

# 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

November 2010

Check us out at our  
web site:

[www.sdera.org](http://www.sdera.org)

## Trucks for SDVT Car 529 Arrive!



Photo by Ron Sutch

For the volunteers at the San Diego Vintage Trolley project, car 529 is a shining example of what this tenacious team can do. Unfortunately, despite their best efforts, the car could not move under its own power. The trucks had to be sent out for rework, and the 529 body has been sitting on a pair of shop trucks. As we reported in several Trolley Lines editions, the arrival schedule seemed to always be "next week: Well, "next week" has finally arrived!

Next, before motor testing can start, SDVT electricians have an unexpected rewiring job. When the trucks were originally removed, the motor cables were cut to expedite removal. Reconnection will require replacing those cables since splicing is not recommended. Once this task is done, installation of the trucks can begin.

Watch for signs of upcoming tests which may include Ron Sutch, staff photographer, making frequent trips to the Trolley Yard with camera in hand; Harry Mathis, Chairman of the Board at MTS walking around with a big smile and a twinkle in his eye; and Dave Slater looking like a little boy on Christmas Eve! SDERA will make sure members get word as soon as that first test happens!

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*Psst!* Wanna Know a Secret?

This newsletter is available in **color** on our website. See [www.sdera.org](http://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, Inc.

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

## PCC Car Project Update

- Dave Slater Project Manager

Now on the web at [www.sdera.org/sdvt](http://www.sdera.org/sdvt)

PCC Car #533 is now on jacks, as her trucks have been removed and shipped to the Baltimore Street Car Museum (BSM) as a trade for other things we need for our project. In return, we are getting TWO sets of overhauled standard gauge PCC car trucks! Years ago, early in our project, I forged networks with the BSM and many other like street-car organizations for mutual restoration benefit. Car 533 has a set of NEW nickel cadmium (NiCad) batteries, and they are on our rotating schedule for charging to keep these batteries in top condition. Dennis Frazier sees to these chores, along with others in our cadre. We also got electric door motors and operating rods for this car to replace the ones removed as spares just before she left Philadelphia - unbeknownst to us here at home. BSM came through once again! These motors are intrinsic to this type of St Louis street car.

The long awaited overhauled trucks with brand new wheels arrived on September 20 after a VERY long wait. It was worth it as this is a **total** donation thanks to the efforts of LRV Maintenance Superintendent Lee Summerlott! Many thanks, Lee! This means that the #529 Project will now be able to move forward in testing! Sal Carini and Gil Cavasos have removed both the motor generator set and the controller, cleaned them up, and tested them and they are ready to be reinstalled. The Decontamination Team



Dave Slater polishes with front glass of Car # 529

Photo by Ron Sutch



Anthony Carideo shown installing a new headlight resistor in PCC #532 on Track #3 in our A Shop. Dave Slater Photo

(DECON) and HAZMAT Disposal team (the white suit guys and gals) has removed any and all asbestos which was "State of the Art" in the 1940's.

We are currently adding the black stripe to PCC # 532, to make her absolutely authentic to the SDERY color scheme. This is being done by Dennis Frazier and Michael Ballard, and supervised by yours truly.

I met with Elsa Sevilla, Producer and Director of the KBPS TV Show entitled "Historic Places Of San Diego" and she indicated that she is going to shoot two more short segments to add important information that was edited out on the last shoot.

PCC #531 is constantly being cleaned and polished to keep up the gloss, as this car and #532 are used for both tours, and TV stand ups, and are in great demand.

New headlight resistors have been installed on # 532. The new parts were made available to us through Newark Electric of Newark, New Jersey. I asked them if these are a stock item for PCC cars from the 1940's and they said yes because there are so many still in service! Happily, street cars are back in mass transit.

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

## President's Message

Dave Slater

Our Depot Painting Project has now been completed and looks WONDERFUL! Our painting contractor Lori Kaye has performed outstanding work — including the donation of 40 gallons of primer, 26 tubes of calking, window repairs, and reglazing of one window. This project was full of surprises, such as a major termite infestation on the west and south walls. I called in our friends from Hydrex Pest Control, and they got rid of all the pests. Once completed, Lori resumed her work. She tells me that there are 6 coats of color on the building, as well as newly sanded and varnished doors! You need to come and see how pristine the work is!

The new fence is in and completed and the motorized gate works well after several adjustments. Tom Matson had our locksmith come in and key the pedestrian gate and all the Event Gates to our master key for simplicity's sake. Many thanks Tom!

We are required to park in the new spaces on the street due to restrictions from the Fire Department. For this reason, the main gate will be closed most of the time but the large pedestrian gate to the left will be open. We have plenty of spaces directly in front of the Depot as well as spaces along W. 23rd Street. New lighting and sidewalks make the new parking safer and less likely to raise a cloud of dust.

Our Sponsors for the painting and yard project were: The Sycuan Casino, The Host Lion's Club of National City, BJ's Rentals (for scaffolding and Hi-Lift equipment). Despite these generous financial donors, SDERA spent about \$20,000 so far. The costs continue to grow as we are obligated to install display tracks on the south lot, as well as planter boxes, trash cans, etc. Donations, large and small, are needed to finish this project. Please give generously. Our facility is now a "Diamond" in the crown of the Redevelopment Area.

We are also very grateful to our many volunteers, without whom our facility could not operate! Many thanks to all who put their shoulders to the wheel!

Tim Higgins, Boy Scout and SDERA volunteer, is planning to make the Depot a part of his Eagle Project. Tim will be working with Mitch Beauchamp (SDERA Board Member and horticultural expert) to create xeriscape gardens around the Depot Yard.

Please welcome Mike Reneau, Rod and Alma Gilbert. I worked with them in train service for many years on the San Diego & Arizona Railway at Campo. All three bring much to our organization!

## Election of Directors for the San Diego Electric Railway Association, Inc.

It's that time of year again... Even More Elections. Thankfully, these won't involve endless advertising and media analysis and nobody will have spent a single dollar on their campaign!

In 2009, members of the San Diego Electric Railway Association, Inc. elected the Officers (Dave Slater—President, Tom Carnes—Vice President, Chris Higgins—Secretary, and Tom Matson—Treasurer) and one Director (Jim Anderson) for a two year term; so, this year, several Directors' seats are up for election to the Board.. Our nominating committee has offered the following nominations: Jeff Trimble and Mitch Beauchamp (incumbents) and Gene Calman (previous Board member) for two year terms and Mike Reneau for a one year term. Elections will be held at the November 13th Annual Dinner.



Car 400 heading to East San Diego on the 7 Line, advertising a trip to La Jolla.



Car 401 heading to 4th & Broadway on the 16 Line passing Moody's Bait and Tackle Shop on the Ocean Beach Side of Mission Beach Bridge across the San Diego River.



(Upper Left) Car 401 approaches San Juan Pl. on Mission Beach Blvd. (Upper Right) View from the top of the Belmont Roller Coaster looking north up Mission Beach Blvd. Car 401 appears again headed towards La Jolla. The Bonita Hotel is on the corner. (Lower Left) The Mission Beach Bridge over the San Diego River with fishermen in the foreground. Photos provided by Tom Carnes from his October General Meeting presentation.



## A Letter from Lori Kaye - Depot Painting Contractor

Dear Friends,

I hope you are all enjoying the sights at The Depot. It sure looks great around there. I wanted to say that working on the Museum was such an honor. I am so glad my older brother told me about the exterior paint restoration that was needed for the building. The first time I laid eyes on the Train Station, I was hooked! I knew it would be a challenge, but I was up for it.

The job entailed washing the exterior (more than once due to the construction that happening at the same time) then scraping 30 pounds of paint chips and silicone caulking from the exterior walls, trim, and windows. Next, I "set" all the nails on the building with a punch tool. I then applied one coat of primer to the exterior. After that, the repairs and patching were addressed. Sixty five tubes of painter's caulk were used for this project to fill all nail holes, seams, and surface pock-marks. Then, all sanding was completed. Next, I applied a second coat of primer. And last, I applied two finish coats of the three colors involved and all sills received 6 coats of paint.



Lori Kaye does last minute touch-ups on the Depot after its major exterior paint work.  
Photo by Jeff Trimble

As you know, Termites had been living amongst you for years. They were abated immediately. All termite damage on exterior walls and trim were repaired.

Some of the windows in the museum upstairs and downstairs were loose. I removed window stops from the interior of the window and moved them closer to the window. I installed latches that were missing to lock the windows. One broken glass pane was removed and replaced. I found some gutters that were leaking on the North East corner and repaired the problem.

All exterior non-painted doors and thresholds were varnished.

Hope to see you when I return. Thank you again for the opportunity.

Sincerely, Lori Kaye

## Fund Raising Committee Formed

The SDERA Board has formed a Fund Raising Committee, co-chaired by Tom Carnes and Mitch Beauchamp, to focus on pursuing grants and large donations. There are several generous organization who support organizations like ours and just need to be approached properly. We have already seen the generosity of the Sycuan Casino and National City Lions Club. This new committee is vital to the next stage in our progress towards becoming a full-featured museum. If you are interested in helping on this Committee, contact Tom Carnes (tcarnes@sdera.org) or Dave Slater (dslater@sdera.org or 619-222-5442).



## 1929 Free Trolley Ride

Tom Carnes

From about 1908 into the 1940s the Presbytery of Los Angeles and the First Presbyterian Church in San Diego sponsored the Mexican Presbyterian Church on 13th Street near J Street. Along with the church, there was a settlement house where people could learn English and job skills, send their children for Bible study and recreation, and receive many kinds of assistance. The church and settlement house held a Vacation Bible School every year at the 13th Street location. In 1929, the day after the school ended, 73 students and their teachers enjoyed a picnic in Balboa Park. To get there, the San Diego Electric Railway donated a streetcar which picked up the children on 12th, took them on a ride around San Diego, up to the park and back again.



Mexican Presbyterian Church in downtown San Diego. The building currently awaiting upcoming redevelopment plans for the area.

Tom Carnes photo.

The following day a picnic was given to the children. The S. D. Electric Railway Co., through Mr. J. A. Moon, donated the use of a streetcar, which came down to within a block of the mission, picked up 73 of the children and their attendants, and took them for a ride about town and through to the park, where the children were treated to ice cream and graham crackers. All of which was greatly enjoyed by the youngsters.

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## Coming in January: Victorian Houses of San Diego County

Many houses remain from San Diego's Victorian past, ranging from mansions to cottages, from beach houses to farmhouses. Eric Pahlke has compiled almost a hundred examples of the grace, beauty, and scope of Victorian architecture in his recent book ***San Diego County Victorians***. He has also researched the histories of the county, the cities, and communities that developed during the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

At the January 8th, 2011 General Meeting of SDERA, Eric will present a summary of his book, with emphasis on the structures that remain in National City and Chula Vista from

Victorian times. National City rivaled its larger neighbor to the north in the splendor and diversity of its Victorian architecture.

Today, there are more houses remaining from that period per square mile than anywhere else in the county, including the Frank Kimball House, Dickinson-Boal House, Brick Row, Rice-Proctor House, Moses Kimball House, and the Stein Family Farm. And the key to the boom of the 1880s, the railroad's arrival in November 1885, is represented by the Italianate architecture of the Depot, home to the San Diego Electric Railway Association.



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  
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

Visit us on the Web! [www.sdera.org](http://www.sdera.org)

To submit items to the Newsletter, contact Chris Higgins  
via e-mail ([webmaster@sdera.org](mailto: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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**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 no-host 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.

**Saturday, November 13**— Annual Dinner and Election—Presentation by Paul Stevanus about ex-Santa Fe steam locomotive 3751. Paul is one of the volunteers with San Bernardino Railroad Historical Society that restored, maintains, and operates this locomotive. The presentation will focus on locomotive history, restoration, and operation, and will touch briefly on the organization and safety.

Dinner at 5:30 with the presentation starting at 7:30pm

**Saturday, December 11** - Jeff Trimble's presentation includes a look at four railroad museums in four states.

They include the Museum of Transportation of St. Louis, and the Galesburg Railroad Museum, plus more. Other topics will touch on railroad sightings along his travels, some of which were truly surprising!

**Saturday, January 8**—Eric Pahlke presents San Diego County Victorians (see details on page 7)

**Next Board Meetings** - December 13, January 10, and February 14 at 7:00PM at the National City Depot.

## Docents and Cashiers Wanted

Now that the construction is done in the area, visitors are returning to see the amazing changes. We need help with docents and cashiers. There are special events where we may even need help on normally closed days! If you cannot make a whole shift, working as cashier allows the docent to spend more time with visitors. Contact Tom Matson for information ([tmatson@sdera.org](mailto:tmatson@sdera.org)) or 619-275-0216. Training is available.