



San Diego Electric Railway Association  
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 San Diego, CA 92138  
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 October 2005

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

# 'VIENNA CARS' ARE IN PLACE AT THE DEPOT

Austrian visitor provides a treasure trove of information

- Jim Price



Car 6888 arrives first into the National City Depot yard while SDERA 3-Railer Pete Pearson looks on. —Photo by Chris Higgins

It was an amazing day: Saturday August 6, the three "Vienna" streetcars were moved from the San Diego Trolley yard to the National City Depot. The day got off to a late start due to a problem with the towing company we had originally hired. But C&D Towing arrived on the scene around 1 p.m., and things moved quickly. Guided by Fred Byle, the SD Trolley Yard

Supervisor, a skilled crew of rail workers got the cars loaded, one by one, onto a Landall trailer. The workers then followed the streetcars to the NC Depot and assisted in off-loading them. Earlier in the day, our neighbor, Jacinto Gonzalez of Chula Lumber, had moved some pieces of "snap track" and the Birney car around the NC Depot yard with his forklift to prepare for the arrival of the Vienna cars. [Thanks, Jacinto!] As the Vienna cars arrived, they were carefully unloaded from the Landall trailer to the track we had laid down. The whole thing

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The MTS crew guides the last of the cars into the yard. —Photo by Andy Goddard

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## San Diego Electric Railway Association

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

## 'VIENNA CARS' ARE IN PLACE AT THE DEPOT



John Buckland (C&D Towing), Fred Byle, Alfredo Ramirez, and Danny Glover from MTS with car 6890.

— Photo by Andy Goddard

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took less than 4 hours! There are many photos of this exciting day on the SDERA web page ([www.sdera.org](http://www.sdera.org)— see the Photo Gallery section). Many thanks to Jeff Trimble and Chuck Bencik who have done considerable research on the history of these cars already.

Meanwhile we were contacted by Peter Bader who lives in Vienna, Austria; Peter edits the Austrian “railfan” magazine called Tramway and Model. He and his wife visited us on Sept. 22 to see the Vienna cars in person – and they brought us some very valuable material that should aid in our restoration work: photos, diagrams, magazine articles, a book about Austrian streetcars, and other items. Of



SDERA President Jim Price, Dave Slater, Peter Bader and his wife, and Jeff Trimble during their visit to our Austrian Streetcars.

—Photo by Tom Matson

course most of it's in German – so some translation help would be useful! SDERA members Dave Slater, Jeff Trimble, Jim Price, and Tom Matson were there to greet Peter and his wife and show them the cars. Their group knew these cars as “Green Mummies” since they were always under green tarps. This time, they got to see them unwrapped and in their bright yellow and red splendor! Unfortunately, the next job is to cover them up to get ready for Winter.

## VIENNA CARS ARE FEATURED IN A.R.M. LATEST MAGAZINE

The most recent edition of Railway Museum Quarterly from the Association of Railway Museums (ARM) features our “Vienna” cars along with a short article about their acquisition. Mention is also made of our acquiring the Birney carbody from the Old Spaghetti Factory. [Apologies to Chris Higgins: the photo on page 17 (also here to the right) was credited to Jim Price, but was actually taken by Chris]

- Jim Price



Vienna Cars at the MTS Yard near Petco Park — Photo by Chris Higgins



## OFFICER NOMINATIONS NOW OPEN!!

**Officers:** The SDERA Nominating Committee, consisting of “3 Jims” - Papulas, Price, & Roamer - is soliciting nominations for Officers and Directors of SDERA for the year 2006. We need to fill: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and 2 of 3 Director (member-at-large) positions. Gene Calman will continue as a Director into the second year of a two-year term. We are required by our organization’s By-Laws to present a slate of officers at the Annual Meeting, which will be held this year on November 19 (see article on page 5). PLEASE support your organization by contacting the Nominating Committee to indicate your willingness to serve.

**PERSONAL NOTE FROM JIM PRICE:** For a variety of reasons, I would like VERY much to not be President of SDERA next year. If it turns out that I do continue in that office, my direct involvement with SDERA will have to be considerably less than it has been this past 2 years. Hence the need for Project Leaders as discussed below.

**Project Chairmen:** We are looking for at least 12 “Good Men and Women” to serve as Project Chairmen to help accomplish many of our critical projects. A budget would come with each of these projects.

**Fund raising, grant writing.** In order to undertake any of our major projects (listed below), we need money – doesn’t everyone. We need someone to dedicate him/herself to researching available grants, applying for them, doing fund-raising with our members and the community, etc.

**Protective Structure for Vienna cars, Birney car.** We urgently need someone to find a structure to protect our newly acquired streetcars from weather elements and possible damage. Given that we have only a 2-year lease on the depot, we need a structure that can be moved without major expense. Something on the order of a “carport” for large RVs would probably suffice. This person needs to research the market, present a couple of options to the Board, and then proceed to acquire the structure and arrange for its installation.

**Restoration of Vienna cars, including documentation.** We need a team leader to get at least one of the Vienna cars restored to operating condition. Another important person on this team would be a documentation specialist who can not only research the history of the vehicles (much of that has been done), but also acquire and interpret the material that we need for restoration – mechanical and electrical diagrams, finding someone to translate key parts of manuals from German to English, etc. This will be a very exciting project – and it’s what we’re all about!

**Restoration of Birney car.** We need a team leader to, first

of all, replace the middle part of the ceiling inside the car with correct wooden materials. Then that team leader needs to work with the Board to decide the future fate of this car – from coffee shop to operational streetcar.

**Herbie.** Our VW “Streetcar on Wheels” continues to haunt us with mechanical problems. In order to use it for its intended purposes (parades, car shows, publicity at public events), Herbie needs a “caretaker” who will: start it up and drive it every couple of weeks; take it to events, or arrange for someone to take it to events – including general maintenance and cleanup; hire someone to make some improvements that are needed (e.g. an operable gas gauge and speedometer, some safety items - lights, seat belts); and hire someone to fix things when they break.

**Exhibits inside depot.** We need an individual to lead a group to design exhibits for the depot interior that tell the history of the depot, National City, Santa Fe, John D. Spreckels, and San Diego Electric Railway. These need to be professionally done sign boards that incorporate relevant artifacts. And given our potentially short tenure in the depot, these exhibits need to be portable.

**Collection Management.** We need someone to catalog our collection. SDERA owns a lot of things – from valuable pieces of paper and photographs to full-sized streetcars. We need to create a computer database to catalog our holdings. This is important both for our organization and for our requirement as a museum to serve the community.

**Community Outreach, Publicity.** For at least the next 18 months, and potentially many more years, we will be operating the National City Depot. We need someone to spend a lot of time getting to know our “neighbors” in National City, spending time with elected and appointed city officials, attending city events as the SDERA rep, organizing community-related events to be held at the depot, publicizing who we are and what we do, etc. Only by appearing to be part of the National City community can we ensure our being able to stay in the depot.

**Strategic Planning, Budgeting.** Because of our uncertainty about staying in the depot after April, 2007, we need a person to take charge of two planning activities: one that builds a case to National City for us to stay in the depot; and one that assumes we’ll have to move elsewhere. People within the National City government structure have offered to help with our plan to stay in the depot – we need someone to work closely with those people and flesh out plans. Preparing budgets for our operations and for growth plans is part of this job.



### SCHROEDER OFFERS MATCHING GRANT TO AID FUND-RAISING!

In an incredibly generous gesture, SDERA member Chuck Schroeder has offered to contribute \$2000 to SDERA – on a matching basis. i.e. for every dollar that anyone contributes to the organization, he'll match it dollar-for-dollar up to a maximum of \$2000. Thanks Chuck!! Our most urgent need for funds is for a protective structure for the Vienna cars and Birney car.

Well, here's the SDERA plea: please send a contribution, as much as you can, and indicate that it's for the "Chuck Schroeder Match." We are California non-profit corporation, and contributions are tax deductible. We will provide a letter of acknowledgement for all contributions for tax purposes. Thanks in advance for helping to match Chuck's generosity! See annual dinner reservation form below.

### SDMTS INAUGURATES PROJECT TO ACQUIRE PCC CARS

Two of the former San Francisco PCC cars stored for many years at Lake Tahoe are coming to San Diego. Former SD City Councilman Harry Mathis, and SD Trolley and SDERA member Andy Goddard have spearheaded this project. The ultimate plan is to restore these cars to full operation and to run them on the "loop" in downtown San Diego, interspersed with regular SD Trolleys.

San Diego Metropolitan Transit System (SDMTS) has recently given its approval of the concept. SDERA will no doubt become involved in this project when the cars become operational – our members can potentially be the on-board conductors, provide historical information, and so on. There may be other opportunities for our involvement before then. Harry and Andy are currently seeking money to pay for the transportation of the cars to San Diego. For more information, contact Andy at [andy.goddard@sdmts.com](mailto:andy.goddard@sdmts.com).

### SDERA ANNUAL DINNER MEETING NOVEMBER 19 TO FEATURE WAYNE TERRY FROM SAN DIEGO TROLLEY

Mark your calendar for Saturday, November 19, for SDERA's annual dinner meeting. We'll start about 6 p.m. with a dinner provided by the Barbeque Pit of National City. The program will commence around 7 p.m. as Jim Price will conduct the annual election of officers and directors and then will present awards to the deserving. Then Mr. Wayne Terry, the Operations Manager of San Diego Trolley, will do a presentation on the San Diego Trolley: the history of the past almost 25 years of operation, this year's exciting opening of the Green Line in Mission Valley, and future projects in the planning stages. This will be an evening for all family members to enjoy.

Please fill out the form below to reserve your spot at will surely be a great meeting with a big turnout! Your reservation and money are needed **no later than November 12**.

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#### RESERVATION FORM — ANNUAL SDERA DINNER, ELECTION & MEETING — NOV 19, 2005

Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ seats at the Annual SDERA Dinner at **\$10 each** = \$\_\_\_\_\_.

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

Address \_\_\_\_\_

**Chicken**      **Beef**

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

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

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

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

Contribution to the Chuck Schroeder Match (tax deductible)    \$ \_\_\_\_\_    I enclose my check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make Checks Payable to **SDERA**, and mail (no later than November 12) to:

**San Diego Electric Railway Ass'n, PO Box 89068, San Diego, CA 92138**



## Upcoming Election of SDERA Officers on Nov 19th

Per our bylaws, this is to state that the annual meeting of the San Diego Electric Railway Association, Inc will take place on November 19, 2005, at approximately 7p.m. at the National City Depot, 922 West 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, National City, California 91950. The purpose of the meeting will be to elect four officers; President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer—each for a two year term and two directors one for a two year term and one for a one year term. Members must be in good standing with dues paid prior to the meeting to be able to vote. Only members present may vote and only one vote may be cast per family membership. A ballot will be provided for any position with more than one candidate.

Requirements for office: Must be a member (regular, senior or life) in good standing (dues paid up). Additionally officers must have been a member for at least one year prior to the election although this restriction may be overridden by a majority vote of the membership at this annual meeting. The term of office is from January 1, 2006 for two years for the officers and one director and

one year for the other director. Officers are subject to a two term limit (4 years total) unless the membership at the annual meeting agrees by a majority vote to override this provision. (Note: No one will have a term limit issue at this election.)

It is anticipated at least one week prior to this election that an additional mailing will be made stating those members willing to run for office and nominated by the nominating committee. Members may be nominated on the night of the election as long as they agree to serve. Contact Jim Price at Jim Price (619)787-4148, Jim Papulas (858)693-8058, or Jim Roamer (619)435-2647. Members may renew (or new members join) prior to the election.

Please note that this meeting is on the third Saturday night in November and not the traditional 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday night that most meetings are held. If there are any questions on your membership status please contact our membership chairman Tom Matson at 619 275-0216 or email him at tmatson@sdera.org. — Tom Matson

## OFFICER NOMINATIONS NOW OPEN!!

(Continued from page 3)

**Publications, newsletter.** At a minimum, we need a new Newsletter Editor and Publisher. This job can be as big or as small as the person who agrees to do it; but something should go in the mail to all members at least every other month. But also, we also need someone to write and publish periodic journals that provide some long-term community benefit in the area of San Diego Streetcar history. Right now, for example, we should publish booklets for both the Birney car

and the Vienna cars that detail their history.

**Depot Docents.** Tom Matson has asked for relief as the depot docent coordinator – he’s been doing this job for several years and it is, frankly, a thankless, but VERY necessary job. To fulfill the terms of our agreement with National City, we must be open at least every Saturday and Sunday, excepting most major holidays. That’s only 8 to 10 days per month. But it continues to be the case that we really don’t have enough volunteer docents. Can’t YOU do one day a month? - Jim Price

### NEW DISPLAY CASES IMPROVE APPEARANCE OF DEPOT INTERIOR

Thanks to the eagle-eye of SDERA member Jim Anderson, SDERA is now the proud owner of 6 gorgeous glass display cases! Jim, who lives on Point Loma and who has traded at Delta Drug on Catalina Blvd. for many years, noticed recently that the venerable drugstore was going out of business. He spoke with the owner and “struck a deal” to buy and move out most of the display cases. Thanks to Jim Anderson, George Geyer, Tom Matson, and Nels Soderberg for moving these cases to the NC Depot and for the many hours of getting them set up for display. Come down to the depot and see them!

### WANTED!

We still need the donation of a video projector, i.e. one that can be driven by a computer, or at least the money to buy one. They still cost over \$1000 new, it should be possible to find a used one for much less than that. Contact Jim Price at 619-787-4148 to offer help.

The three doors on the west side of the NC Depot receive hours of sun and/or moist sea air every day, and they are suffering. The varnish is peeling, and the historic wood is exposed in many areas. We urgently need someone with some woodworking experience to sand down these doors, and re-coat them with varnish. Please contact depot caretaker Jim Anderson at 619-224-1041 if you can help.



San Diego Electric Railway Association  
PO Box 89068  
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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)

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

RESERVE  
THE DATE!

**Annual Dinner, Election of Directors, and Meeting—November 19, 2005**  
**Mr. Wayne Terry from San Diego Trolley will be the Guest Speaker!**  
**Details and Reservation Form on Page 4.**

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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 5:00 for an optional no-host dinner at Keith's Restaurant—3rd and National City Blvd.

**October 8** – monthly membership meeting. Jim Price will discuss his recent trip “Down South” where, among other things, he and his wife Joan rode historic streetcars in Dallas, TX, and Memphis, TN; as well as the new “old” streetcar line in Little Rock, AR. They also visited several train stations and some railroad museums in AR and TX. Tom Matson will also show similar pictures of his August, 2005, trip

to the new historic trolley line in Charlotte, North Carolina. Tom will also provide literature and sample gift store items that they carry in their bookstore as ideas for our possible use.

**November 19 – SDERA Annual Dinner Meeting / Election of Officers**—see article and mail-in form on page 4. Note that this is NOT the 2nd Saturday of the Month!

**December 10**—Monthly membership meeting. Details to be announced.

*For the latest updates, see the Calendar page on our website—[www.sdera.org](http://www.sdera.org).*