

SAN DIEGO ELECTRIC RAILWAY ASSOCIATION



TROLLEY LINES

San Diego Electric
Railway Association
DBA San Diego
Electric Railway Co.
PO Box 89068
San Diego, CA 92138
(619) 474-4400

April 2009

Check us out at our
web site:

www.sdera.org

Landmark Tower Rebuilt



Photographer unknown - Tom Matson Collection

The tower that was a long-time fixture at Euclid and University has been rebuilt. Seen in this 1940s photo with Car 433 (above) at the end of the 7 Line, the Euclid tower stood for years until termites finally forced its demolition in 1999. Built in 1932, it was once a drive-in hamburger restaurant and has hosted several businesses over the years. There were clocks on the four sides of the tower but they were removed due to children shooting out the plate glass clock faces with pellet guns and slingshots. The photo below shows the new structure that is now the Tower Bar. It has been restored to the original dimensions - including the 110 ft height.



Photo by Chris Higgins

In front of the tower, SDERy installed a Wye late in 1936 or early 1937 so operators could turn the new single-ended PCC cars around.

Today, the tower is far more colorful, reflecting the City Heights diverse tastes and ethnic population. The building pictured in the top photo with the curved roof is still there but with a new facade.

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Psst! Wanna Know a Secret?

This newsletter is available in **color** on our website! See www.sdera.org and look on our Newsletters page.

SDERA operates the historic National City Depot museum which is open Thursday through Sunday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Phone 619-474-4400.

San Diego Electric Railway Association

- David Slater, President
- George Geyer, Vice President
- Chris Higgins, Secretary / Webmaster / Newsletter Editor
- Tom Matson, Treasurer / Docent & Membership Coordinator
- Directors: Jim Price, Tom Carnes, Mitch Beauchamp, Jeff Trimble, Jim Anderson
- Gift Shop Manager - Jim Anderson

PCC Car Project Update

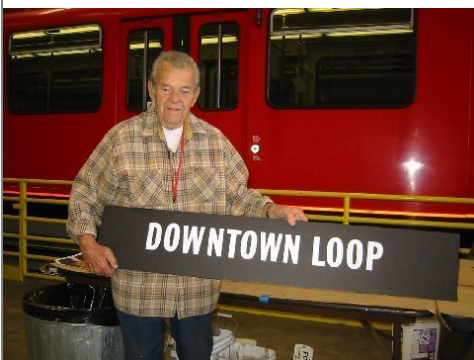
- Dave Slater, Project Manager

Now on the web at www.sdera.org/sdvt

The rebuild of PCC Car #529 continues. A lot of the new steel work has been completed on the outside of the car, and it has been prepped for primer paint. By the time you read this, the exterior primer should have been applied. Then, she will be rolled to the stub end of Track #6, East, and she will be raised up high on four electric jacks. Her trucks will be rolled out of the way, the cutters and welders will be back to remove rotted steel under carriage frame work, and it will be replaced with new steel.

The new special order 1" plywood has arrived, and parts of it have been cut and fitted into the rear of the car. Harry Mathis and I went over to visit her last Thursday and met with Carlos Guzman, the owner of CG Guzman Industries, and he walked us through, and gave us a detailed report on the progress of this vast effort. Parts of the metal around the front windshield and around the front destination box are rotted metal and that will also be replaced. The glass contractor was called in and he will advise Carlos and his Manager as to how they will fabricate and install a metal lip around the front windshield to hold the rubber windshield glass gasket. Once again, after a very close inspection, I must say that the work is pristine! All new metal body trim and rain gutters has been fabricated at the Guzman Long Beach Shops, brought to our Shops, and painted with primer before being mounted on the car. This is not the way it was done originally, but it will lead to a much longer lasting car. KUDOS to CG Industries!

Meanwhile, back at the A Shop, Track #3, work continues on cars #530 & #531. I had Art Aydelotte fabricate a new destination sign for the first car in the line-up, which happens to presently be #531. (We do move the cars around from time to time.) The lettering on this sign is exactly the same size as the LRV's, which is 4" high. It reads DOWNTOWN LOOP, white on black.



Art displays the new "Destination Sign"
Photo by Ron Sutch

This is the primary sign that will be displayed on the roll for the front and side destination boxes. Others will be: NOT IN SERVICE, SPECIAL, HELLO SAN DIEGO! As always, a very nice

job! Many thanks, Art!

Dennis Frazier, Ron Sutch, Tom Carnes, Paul Burshteyn and new member Dan Kelly, with Art Aydelotte as a hands on consultant, have been installing new Masonite panels and new oak wood moldings under the windows. (Paul Burshteyn is a Coaster Locomotive Engineer and Dan Kelly is a former carnival and ride mechanic. Both bring a lot to our team! Welcome once again to the Project as well as to SDERA!) This task is very time consuming and requires a great deal of accuracy. Some of the aluminum end pieces have had to be drilled out and milled and then re-fit to take new mounting screws. The mounting screws are all much better hardware than originally installed with the idea that they will last longer. Dennis, Tom, and Nadya Midgley also assisted Art in the rebuild of the sander apparatus that is now complete and ready for delivery to #529. Since the last issue of Trolley Lines, I had Chuck Bencik come in to work on installing the last window crank, and with a lot of adjusting of the interior of the handle, Chuck got it mounted properly. Thanks, Chuck! Dennis has assumed the duties of Battery Maintenance and he keeps our three sets of batteries clean, filled with distilled water, and fully charged. This servicing is completed twice a month on a rigorous schedule. Lately, we have been using a lot of "juice" for demonstrations and a TV stand up with Ken Kramer's "About San Diego" show on KNSD Channel 7/39

(Continued on page 7)



Ken Kramer interviewing Marjorie McLaughlin, one of the first women hired to operate Streetcars during WWII, while men were off to war. She appears here in her ORIGINAL Uniform.
Photo by Ron Sutch

Upcoming Work Party Dates: Work Sessions are now being held Tuesday, and Thursday from 10am to 2pm. *Due to security requirements, please contact Dave Slater / 619-222-5442 for authorization to be on the Trolley grounds. Saturday Work Sessions have been temporarily suspended.*



President's Message

Dave Slater

The demolition of the two buildings on the east side of what, for a very short time, is still Harrison Avenue began about two weeks ago (shown in the photo below). In conversation with the Community Development Commission (CDC) members of National City, who oversee all re-development and are also our landlord, they tell us: "Demolition of these two buildings will be followed by the removal and permanent closure of Harrison Avenue, then on or about September 9, 2009, the black top on the south lot will be removed and that area graded. The fence will be removed and a wrought iron fence will be installed with a large sliding gate where our east gate is now. After that is completed, the same work will commence on the north lot." Stay tuned for these stories and more! (Yes, the timing is different than originally announced.) Initial plans for the lot across the street appear to be for a "family-style" restaurant to support the area and the new hotel being built across Bay Marina Drive.

On page 6 of this issue you may view photos of both the installing of a snap track extension on NC Depot Track #2, and the placement in our yard of a Ballast Regulator and a Track Tamping machine. These are temporary exhibits. It is a once in a lifetime opportunity for some of us and our visitors to get up close and personal with this equipment. This work took place about two weeks ago. Also in this issue, you will see our wish list. Please help out with anything that you can on this list. We have a great need for these items. Our SDERy White Line truck has been off-loaded from Gary Sweetwood's rail hauler trailer, as the trailer is needed for another rail transport assignment.

I also had our two motor cars installed on Track #1 center. This is another opportunity to see them in the context they were built for. IE: on the rails. Thanks to Bob Recks, Dr. Dunn's trailer was returned to him after two years. Thanks a lot for the use of you trailer, Doctor!



Photo by Chris Higgins

Once again, many thanks to all of our volunteers, without whom we could not move forward.

We have several new items in our Gift Shop! We have mouse pads featuring SDVT/SDERy PCC car #531, - a very handsome sight - as well as SDERy DVDs and several new books donated by both Dr. John Hopperton and yours truly.

April Wish List - Donations Needed

- Either a 40' storage container or a 40+' semi trailer for storage of strategic Museum artifacts and equipment.
- A laptop computer, preferably with Windows XP.
- Cash Donations - large and small to keep us rolling.
- Advertising to tell about our Museum and Gift Shop.
- Volunteers for our many projects, staffing & cashiers for our Gift Shop.
- Street car artifacts of all kinds from our San Diego Electric Railway Co.

As always, all donations are tax deductible to the full extent provided by law. Our Tax ID is: 33-0202834.

Winter Storm Damages Depot

A strong winter storm hit the San Diego area February 9th with heavy rains and high winds. A service access hatch on the flat part of the roof of the Depot was blown off and wound up in the middle of the parking lot. Since the Depot was closed other than for our tenants, that part of the lot was empty.

National City sent a Public Works employee to survey the required repairs and a Fire Department ladder truck arrived the next day when the weather was calmer to place the door back on the roof. The city also inspected the roof and determined that other repairs were required and they will be done after the rainy season.



SDERY Car 406 near the end of the 7 line at University Ave and Menlo Ave March 1948 by Eric Sanders
(Eric Sanders Collection in the SDERY Library)



SDERY Car 403 in storage at the Imperial Car Barn April 17, 1949 by Eric Sanders
(Eric Sanders Collection in the SDERY Library)



SDERy Car 402 — End of the 11 line April 11, 1948 by Eric Sanders (Eric Sanders Collection in the SDERy Library)



SDERy Car 401 at the Adams Ave. Car Barn, March 1948, by Eric Sanders (Eric Sanders Collection in the SDERy Library)

Odd Looking Visitors in the Depot Yard



A crane moves snap track around in the yard prior to moving the MOW vehicles onto Track 2. Photo by Robert Baxter

Strange looking creatures have appeared in the yard of the National City Depot. Oddly shaped yellow things appeared March 7 accompanied by a large white crane. In fact, these weird machines are Maintenance Of Way (MOW) vehicles on loan from Gary Sweetwood.

The yard was rearranged and snap track was used to extend our “display tracks”. Our track inspection cars were moved to the space between the Birney car and the Vienna car on Track 1. The new visitors sit on Track 2 so they are one of the first items seen when you enter the Yard.

The first of the MOW systems is a “Fairmount Tamper Electromatic Mark I” ballast tamper. Tampers can do three things; tamping, jacking, and lining. Tamping is the shoring of ballast below the ties to improve the support of the track. Jacking involves lifting and vertically aligning track to even

out bumps. Lining is adjusting the lateral alignment of the tracks. Prior to the introduction of mechanical tampers, this task was done by manual labor. As well as being faster, more accurate, more efficient and less labor-intensive, tamping machines are essential for the use with concrete ties since they are too heavy to be packed into the ballast by hand.

Tamping machines have four pairs of metal rods with small paddles specifically designed to move gravel easily. Two pairs of the tools bracket the rail on each side of the tie - looking much like chopsticks. They push through the ballast to a designated point below the tie, oscillating at a very fast rate (“liquefies” the ballast), and then squeeze the ballast up under the tie.

Behind the tamper is a Kershaw Ballast Regulator—a machine designed for ballast shaping and profiling. A plow in the front helps to push the ballast and give it a uniform height. Wings reach out to help profile the ballast and give it a uniform appearance. On the back is a rotary broom to sweep ballast forward. In some cases, two regulators might be used together - one to plow the



Above: A Ballast Tamper sits next to the Birney car. Left: The Ballast Regular shows its odd shielding.

Photos by Tom Matson

ballast and one to sweep (shape) the stones. One machine is capable of both activities. Most regulators and many other MOW vehicles are equipped with a turntable that allows the machine to rotate and change directions.

Let’s admit it - none of us dream of how cool it would be to drive a Maintenance Of Way vehicle at less than 1 MPH but without these important tools, today’s railroads would be a far more dangerous and bumpy. Make sure you get a chance to check them out while they’re here!

-Chris Higgins





PCC Car Project Update

(Continued from page 2)

San Diego. Thanks so much to Gena Holle for arranging this long sought after work with Ken Kramer!

I have made purchase arrangements, in concert with Harry, to buy 8 of the proper Class 1 railroad style wheels from the Branford Electric Railway Museum of Branford, Connecticut! Each truck has four wheels, thus these are enough wheels for one car. These wheels were removed from Chicago Transit Authority's (CTA) high speed "El" cars when they were taken out of service. They have between 0% and 5% total wear! This is a great find! Harry had our check for only \$9,500 sent out several weeks ago. They will be piggy backed on an order being sent to the Orange Empire Railway Museum (OERM) and we will bring them home from there. I have arranged for a donor to cover the entire amount! The wheels that we currently have on all of our three cars as well as the extra set of trucks are "Street Car" wheels. That is to say they have a narrow tire width, and a short flange that will not stay on the rails of our Class 1 Railroad that we operate on, ergo the necessity for the change out. I recently had an electronic conversation with the sellers, and they inform us that our wheels will arrive at OERM on April 1, 2009. No joke intended, it just happens to be the ETA.

As well as being our Staff Photographer for our Project, I have appointed, with our Board's approval Ron Sutch as Recruiting Officer. He has fabricated a beautiful Story Board all about our project, and is taking this to all kinds of gatherings, far and wide, to bring in new members. The latest appearance was at the OERM semi-annual Swap Meet which was a great success. Many thanks, Ron!

The eyes of America and Europe (including the Czech Republic) are upon our project, as we are the only "Start Up" street car operation anywhere. Restoration of street cars is VERY expensive. We need more donors to help us "Restore The Magic". Please contact me if you would like to make your mark and be a part of financing this undertaking. All SDVT donors who allow their names to be used will be memorialized on a brass plaque. We depend upon donors to move forward. May we please be your favorite charity? It is tax deductible to the full extent allowed by

current IRS Code. Contact Dave Slater for more information at (619) 222-5442 or dslater@sdera.org.

Wheel Fund Progress!

As many of our readers know, this fund raiser has been in progress since early June 2008. A great deal of cash has been raised, and there is



Ken Kramer apparently is enjoying looking at the controls, while Ed Herold looks on.
Photo by Ron Sutch

a great deal more that is needed. The San Diego Vintage Trolley, Inc. (SDVT) is a California 501(c) (3) non profit, tax exempt, charitable corporation and a wholly owned subsidiary of the Metropolitan Transit System. As you also know, the San Diego Electric Railway Association is a major supporter of SDVT. Please earmark your donation to help "Restore The Magic - Wheel Fund". Here is the total money needed to buy 32 PCC wheels and the donors, as well as a complete breakdown to date:

Total money needed: \$144,000 @ \$4,500 each wheel

Donations:

Jeff T: \$450	Slater: \$600
Sundack: \$50	Aydelotte: \$1,000
Roamer: \$500	Hopperton: \$9,500
Becker: \$200	(and other anonymous donors)
Copeland: \$40	

Total donations to date: \$17,440

Total expenditures to date: \$9,500 for EIGHT wheels! This is a special deal I found!

Remaining cash on hand: \$7,940

Total funds needed: \$126,560

Please mail checks to: The San Diego Vintage Trolley made out to SDVT, and "Wheel Fund" on the memo line, to:

San Diego Vintage Trolley, Inc.
Attn: Rebecca Zelt Suite #900
1255 Imperial Avenue
San Diego, CA 92101

Having the proper railroad wheels will allow us to remove the current MUNI street car wheels, and install railroad wheels with deeper flanges and wide tread to run our PCC cars on the tracks of the San Diego Trolley, which operates over the San Diego & Arizona Eastern Railroad.



Ed Herold (also in his ORIGINAL uniform) relates to Ron Sutch how he put the LAST Streetcar into the Car barn at Adams Avenue in April, 1949. Ron is SDVT's Staff Photographer.

Photo by Ron's Camera



San Diego Electric Railway Association
d.b.a. San Diego Electric Railway
PO Box 89068
San Diego, CA 92138
(619) 474-4400

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

Open Thursday through Sunday, 9 AM — 5 PM.

Depot phone: call (619) 474-4400

Visit us on the Web! www.sdera.org

To submit items to the Newsletter, contact Chris Higgins
via e-mail (webmaster@sdera.org) or phone (858-521-
0895). Items need to be submitted by the 18th of the
month prior to publication.

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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 night at the National City Depot. We normally have an optional no host dinner at Keith's restaurant at 3rd and National City Blvd at 5:30. (In Mar, June, and Sept we have potlucks at the depot.) Plan to arrive at 7pm to see the Gift Shop, chat, and buy raffle tickets. The raffle starts at 7:15 PM.

Saturday, April 11 - Michael Janusek presents a video on the last three electric railway freight operations.

Saturday, May 9 - Bob Moore presents Yakama Washington Electric Railway operations in the 1970's.

Sunday, May 3 - It's Back! Ex-Santa Fe 3751 will make its 2009 appearance in San Diego. The Central Chapter of the National Railroad Historical Society and the Pacific Locomotive Association sponsors this trip from Los Angeles

with an open-door baggage car and three dome cars. For additional information, see www.goldenstaterails.com.

Saturday, May 9 - Model Railroad Swap Meet - 7-11am. San Diego Model Railroad Museum in Balboa Park - Rear Entrance. Contact Jim Anderson at 619-221-1041 with questions. Buyers \$2 / Sellers \$5.

Saturday, June 20 - All Gauge Train Swap Meet - La Jolla. Contact Jim Anderson at 619-221-1041 with questions.

Next Board Meetings - April 13 and May 11 at 7:00pm at the National City Depot.

San Diego Electric Railway DVDs are available in our Gift Shop for \$19.95. Orders for these unique pieces of San Diego Streetcar history can be done by phone— 619-474-4400 during Depot hours or you can get one next time you're at the Depot!