terry, President, San Diego Trolley; and Lee Summerlott, Superintendent, LRV Maintenance.

The San Diego Vintage Trolley has been selected to receive the coveted People In Preservation award from Save Our Heritage Organization (SOHO). This award is being accepted on behalf of all of the SDVTI volunteers by our Chairman, Harry Mathis on May 31, 2012. In preparation for this PR event, a photo shoot was held on May 17, 2012.

It is noteworthy at this point, to say that our project is famous all over the U.S, Canada, Europe, Australia, and the Czech Republic. Years ago at the inception; I forged an alliance with all of the street car community, and their assistance has been invaluable. And we also reciprocate in kind to Restore The Magic!

For the latest information on the San Diego Vintage Trolley Project you can go to their web site at www.sdvintagetrolley.com, and click on News Releases, then scroll down to the movie we made about this.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By
Dave Slater

By the time you read this, the interior restoration should be completed on our Vienna car, #6891 on the south display track. This work is being done by Painting Specialties, Inc. of San Diego. It is very expensive. Donations are needed to refresh our treasury.

Work also continues on our VW street car parade float, # 1031; this is a complete restoration, and ongoing over the past year.

The Superintendent is yours truly, Lead Man is Anthony Carideo, assisted by Dan Kelly, Aaron Donovan, Dennis Frazier, with photos by Staff Photographer, Ron Sutch. Soon work will begin on Car #66, which we have some parts for. One panel will be restored and displayed on the north portion of our property. This project is being led by our Treasurer, Jeff Trimble.

Also nearing completion is the re-railing of our large model railroad. There are new, complex track patterns with a double crossover switch. This work is being funded by the Tim Lewis Grant. Lead man on this is Director, Charles Smith, assisted by Mike Quigg, Scotty Lewis, Pete Pearson, and Carl Lewis.

We are in the process of getting car #54, currently at the History Center in Balboa Park (Formerly in front of the Whaley House in Old Town). This project is still in the vetting stages. I along with some fellow Board members and Mike Reading attended a meeting called by Charlotte Cagan, Acting ED for the History Center in Balboa Park, along with their President, Tom Fetter.

Mike has taken the lead on this project. He contacted the Facilities Director, and they met, and took measurements of height and width of the car, along with the path to the Prado street outside the building.



Work continues on Vienna car, #6891 Photo By Richard Finch

Mike's suggestion is that the pole and the trucks be removed for the move, and a set of pneumatic rubber tired dollies be placed under the car, so the weight wouldn't crack the tiles on the floor going outside the building.

Charlotte and Tom Matson are checking on the feasibility of the car being on display outside the History Center for the upcoming 2015 100th anniversary of the park. If that plan is approved, then we will be getting the car after that event is past; if not it may be much sooner. I had a display track installed on the west side of the display area at our Museum, ostensibly for a PCC car. However, this doesn't look as though that is going to happen anytime soon. Meanwhile, we have two pieces of track inspection rolling stock displayed at that location.

Mike was especially interested in this project, since his Grand parents, the late Jim and June Reading were docents at the Whaley House in Old Town where the car was on display for many years.

A big salute goes to our Groundskeeper, Bill Steinmetz, who works tirelessly, maintaining not only all of our 1.1 acre site, but our parking lot as well! Thanks so much for your diligent work, Bill!

Please come and help your Museum grow!

A Salute To Our Volunteers!

They are:

Dave Slater
Tom Carnes
Chris Higgins
Amanda (dog)
Tim Higgins
Jim Anderson
Tom Matson
Jim Price
Randy Butler
Robert Butler
Mitch Beauchamp
Jeff Trimble
Mike Reneau
Richard Finch
George Geyer
Jason Ballard
Dan Kelly
Aaron Donovan
Ron Sutch
Gary Johnson
Sergio Lopez
Michael Ballard
Jody Suroweic
John DeLalla
Robert Baxter
Samantha (dog)
Missy Cheeseman
Keeper (cat)
Anthony Carideo
Kinoa (dog)
Sean McColgan
Sandy (dog)
Patrick McColgan
Scotty Lewis
Tim Lewis
Carl Lewis
Tom Sapien
"Pete" Pearson
Mike Quigg
Matt Zacharzuk
Bill Steinmetz
Conrad Gomez

WE COULDN'T OPERATE
WITH OUT YOU!

The Story of Car 54

By
Eric Sanders

Resting in the back room of the San Diego History Center in Balboa Park is the body of one-time San Diego Electric Railway Company street car # 54.

The car awaits restoration and exhibition.

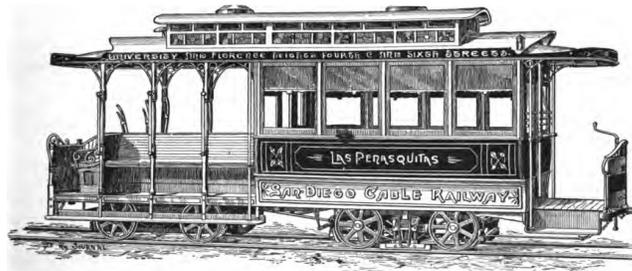
The informed visitor will examine the body structure with great care because this car was built here in San Diego from the bodies of two former cable cars [top photo]. Examine the roof and clerestory, check the details against those visible in old cable car photographs, and one will see that the Cable car ancestry is clearly evident in street car number 54.

In 1892 the San Diego Cable Railway Company closed down and twelve combination style (open-closed) and two all-open type cars went out of service.

However in 1896 after remodeling and a conversion into electric streetcars the twelve combination style cars were returned to service by the new owners, Citizens Traction Company. The track was still narrow gauge but the overhead catenary and other necessary electrical facilities had replaced the in-street endless wire cable loop.

The life of the line was short lived as in 1898 service was again discontinued. In time, the Citizens Traction franchise, cars and other facilities were purchased by the San Diego Electric Railway Company.

The uptown narrow gauge track was converted into standard



gauge and then combined with SDERY's own Fifth Avenue line. The remaining narrow gauge rail was abandoned. The SDERY's own cars went into service on the line and the twelve narrow gauge cars went into storage.

In 1903, four of the cars were scrapped but the remaining eight were worked over into four double ended electric cars. This was done by cutting away one third of an old car and splicing it with the remains of another car. The re-built cars, numbered 51 through 54, then went back into service on SDERY's lines.

In 1914 the much-publicized center entrance "Exposition Cars" began arriving and many of the old cars were displaced. Electric cars 51 through 54 went into dead storage. As an economy move two years later the cars were sold for scrap.

The body of number 54, less trucks and electrical equipment, was purchased by H. H Himebaugh. He located the car body in Logan Heights on the west side of the 2100 block of Logan Avenue (there's the body of an "Exposition Car" located today on the east side of the same block). The closed sections were boarded up and Himebaugh used the car as a real estate office.

Two members of the Railway Historical Society of San Diego (RHSofSD) who lived in Logan Heights in the twenties remember seeing the car there.

Two or three years later the car body was moved to the backyard of the family home at 2140 Kearny Avenue. Until his health failed; Himebaugh continued to use it as his office. The home later passed into the hands of Himebaugh's daughter, Mrs. Nellie Clower. Members of the Clower family used the car as living quarters and for storage.

In 1955 RHSofSD member Lyle Judd (Sam Judd's father) "rediscovered" the car and the Society started negotiations to acquire it for their collection.

In 1958 Mrs. Clower donated the car to the Society and on March 15, Robert E. Staite, a contractor who once "hawked" newspapers on the car, moved it to the M. H Hiesman's "Bullfrog Haven" at 47th and Nogal Streets. Later, it was moved to the Star Machine Company yard on 10th Avenue. Another move became necessary in 1962.

On the assurance of RHSofSD member Jack Stodelle that the Society would appropriate funds for professional labor and materials, the San Diego County Board of Supervisors approved the exhibition of the car at the rear of the Whaley House in Old Town after restoration had been completed.

In May 1962 the Board of Supervisors approved immediate placement of the car in the Old Town location. During the May hearing, Chairman DeGraaf Austin recalled that he had ridden to and from school on Car 54.

Memories of Car #54

By
Mike Reading

My Grandparents were the curators of the Whaley House in the early sixties after the house was restored by the County of San Diego. My Grandfather was also member of the Railway Historical Society of San Diego. (RHSofSD)

When the Society acquired the Car 54 carbody he made the initial contact with the County about storing and displaying Car 54 at the Whaley House.



Car Number 54 at the turn of the century



Car Number 54 in the courtyard of the Whaley House

As a young boy during the sixties, I played a lot on Car 54 (pretending to run the car) when the family would visit my Grandparents at the Whaley House.

Later, prior to the American Freedom Train's visit to San Diego in 1976, the organizers of this train was asking for display materials from around the country. My idea was to model the Whaley House, along with a model of Car 54 as a diorama. My Grandfather and I spent about 3 hours photographing and measuring the house and car.

Car 54 stayed at the Whaley House until the late 70s or so until it was moved to Balboa Park to be put into what is now the San Diego History Center in the Casa de Balboa Building. The front of the building was left open until the car was placed inside. One interesting note: you mention that Robert E. Staite once

worked aboard Car 54, and him later moving it for the RHSofSD.

I worked for his company about 10 years ago!

When I went along with other SDERA members to meet with the SDHC Executive Director, she mentioned that Mr Staite was one of the Board members of the SD Historical Society! Small World!!



Car Number 54 today in the back room of the History Center



April 14, 2012

Letters from Members

Dear Tom Matson,

Please extend thanks to the group for continuing to send fine newsletters. The April issue was packed with items. In looking back in my files, I find the November 2010 issue most informative-about the beach lines.

Concerning the April 2012 issue: Suggestion: Return the masthead depictions to show the PCC as it should be--with doors on the proper (right) side. The April suggests the existence of a PCC with its doors on the left side. That would be fine in Melbourne, Australia, but not in San Diego.

[*editors note: Sharp eye Bill. I will correct that in a future issue.*]

The article (p.2) on car 529 is great. I'm eager to get to SD to ride it, but my age is suggesting few, if any more travels. I turned 89 in February.

Car 529 has a feature missing---the blinker or flashing light to the left of the driver.

Most of the riders of 529 may not realize there were several differences between the early prewar PCCs and 529. Also there were differences between the St. Louis and the Pullman Standard cars. Standee windows for example. Page 4 of the issue clearly shows the features of those early PCCs.

On page 3 I found very interesting data concerning the operation and ridership of SDERy. It's difficult to imagine that in Sept, '43 there were over 11,000,000 passengers. I was in the service then, and away from that excitement.

I have some questions about pages 4 and 5. On the whole accurate, but here are some lingering questions. I don't believe those NYC cars operated on the L's. They were on street level operations, but were owned and operated by the L co. The L equipment was much different, with passenger access at boarding-levels.

The writer forgot to ascribe some capital letters: North Park, for example. The sequence of paragraphs gives the reader the notion that the wyes for the new PCCs were installed in the 1940s. As the new PCs arrived in 1936, the wyes had to be installed--for routes 3,7, and 11 and a loop for the end of the 2 line.

On page 5, car #414 is waiting. But it's not at the end of the line It's standing at 4th Street and University---waiting to proceed to the single track between 47& St. and Euclid. The Piggly Wiggly market at the corner is a familiar spot, for the State College bus route terminated at that corner. It operated from that corner to State College on several daily trips to match the class hours. I remember that old bus -- a Twin Coach, very noisy, emitting clouds of smoke.

Missing in the article is more information concerning the specials operating to the Consolidated parts plant - on the old beach line on Kettner, near old town. In the discontinuance of the beach lines, the wires on Kettner had been brought down, but tracks remained (maybe some covered with asphalt). Then came the war. The wires were restored. Tracks to accommodate several cars were installed at the parts plant. A new double-track switch was placed at the junction of Kettner and B.

Before and after the shifts at the plant the crowded streetcars rolled. There were standees as the cars traveled on Kettner and moved onto B St. At 5th Avenue many passengers left to transfer to other routes. But cars #7 and # 11 continued on B and reached 12th and turned toward the park. They remained crowded until they reached their major discharge points on University and on Adams avenues. On a second shift (shift change around 11 p.m.) run, I (on a short leave) was the "guest" of a female operator of a #7 route -- a class 5 car. Just the two of us rode from the Adams car barn to the parts plant, and en route she showed me a number of the features of the operation, especially as we glided through the Park to B street, and made a right turn. She was very alert to the signals on the route through the park -- both coming and going. Once the car was loaded at the parts plant, we rode on Kettner, then B Street, up through the park, and on east on University to Euclid. Then we rode back to Park Blvd empty, turned at the switches at University and Park, and returned to the Adams Avenue car barn.

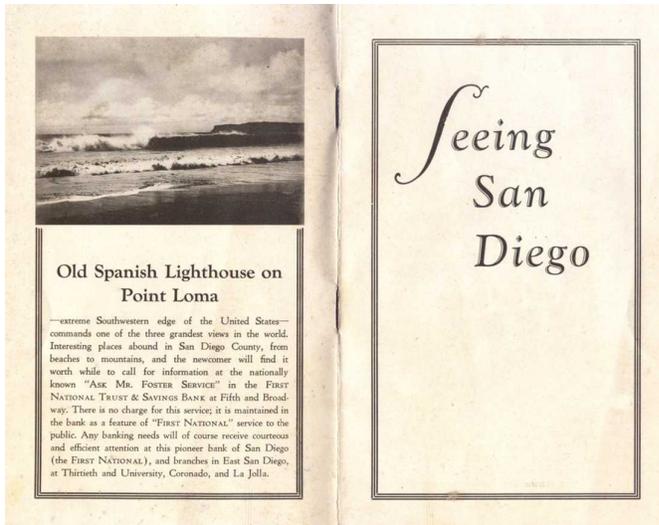
Thanks again for the fine April newsletter.

My membership: Membership becomes due Nov. 2012. Enclosed is a check for \$45 for a continuing membership for 3 years.

Best wishes,

William G. Jamison

[PCC Project Manager's note :
The purpose of the white lens
flasher on the left front of the cars
was to alert oncoming street cars
when they were apparently, but not
really on a head on course on a pass-
ing siding. CALPUC said, and we agree
that it is redundant today with our
operation configuration.]



From The Desk Of The Editor

I would like to welcome and thank Chuck Bencik and Jody Surowiec who have joined the editorial staff. They are volunteering their time along with Tom Matson to proof read and fact check the newsletters for accuracy. Our intent is to make our newsletter as informative as it is entertaining.

I would also like to thank Mike Reading and Bill Jamison for their first hand accounts of their experiences and memories found else were in this issue.

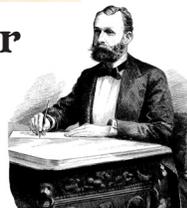
While I was looking in the archives, I came across a pamphlet entitled "Seeing San Diego" that is so eloquent in its simple design that I would not even try to improve on it so here is a sneak preview. Though there

is no date printed on it. The content and photos appear to be from the period of 1915 to the late 1920's.

Inside is loaded with detailed information of the different trolley lines, where they go, and what you will see along the way.

I will be starting the series in the August issue. Just in time for the summer heat. That said it would only be fitting that we start with the Beach lines.

If you have any stories or memories of riding the trolley to the amusement park in Mission Beach, a picnic at the Cove, or anywhere in between; I would like to share it with the other members.



==== The 3 Railer News ====

By Charles Smith

The track replacement project at the toy train layout has reached a major milestone with the installation of the final two turnouts in our original design.

All of the tinplate tubular track mainline has been replaced with true nickel silver rail. The sidings and mainline track have power and

separate grounds. Over half of the turnouts are now remotely operated.

Several buildings and some of the scenery have been returned. Several new concepts for the presentation of the layout are being considered as we move from a modular train table to a more permanent display.

WISH LIST

- ✓ A golf cart with pick up style body, in good condition
- ✓ A 6,000lb forklift in good condition
- ✓ A "clamp on" style vise
- ✓ 2 "Lapel style" Microphones
- ✓ 2 Mannequins, one male, one female

Please contact Dave Slater

Davesugi@cox.net or (619) 222-5442.

All donations are tax deductible, as you may know, we are a California 501 (c) (3) California Non Profit Corporation. Tax Exempt # 33-0202834.

PLEASE REMEMBER US

We ask that you name us in your Wills, and or Trusts as a beneficiary for real estate, stocks, bonds, or bank accounts. These can be in the form of the above, or immediate donations.

There are great tax advantages for you in doing these things. Our Corporate Attorney, Sam Judd, is set up for just these type things. Or, your own attorney or advisor can work with you on. Your help in these areas is one of the things that will keep our organization sound on into the future.

Please join the people currently enrolled.

Please contact me, Dave Slater, President, @ Davesugi@cox.net or (619) 222-5442.

Thank you so much for your kind consideration. *Parenthetically, I have never seen an armored car in a funeral procession.*



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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 Thursday through Sunday, 9 AM — 5 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 15th
of the month prior to publication. -- Next issue in August

Please send all photos in the largest size as possible. 2 or 3 meg file (about 800 pixels on the longerst side)

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.

Upcoming Events

Monthly meetings are normally held at 7:30 PM on the
2nd Saturday at the National City Depot.
Optional nohost dinner at The Barbeque Pit Restaurant
- 920 E.Plaza Blvd, National City at 5:30PM about 1 block
east of Highland Ave. and Plaza Blvd. (Except March,
June, and September when we do a potluck).
Plan to arrive at 7PM to see the Gift Shop, chat, and buy
raffle tickets. The raffle starts at 7:15 PM.

General Meeting - Birney street car system - June 9th, 2012

The June 9 program will be by Jeff Trimble who will
tell us about the Bellingham, Washington Birney streetcar
system. Our Birney car came from there. There was also a
sister "feeder" interurban line in the area. He will show us
some rare photos from that time frame. This line was able
to last many years longer than other lines as they used the
less expensive Birney trolley cars for their system.

The Birney name comes from Charles Birney who
designed this no frills economic car in the early 1900's.
It was made by several streetcar makers.

June is also potluck month at the National City Depot.

We hope you can participate and if you can do so please
bring a serving for at least 8 people. Please set it up be-
tween 5:30 to 6:00 PM so the potluck can start at 6:00 PM.
Please call Tom Matson (619) 275-0216 to let him know
what you plan on bringing and leave your name and number
if he is not available.

General Meeting - Street Cars of Canada - July 14th, 2012

On July 14th, Phil Craig, an SDERA member who lives in New
Jersey, will show his HD-1080i videos of the light rail systems
and heritage streetcar lines in Calgary and Edmonton, Alberta.
After the break, he will switch to the recently opened light rail
lines in Charlotte, North Carolina and Norfolk, Virginia."

West Coast Regional Garden Railway Convention - July 6-7, 2012

Garden Railway Conventions, West Coast Regional Meets
only have 'self-guided tours' of the Open Houses. We provide
our visitors with a Tour Guide, which will include a daily sched-
ule, maps and descriptions of our garden layouts. These will be
obtained through our online Registration at
SDGRS.com and bonitagardentrains@cox.net. Scheduled to
be open **Friday, July 6**, will be our member's garden railways
located in San Diego's Southern, our Central and East County.
Saturday, July 7, the Open Houses will be on San Diego's
Pacific Coast, inland to the east and will extend into our North
County. Also in the plans, we will have for our Members and
Visitors, an optional, pay for banquet at The Old Poway Park,
with their steam engine.

For current information or questions, email to bonita-gardentrains@cox.net or call Gene Cook at 619-948-1467 and
619-479-9164.

SD Model RR Museum Swap Meet - October 13, 2012

San Diego Model RR Museum in Balboa Park - Casa de Balboa
Building, Museum's Rear Entrance. Cost: Buyers \$2, Sellers \$5
Jim Anderson - 619-22-1041 for additional information