

The Singing Wire



The Newsletter of the Pikes Peak Historical Street Railway Foundation

Restoring the Birney – A Love Story

Arriving in Colorado Springs
November 23, 1994



June 2002 - stripped down
to the bones - and ribs!



2002 - the Birney's
truck has been rebuilt



Installing the ceiling slats



Varnishing the ceiling



Sanding car for painting



Working on frames & windows



The Birney gets a new canvas roof



Poking a nose out
of the carbarn!



Our Purpose

The Pikes Peak Historical Street Railway Foundation exists to restore and operate historical street and electric railways in the Colorado Springs area. Our goal is to provide a cultural, historical, and educational experience for the citizens of the Pikes Peak region and southern Colorado.

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Regis after installing electrical outlets in the Rock Island Museum

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The Singing Wire

This newsletter is produced and published collaboratively by volunteer members of the Pikes Peak Historical Street Railway Foundation. We welcome submittal of articles of interest to the membership. All articles are subject to editing. Mail input to above mailing or email address.

The PPHSRF is a Member of:
 HeritageRail Alliance
 Colorado Springs Chamber of Commerce
 Coalition of Pikes Peak Historical Museums
 Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad

Letter from the President

After a long cold winter, we're all waiting for the snow to melt and the sun to shine so we can complain about the heat. How cold was it? We burned \$480 of propane in 5 weeks. The roundhouse ghosts moved from the attic to the furnace room. Our pet lizard took up residence in the depot agent's office. We had to put the extra water bottles in the fridge to keep them from freezing. Yep, it's been a cold winter.

Everyone at the museum is tackling spring cleaning on an industrial scale. Our goal is to present ourselves as a park and not a junkyard. Scrap is being sold, trash hauled away and everything else put online by **Marti** and **Dave** for sale or give-away.

Although our top priority in 2019 is to make the Birney operational, many new displays are underway both in the museum and the restoration shop. We will have something for all age groups to learn from and be entertained by.

We have submitted notice to the city of our intent to renew the museum's lease agreement for another 10 years. We are not anticipating any problems.

A new PCC Motorman's training manual and annual recertification program have been put into effect to be supervised by **Tom Levy**. Get ready for your dreaded written exam and driving test. Minimum passing score = 100%. We'd like everyone requalified by 1 June.

We are negotiating the acquisition of a piece of streetcar equipment that will make a one-of-a-kind exhibit for the museum. We should have details by the next newsletter. *Don't tell anyone, it's a secret!*

The museum is in need of an old but still operational utility tractor with loader for track work, car moving, clean-up, etc. If you have any possible leads, please let us know.

In our never-ending quest to publicize the museum, a recent conversation stands out. After a small group had finished their tour, an elderly lady told me how much she had enjoyed her visit and had never known about the trolley museum in spite of living in Colorado Springs her entire life. When asked where she lived, she pointed toward Roswell Park and said, "**about 2 blocks that way.**" We've got a lot of work to do!

While funding will always remain a critical concern for our museum, recruiting and retaining volunteers to do the actual hands-on work is even a greater need.

Money will never be as important as someone with a hammer, paint brush, sewing machine, calculator or the temperament to lead a group of school kids on a tour.

In the balance, dedicated people will always be the key to our operation.

Thank You!

Wayne Russert

One hundred years ago this May, four Birney Safety cars, built by the American Car Company of St. Louis, were delivered to the Fort Collins Municipal Railway (FCMRwy). One of those cars was our trolley museum's Birney No.135, the former FCMRwy No. 22. It is historically significant because it was ***the last Birney car to run in revenue service in North America on June 30, 1951.***

JOIN OUR BIRNEY BIRTHDAY BASH!

Celebrating our Birney Car's 100th Birthday

SATURDAY, MAY 25, 2019

10:00 AM until 3:00 PM

**Trolley Rides, Tours, Exhibits, Special Events, and Operation Lifesaver
 Free lunch and birthday cake from 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. (donations welcome)**

Join our celebration! Admission: \$3.00, including lunch



John's History Corner

by John Haney

In this issue, John shares three past columns from the days when trolleys ran in Colorado Springs

LIGHTNING PLAYS HAVOC ON INSTITUTE LINE - 1904

One July afternoon when the Colorado Springs trolleys were operating, the weather took a violent turn. Between 4:00 and 5:30 p.m. on July 27, 1904, heavy showers falling as "veritable sheets," lasting from five to fifteen minutes, and, at times, combined with several bolts of lightning and a little hail, fell all over the city. The streetcar lines were washed over with sand on the east side and in other sections of the city. One bolt of lightning struck the trolley wires and put the whole system out of business for about an hour. On the Institute Line, a "pyrotechnic display" caused by the lightning was started on one of the cars. Terrified, one or two passengers jumped out of the car and into the heavy rain, but others were trapped by the lightning effect and stuck to their seats. No one was injured and the car soon resumed its journey.

Courtesy Mel McFarland and the "Colorado Springs Gazette," July 28, 1904

COASTING DOWNHILL: THE LAST DAYS OF TROLLEYS IN THE PIKES PEAK AREA - 1932

By the early thirties, streetcars were taken for granted. After all, they'd been around for forty-five years. They still served the area well, running to the Broadmoor, the east side, Manitou, and North Tejon. Yet operating costs, the Great Depression, and an average of one automobile owned per household were taking their toll. The few photos of Colorado Springs streetcars available in these last years show considerable wear and tear, a sign that dollars to keep the operation a first-class system were just not available.

Popularly known as "dinkies" because they were much smaller than the two-man operated cars, Birney Safety Cars had been operating since the late teens. They were the backbone of the fleet and were run year-round. The larger wooden open and two-man operated closed cars were added to run to Manitou to accommodate the summer tourist traffic.

TROLLEY vs AUTOMOBILE – 1926

Streetcars and automobiles were not always what you might call "buddies." This was particularly true as the number of automobiles grew in every city that had streetcar service. Colorado Springs was no different.

One unfriendly auto/trolley event occurred in about 1926, just after my father, J. Donald Haney, age 15 or 16, received his learner's permit and was driving the family Buick. He set

out from his residence on Alsace Way with a few passengers, headed toward downtown. He was crossing the tracks on

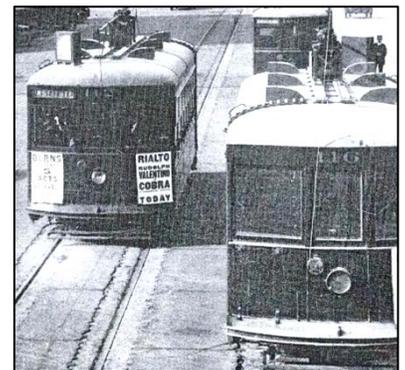


Cheyenne Boulevard when the motor stalled. In horror, he saw an inbound Broadmoor trolley rapidly bearing down on him. Most of the car had cleared the track, but not the left rear wheel. Frantically, he tried to restart the car. The trolley just kept coming until it knocked the car off of the track. The collision totally ruined the Buick's fender, and one passenger had a little blood on his face.

The auto/trolley rivalry intensified, as one might expect, as Colorado Springs population grew. By the time the system shut down in 1932, car ownership had grown to an average of one per family, and the trolley company could no longer compete.

The Birneys were fun to ride. Patrons could make them swing up and down by bouncing at either end of the car. They were great to create trouble with on Halloween, when boys would grease the tracks (operators HATED Halloween!). Colorado College men tried to hijack the last Tejon car to the steps of Palmer Hall, but all its safety features went into effect, and it could only be moved a few feet!

April 30, 1932 was the last day that the trolleys ran. Every piece of equipment was out on the streets. No fares were collected, and thousands rode the cars. Then, they were gone. They were greatly missed.



Restoring the Birney – A Love Story

continued from page 1

Safety Catcher installation complete



Checking on the roof climbers



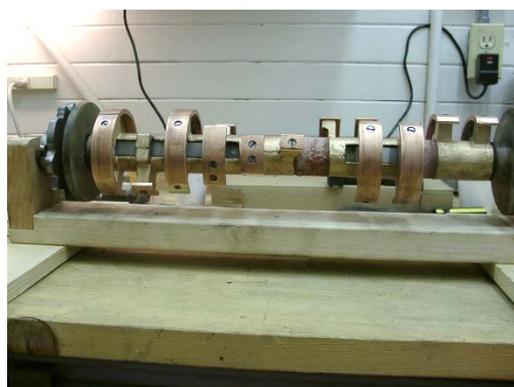
Forming the body sheet metal



Installing the "Clanger"



Rebuilding the Controller



New Red Oak Floor



Air Brake Controller in place



Priming the Birney for painting



A great new paint job



Original and replicated seats



Motorman's seat



Refurbished passenger seat



The Birney's new interior



COME SEE THIS AMAZING RESTORATION FOR YOURSELF ON MAY 25TH AT THE TROLLEY MUSEUM

The Rolling Spotlight featuring D&RG Caboose 01501

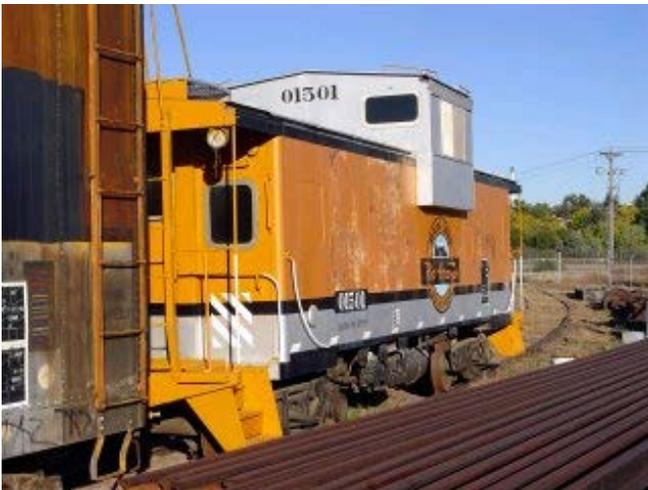
In this issue, we continue the series of articles in which we share photographs and interesting information on one or more of our historically significant pieces of rolling stock in the museum's collection.

Photos of Caboose 01501 over the Years: 2002 - 2018

June 2002 – R&LHS 2002 Annual Meeting attendees visit the Pikes Peak Trolley Museum



Longtime member Lorne Noyes visits on 6-22-2007



Director Ron Oatney's photo on 8-23-2018



History of D&RG Caboose 01501

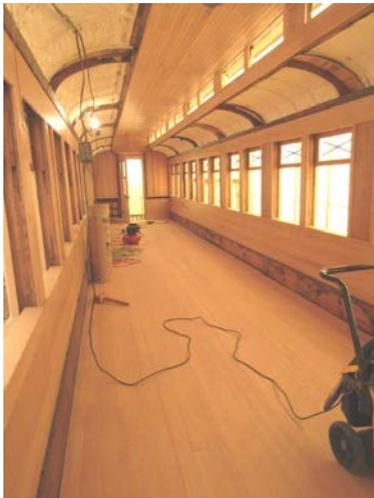
Built by the International Car Company in 1966, the 01501 is 29 feet long and weighs 28 tons. It was in full service until 1984, but by 1995 it had been demoted to switching service. It was the last D&RG Wide Vision waycar to keep its original paint scheme – the iconic “Grande Gold” and silver.

In 1995, No. 01501 was bought by a private owner, who had it overhauled and repainted by Uhrich Locomotive Works of Strasburg, CO. In 2001, the car was purchased by a Pikes Peak Trolley Museum member and moved to the museum by rail in 2002. The car added extra miles while in transit; in error, it was put on a working freight train going back and forth between Denver and Colorado Springs. It was finally delivered several days late!

In 2008, No. 01501 was resold to the original private owner and has remained on property for display. Museum volunteer Tom Levy has turned the empty caboose into a popular mini-museum, telling the history of the car and cabooses in general.

Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Tourist Sleeper Car 470 Restoration

Update by John Engs



The floor is done!



End walls in place, and door with original hardware

Come see the progress for yourself! We work on the 1st, 3rd, and 5th Saturday of the month from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

FAREWELL to ex-SEPTA PCC Car #2131

PCC Car #2131 arrived in 1995 along with eight other "Philadelphia" PCC cars. It was painted in "Pittsburgh" livery – green and cream – shown in the photo below.



Several years later, 110-volt capability was installed so that it could be moved to the Sky Sox Stadium to become a special place for people to gather before and after the baseball games. Seats were removed from the rear of the car to enable tables to be set up for meetings and for serving food. After years of wear and tear, #2131 was returned to the museum, in need of



refurbishing. It is shown (above) being hoisted off a flatbed trailer after its return on March 1, 2006.

Car #2131 "lounged" for many years after its return to the museum; insufficient funds were available to restore it to operating condition. Subsequently, it was sold and is shown (below) on March 24, 2019, being readied for transport to its new owner.



Museum Operations and Restoration Updates

Operations

May 15, 2019 – August 15, 2019

Ron Oatney is the Director of Museum Operations; he welcomes your ideas and participation. The following update details recent activities by volunteers, members, Workfare, and Front Range people.

- Our community service people have successfully cut down all the elms growing in the East yard and the ones growing up through the CTA trucks. It's an ongoing project that always improves the looks of our grounds.
- **Mike Walker** is currently cataloging and organizing the recently-donated Jack Timberlake railroad book collection. We are revamping our library to make room for this great collection.
- **Wayne Russert** and **Jordan Kortsen** rented a 2½-ton forklift to move and load a 10-ton roll-off with scrap to be sold. The property looks good with the piles of scrap gone. We now have a 5-ton dumpster for smaller scrap. Iron and steel only, please. General clean-up is always a good thing!
- **Tom Levy** and **Wayne Russert** have put together a new training manual and test for PCC operators. All operators will take the test and have a 100% score in order to be certified.
- **John Caulfield** and **Ron Oatney** contacted the COG Railway and asked them for rack and rail for a display. The plan is to make a short display of rack, rail, and a cog wheel on the rack. John and Ron picked up four sticks of 40-pound rail on April 4th.
- **Ron, John,** and **Wayne** borrowed the Friends of the Cumbres and Toltec's trailer and picked up the rack the week of the 14th. The rack was too heavy and too long to transport by pick-up truck. As of now, the COG is not giving away any cog-wheels. We hope to be able to get one in the near future to finish our display.
- **Marti Benson, Bonni Russert,** and **Mary Manley** are working on a WWII-era home display in the Brill 48 car and have a good start.
- **Betty Haney** and **Marti Benson** are calling members to talk about supporting the museum through the King Soopers rewards program.
- **Marti Benson** and **Dave Lippincott** are putting unused, unneeded, and irrelevant items on Craig's List to clear out and make a few dollars doing it.
- A new mini-poster with the story of D&RG caboose 01513 (at the D&RG station) will be on display inside the caboose. **Tom Levy** is building two new dioramas, accompanied by descriptions, for it. One uses N scale models showing the eight common US caboose designs; the other is a scene showing a portion of the Rio Grande's caboose track at the Burnham yards in Denver.
- Would you be willing to train as a supervisor, trolley car operator, tour guide, or do restoration work? To apply, please contact Ron Oatney at 719-650-5605 or Wayne Russert at 303-660-3799.

Restoration

May 15, 2019 – August 15, 2019

John Caulfield is the Director of Restoration; he is always looking for volunteers with the kind of skills to restore our historic cars. The following is an update on recent activities.

- **PCC #2129:** The car has been performing well and is used almost daily, giving trolley rides to museum visitors.
- **In the carbarn:**
 - **Car #135:** **John Cusack** and **Tom Levy** traveled to Fort Collins to get information on solving a problem in the Birney's pneumatic system. Restoration of the car is approaching 90% completion. Rollout is planned for December 2019!
 - **Brill Car #48:** The display in a portion of the car showing its use as a small residence during WWII is coming along nicely, thanks to **Marti Benson, Mary Manley,** and **Bonni Russert.** Be sure to check it out!
 - **Laclede Car #59:** **John Caulfield** built stairs up to the car to allow visitors to see the interior and take photos.
- **On the grounds:**
 - **Garden Layout:** Buildings were repainted, bushes trimmed, and surroundings were cleaned up for summer operating.
 - **Car #3101, LARy War Baby:** The roof leak has been temporarily sealed to prevent further damage.
 - **Pittsburgh Interurban Car #4002** and **Denver Tramway Cars #724** and **#770:** Plans to utilize these cars are under consideration – stay tuned.
 - **Roswell Rock Island RR Museum in RI 4363, exSP6777:** The car was moved about 15' to the east, and **John Caulfield** has built a viewing platform and stairs up to the car. Exhibits have been maintained for museum tours.
 - **D&RG 10400 caboose:** **Tom Levy** continues to maintain the car for the enjoyment of museum visitors.
 - **NEW:** **John Caulfield** called a work day on April 27th and 20 volunteers responded. Much hard work was done, and calling a work day every other month has been proposed. Be sure to watch for information on a June work day.

- **In the news:**



FASTTV Network filmed a segment of their debut episode of Wings Wheels & Rails at the trolley museum on April 27th.

John Haney hosts our segment, providing information on the equipment in our collection. Rob Wagner is the COO of the company and has promised us a DVD of this segment. Be sure to visit their website: <https://fasttvnetwork.com/> to see this episode.

Fort Collins Municipal Railway will be celebrating the 100th birthday of their Birney Car No. 21 on Sunday, May 19th, when the car will be operating between noon and 5:00 p.m. from City Park down Mountain Avenue.

Volunteers – Always Needed, Always Welcome

Your continuing support of the Pikes Peak Historical Street Railway Foundation is vital for meeting operating expenses and funding restoration costs. Please consider additional contributions for the restoration of the "Laclede" and the "Birney." **Please mail checks to PPHSRF, PO Box 544, Colorado Springs CO 80901-0544 or indicate payment by credit card or PayPal below.**

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION (Please print)

Name(s): _____
 Address: _____
 Home Ph: _____ Cell Ph: _____ Email: _____

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES (Please check one)

<u>Individual</u>	<u>Family</u>	<u>Corporate</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Friend \$40.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Unlimited guests \$60.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor \$250.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Check enclosed. Please mail to the address at the top of this form.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Please charge my credit card: _____ Exp. Date: _____ Name as it appears on card (please print) _____ Signature: _____		
<input type="checkbox"/> "PayPal": Send funds to csstreetcarfdn@aol.com		
Additional Contribution: \$_____ to be applied to (please check one):		
<input type="checkbox"/> Car Restoration	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum Displays	<input type="checkbox"/> General Operating Fund
<input type="checkbox"/> PLEASE CONTACT ME ABOUT VOLUNTEERING!		

Note: For contributions of \$250 or more, please consider making your donation through the El Paso County Enterprise Zone; your contribution may qualify for a 25% Colorado state tax credit. For more information, call 475-9508.

Many thanks to our volunteers, members, and donors!

Meet Your Museum Volunteer



In this issue, we'd like you to meet Regis Larouere, a trolley museum tour guide and faithful volunteer since 1999.

Regis was born and raised in Pittsburgh, PA. For more than 40 years, he worked as an electrical/mechanical draftsman. In 1998, Regis and his wife Shirley moved to the Springs.

Regis is devoted to his church and to his family: wife Shirley, three children, six granddaughters, and one great-grandson.

Over the years, Regis has worn many "hats" – electrician, motorman/conductor, tour guide, "Jack-of-all-trades" and Santa Claus. After 20 years of volunteering, there isn't much he hasn't done! Give him a "thumbs up" when you see him.

Can you picture yourself here?

Volunteers really do make a difference – any number of hours you can give would be most appreciated!

2019 Museum Hours
Open Wednesday through Saturday
 Museum opens at 9:30 a.m.
 Last tour at 3:00 p.m.
 Adults \$5, Active Military & Seniors \$4
 Children 3-11 \$3

