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The Singing Wire

This newsletter is produced and published collaboratively by volunteer members of the PPHSRF. 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

Pikes Peak History Coalition (PPHC), formerly CoPPHM

Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad (FoC&TS)

ColoRail (Colorado Rail Passenger Association)

Friends of Fort Collins Municipal Railway (FoFCMRy)

Friends of Trolley No. 04

Denver Rail Heritage Society, operators of Platte Valley Trolley

Letter from the President

Dear members and supporters:

This past year has been a good one, with several notable exceptions. Our museum has prospered with the opening of new exhibits (e.g., Denver Tramway #117, MCRX coach #10400, Denver and Rio Grande 1883 baggage car No. 163 brought in for restoration by the Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec NG RR, the Fort Collins Birney #135 being put into operation), and a gratifying surge in visitors, due in large part to our Polar Express layout and other kid-oriented exhibits. We have greatly improved our conference room with tables, chairs and a large screen TV that plays short train and streetcar related videos. We have opened discussions with the Union Pacific Railroad with the possibility of an expansion of our yard to the east. Our recently acquired COG Railroad car has proven to be a hit for hosting kids' birthday parties. We are also beginning to host canine sniffing contests as our outdoors venue is very challenging for those animals.

On the disappointing side has been the passing of two of our long-term volunteers - Regis Larouere and Tom Tassia - and our inability to attract more volunteers, which has had an adverse effect on our restoration activities. We have made very little progress in locating a spot to partially relocate, near an in-street streetcar line that we have been seeking for several decades.

Our funding through memberships and donations has put us in a secure position, allowing for expending monies for such items as restoration of the LaCledde #59 streetcar, repainting of our PCC #2129 (the one in operation), and work on the Denver Tramway #553 electric trolley bus, all of which we will undertake in 2023.

To keep the money flowing, we ask that you consider a year-end contribution, either through the El Paso County Enterprise Zone (\$250 up for residents of El Paso County) or through tying your food purchases from King Soopers to that firm's donations to us. Ask the clerk at the Customer Service desk to tie your discount card to VP219 and you will be added to the 70+ households that are already "donating" at no added cost to them.

Our best wishes to all of you for a very happy holiday season and a prosperous 2023.

David Lippincott

King Soopers Community Rewards to benefit the Pikes Peak Trolley Museum & Restoration Shop

Call 1-800-576-4377 and choose option 3. Give the customer service agent the King Soopers Shoppers Card Number and ask them to link the card to "VP219," which is Pikes Peak Historical Street Railway Foundation. That's all there is to it.

If you have an online King Soopers account, it is even faster to Sign in, go to "Community Rewards," in "Find an Organization" enter "VP219" and click "Enroll."

for supporting the trolleys!!



NOTE MUSEUM HOLIDAY SCHEDULE ON PAGE 8!

Trolley Museum Christmas Holiday Potluck for Volunteers Monday, December 12th, from Noon – 2 PM



We will have a Christmas Holiday Potluck for Volunteers on Monday, December 12th, from Noon – 2 PM, or so. The museum will furnish the meat and water and lemonade to drink, but please, no alcohol. If you come, please bring a dish or plate - your choice - enough for roughly 8-12 people. We plan to be in the Cog railcar, where there is power to keep your food – and you - warm. Also, no need to let us know if you can or can't come!

Left: "Mrs. Claus" (volunteer motorman Irene Bones) operating PCC 2129 in snow during a past trolley museum Santa Trolley.



John's History Corner

by John Haney

CSRT's TROUBLED AUSTIN BLUFFS LINE

Colorado Springs' first horse-powered street railway lines were built beginning in 1887. The lines were all single-track with occasional turnouts using ten little 16-foot coaches and one or two of their 42 horses on each run. As the new system was growing, electric traction had proven successful in Virginia, so early in 1890, the Colorado Springs Rapid Transit Railway Company was formed to convert the cars and lines to electric operation by adding overhead wires, motorizing existing cars, then building its own power plant, and ordering heavier equipment. At the same time, extensions were needed, and lines were extended to Manitou Springs, further north on Tejon, and a new Walnut Street line. By the summer of 1890 all the expansion and improvement work was finished!

In the midst of this busy conversion, two risky extensions were completed. The Austin Bluffs line was a route that should never have been built! Land developers, some of whom included principal investors of the Colorado Springs Rapid Transit Railway Company, had launched a subdivision at the base of Austin Bluffs, likely the first section of Austin Bluffs annexed into the city in 1888. Austin Bluffs Land and Water Company piped water from West Monument Creek and a few homes were built. More were planned and transportation facilities were now needed, so it seemed logical to extend the street railway to that new neighborhood. An obvious conflict of interest was of no apparent concern.

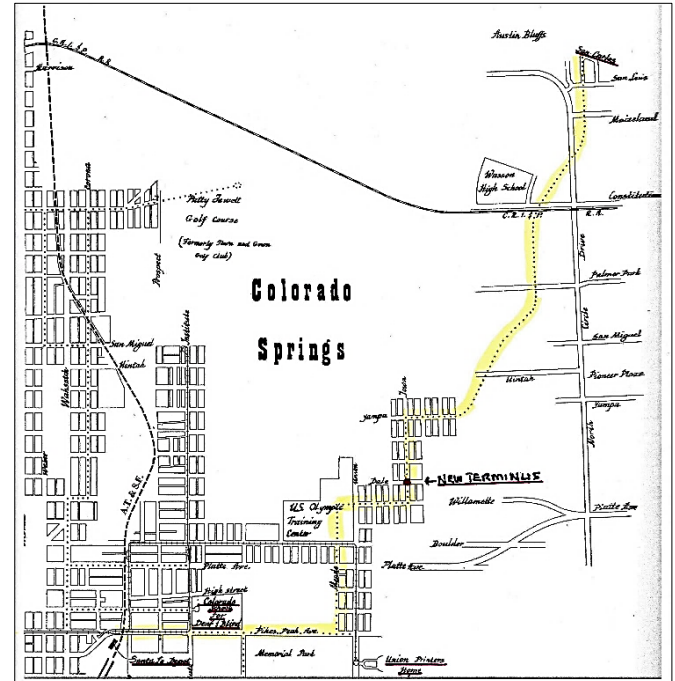
The Pikes Peak line which ran east from Tejon to the busy Santa Fe station became the Austin Bluffs line when it was extended past the School for the Deaf and Blind to Meade, a block from the Union Printers Home, then north through a platted residential area and northeasterly across the open and uninhabited prairie to what now is San Carlos Circle.

This Austin Bluffs line, although helpful as a real estate promotion, was a burden on the streetcar system and likely to be unprofitable for years. Only a few homes were built in the subdivision; the land developers had arrived on the scene over a half century too soon! It would be eight years before millionaire Winfield Scott Stratton would purchase the CSRT and turn it into a successful, first-class operation. Nor could the CSRT have anticipated that in 1902 General Palmer would donate 692 acres for a park adjacent to the subdivision (Palmer Park, now the largest park in the metro area).

As a consequence of the red ink flowing, service was cut back to a new terminus just beyond the intersection of Iowa and Dale, and the line was then designated as the "Printers Home" or "Knob Hill" route. Track and overhead on the abandoned section were left in place. Rails, fastenings and trolley wire from the outermost portion of the now idle track were used by August 31, 1892, to double track the busy Tejon Street line between Kiowa and Cache La Poudre Streets, leaving much of the track and overhead material on the "Bluffs" line nearer to Dale Street in place until the Wahsatch line was built a decade later in 1902.

The second extension to a chancy subdivision out in the boondocks was the proposal for a Broadmoor line to Count Portales' Casino, which was first rejected by the CSRT, but was built after Portales contributed \$20K.

"Build it and they will come" is how it works in the movies, but it was premature for the streetcar to the Austin Bluffs subdivision. Not all was lost, however, as the resourceful CSRT and CS&I officials were able to remove and reinstall the infrastructure where it was needed, to double track the lines where growth was taking place.



Above: November 1917 map of CS&I Austin Bluffs line (yellow dotted line). An aerial photograph of the location of what was once the former line's roadbed was confirmed by a friend of John Haney working in the City Engineer's office.

Denver Tramway Company History on Display at the Trolley Museum

DTC transit history is on display at our museum! DTC cars include No. 724, an all-wood snowplow/work car built by DTC ca 1913, No. 770, used as the Broadway Shop switcher, built in 1926, and what remains of DTC No. 329, built in 1911 in Denver by Woeber Bros.

DTC Car No. 117 spent 40 years in service and is available for tours while being restored. It survived when almost no other Woeber-built car did, preserved by the late James E. Kunkle, an RTD retiree (photo right). No. 117 is part of his family's history as both his father and grandfather worked for DTC in streetcar days.

DTC trolley bus #319 was built in 1940 by Brill Westinghouse and was in service until 1955, when DTC ran the final trolley coaches. It has 44 seats and runs on dual overhead wires.



(continued from page 1)

Denver Transit History Timeline

1858	Denver is established.
June 1870	Denver Pacific Railway trackage from Cheyenne is completed.
August 1870	Kansas Pacific Railway trackage from Kansas is completed.
1871	Denver Horse Railroad Company becomes Denver's first transit company; by the 1880s it is known as the Denver City Railway.
1885	Denver Electric and Cable Company is incorporated.
By 1886	Denver Electric and Cable Company is reorganized as Denver Tramway Company (DTC).
Late 1880s	DTC embraces cable car technology (cars pulled along tracks by underground cables) and builds a new powerhouse to serve four branch lines - at a cost of \$2 million.
Late 1880s	Denver City Railway quickly shifts to cable car technology and reincorporates as Denver City Cable Railway.
Dec. 1888	DTC opens new powerhouse, which provided power for a 12-mile cable network.
1889	Denver City Cable Railway opens its new powerhouse, driving the largest cable-car system ever run out of a single powerhouse. The company's Welton Street line was the longest in the U.S. when built, stretching about seven miles.
1893	DTC quickly converts its major lines to superior overhead wire technology.
1893	Denver City Cable, licensed only for horse and cable cars, converts via subsidiaries.
1893	Panic of 1893 sends Denver City Cable into bankruptcy, imperils smaller competitors.
1890s	DTC buys up smaller lines, expands electric streetcar network.
1898-1899	DTC finally acquires Denver City Cable.
Spring 1900	DTC is only major streetcar company left in Denver, having converted its former rival's 30 miles of cable lines to overhead wire lines.
1903	DTC's extensive network spans 155 miles; fare is only a nickel.
1904	DTC builds a large new powerhouse, expanded in 1911, as primary power source.
1911	DTC expands regional reach, such as Denver & Intermountain RR to Golden.
1914-15	Streetcar use in Denver declines 9 percent; automobile traffic increases 50 percent.
1918	Prices rise with inflation, wages stay low, and workers unionize.
1919-1920	Short work stoppage; major strike beginning August 1, 1920; 7 killed, dozens injured. 700 strikers fired after strike; the union disbands. Fares stay too low to raise wages.
1920	Streetcar traffic peaks around 1920 before entering a decades-long decline.
1925	DTC in receivership, reorganizes in 1925. Starts conversion to rubber tired trolleys.
1940	Conversion of downtown streetcars to buses and trolley coaches begins.
1950 & 1955	DTC runs final streetcar June 3, 1950; final trolley coach in 1955; powerhouse closes.
1960s	Annual ridership plunges from about 40 million to fewer than 20 million by 1969.
1969	Colorado General Assembly creates Regional Transportation District (RTD) to plan and operate transit in Denver metropolitan area (population nearly 1.3 million people).
1970-1971	RTD, DTC, City & County of Denver, and Denver Regional Council of Governments develop post-DTC goals for service in the Denver area.
1971	DTC ceases operations, sells buses and other assets to the city, which operates the system as Denver Metro Transit for several years.
1973	Voters approve ½-cent sales tax to fund RTD; Denver Metro Transit acquires RTD next year.
Since 1994	RTD, DTC's public successor, operates a fleet of buses throughout Denver metro area and has built up a network of light rail and commuter trains since 1994.
2022	RTD now operates 113 miles of rail with twelve rail lines, one of which is currently operating at reduced COVID-19 service levels and two of which have currently suspended service.

The Rolling Spotlight featuring CS&I Brill Car No. 48

In this issue, we continue the series of articles in which we spotlight historically significant equipment, museum items in our collection, or individuals who have made significant contributions to the museum. Here we share the unique story of Car 48, including information retrieved 10/20/2022 from the History Colorado website: <https://www.historycolorado.org>.

The Colorado Springs & Interurban Railway (CS&IR) Streetcar No. 48 is *the only surviving streetcar from the first batch of streetcars purchased for the Colorado Springs & Suburban Railway by Winfield Scott Stratton*, the first millionaire in Cripple Creek after his strike at the Independence Mine in 1901. In terms of engineering, CS&IR No. 48 used the Brill convertible design, which provided six inches of additional passenger space and addressed worries about potential health hazards with the use of retractable windows, an improvement for streetcars as it made opening and closing windows a task that riders could accomplish in transit.



Left: The Colorado Springs & Interurban Railway (CS&IR) Streetcar No. 48

Right: No. 48 when used as a residence in Colorado Springs

The Brill convertibles use of the Narragansett steps, which featured two steps where one was retractable, enabling the steps to reach closer to the ground than the original one-step system, also represented the early beginning of the



transition from wood-framed streetcars to steel frames. Purchased as a kit and assembled in Colorado Springs, the car originally contained a bulkhead separating the passenger compartment into two sections; one was used for smokers and one for non-smokers, a rarity on streetcars at that time. The CS&IR No. 48 was also *the last streetcar to be used as a legal residence in the city of Colorado Springs, from 1932 or 1933 until 1998.*

Information as found on the web: National and State Register; National Register: Feb. 24, 2011; Site Number: 5EP.6740 Colorado Springs & Interurban Railway (CS&IR) Streetcar No. 48 (located at 2333 Steel Drive, Colorado Springs in El Paso County)



Above: Moving the No. 48 from the museum yard to inside the car barn (Don Gage photo); a view of the car exterior inside the car barn today; and a view of the interior of the car today as it might have looked when used as a residence (Mike Walker photos).

Museum Volunteer Tom Tassia Remembered

Thomas Anthony Tassia passed away on Saturday, September 24, 2022, in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Tom was an active Pikes Peak Trolley Museum volunteer for at least ten years; his favorite job being a museum tour guide. He also contributed "Tassia's Tidbits," short pieces of local historical trivia he periodically discovered that were published in *The Singing Wire*, the museum newsletter.

With degrees in electrical technology and math and physics, Tom worked for Sandia Laboratories in Albuquerque, Lawrence Livermore Laboratory in California, and retired working at ITT in Colorado Springs.

He is survived by his wife, Rita; his two sons, James and Brian; his two sisters, Rosemary and Dolores; and his grandchildren, Amanda and Zack. We extend our deepest condolences to Tom's family.



August 27th Open House a Big Success!

The Pikes Peak Trolley Museum sponsored a Free Day/Open House on August 27th, complete with guided tours of the museum, restoration shop, and outdoor displays, trolley rides, a C&TS volunteer information tent, and two Model A clubs. The Birney was “demonstrated” while not quite ready to give rides.



Throughout the day, some 225 visitors enjoyed the event, keeping our volunteers busy.

Ron Oatney photos



St. Louis Loop Trolley Resumes Service

The Loop Trolley operates on Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays from 11 a.m. until 7 p.m. It was free to ride during a three-month pilot program, which ended Sunday, October 30, 2022.

The 2.2-mile route runs on Delmar Boulevard and DeBaliviere Avenue, between the University City Library and the Missouri History Museum in Forest Park.

A round trip on the Loop Trolley will take approximately 60 minutes, including a 10-minute operator break at each end of the route – at the Missouri History Museum and the University City Library. (Heavy traffic conditions will impact trip times.)

You can board the Loop Trolley at any of the 10 stops along the route.

- 6 Trolley stops are located on Delmar Boulevard
- 3 Trolley stops are on DeBaliviere
- 1 stop is at the Missouri History Museum



What became of the Rock Island Roswell Roundhouse turntable?

Mel McFarland, Colorado Midland author and Pikes Peak Trolley Museum tour guide, has the answer!



In March 1983, Mel purchased a caboose from the Colorado and Eastern Railroad in Denver. It was delivered to the Rock Island trackage at Roswell. In April 1983, the ex-Burlington Northern caboose was moved from the Rock Island trackage east of the roundhouse to its new home. The moving permit did not include using the Polk Street bridge because they felt it was not strong enough. (This was before the short connection with Fillmore was built.) Mel knew it was the old turntable from the roundhouse. *Here the caboose is going over the bridge - you can see the turntable fairly clearly.* A few years ago, a new Polk Street bridge was installed. Unfortunately, the turntable was not saved.

Tassia's Tidbits

When guiding tours, I always like to gather information from those taking the tour. One day a person who lives in Roswell, the original name of the town where our car barn is located, shared that the yellow house (*Mike Walker photo right*) at the corner of Main Street and Fillmore Place was originally the schoolhouse for Roswell.

[The Rock Island Railroad employed nearly 200 men here, and most of their families lived in the town of Roswell, north and east of the Roswell yards. Today, the Roswell area remains a quiet, peaceful section of small, well-kept homes.]



Museum Operations and Restoration Updates

Operations

May 15, 2022 – November 15, 2022

The Museum welcomes your ideas and participation. The following details recent activities by volunteers, members, and Community Service workers.

- **Carbarn:** Enclosing the conference room walls is complete. A large screen TV now plays 5 short videos on a loop.
John Caulfield and “crew” are putting up festive Christmas decorations, adding to the spirit of the season. A “blow-up” Santa will greet guests outside the front door. Lights will be strung up on the front of the building.
- **Museum Displays:** Wayne Russert has lowered the “O” scale layout, now on rollers and easier to maintain, so it can be seen more easily by our younger visitors. Above it, on the east wall, Wayne installed a historic “Buddy L” model freight train.
- **Museum Grounds:** The addition of Cog Railcar No. 17 continues to be a great attraction. The iconic car has given us the opportunity to tell more of Colorado Springs’ unique rail history, from cog railways to early narrow gauge railroads to, for a while, one of the best trolley systems in the country. The car is a source of income from rentals for parties and weddings.
- **Visitors:** COVID-19 protocols: Masks are optional.
We continue to have a significant number of large groups visit us; they seem to really enjoy their tours. A total of 817 visitors came through the museum beginning in July through October.
- Updated **Street Signs** have been installed on nearby city streets by Colorado Springs crews, clearly directing visitors to the “Trolley Museum.” Also, a new “40th Anniversary” sign is now in place on the front of the carbarn.

Restoration

May 15, 2022 – November 15, 2022

The Museum 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:** Our “Old Faithful” is back in service and is operating well, providing trolley rides for our visitors.
- **CS&I Car #135:** On October 28th, Chuck Bader (FCMRy) and John Kenney worked on the Birney’s brake valves. Still a puzzle is the source of a compressed air leak in the brake line. The Birney operated under its own power in August during our Open House to “demonstrate” future operation, but we were not yet able to give trolley rides to the public.
- **CS&I #59:** Work on the Laclede’s second vestibule is on hold.
- **Car #48, “The Brill”:** #48 continues to be a popular display of a young couple’s WWII-era residence - which it once was.
- **Denver Tramway Car #117:** #117 remains available for viewing as cosmetic restoration continues. Its unique history is of a great deal of interest to tour participants, especially those from Denver.
- **Car #3101, LARy “War Baby”:** Clean-up of the car interior has begun while protected under a tarp awaiting roof repairs.
- **Car #4002:** Extensive work on the car is planned to coincide with the visit of Dr. Steve Kutznetsov once replacement of the front windshield is complete. Installation of a new control panel and installation of the motor generator are planned.
- **Car #4363, exSP6777, Rock Island RR Museum:** The car continues to be part of regular museum tours. Pick up a handout describing the history of the Rock Island in Colorado.

Volunteers – Always Needed, Always Welcome



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from your friends at the Pikes Peak Trolley Museum!



Above: Operating Polar Express layout



Above: Operating Polar Express layout

Be sure to enjoy the Trolley Museum’s Model Train Layouts during December!

Betty Haney photos

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)

Individual

Family

Corporate

Friend \$40.00 Unlimited guests \$60.00 Sponsor \$250.00

Check enclosed. Please mail to the address at the top of this form.

Please charge my credit card: _____ Exp. Date: _____

Name as it appears on card (please print) _____ Signature: _____

"PayPal": Send funds to csstreetcarfdn@aol.com

Additional Contribution: \$ _____ to be applied to (please check one):

Car Restoration Museum Displays General Operating Fund

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!

Update on Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic RR restoration of D&RG Express Baggage Car No. 163 at the Colorado Springs work site



In Chama, FoC&TS photo



In place at PPTM, Betty Haney photo

On June 18, 2022, FoCTS volunteers and trolley museum volunteers and a few museum members happily welcomed the arrival of D&RG Car No. 163. The historically significant 138-year-old car was, in 1883, among the newest constructed by the D&RG and one of 19 such cars in service by 1886. Baggage cars originally carried passengers' checked baggage. Later, with the addition of shelf space and floor areas for packages and large boxes, package service and the express element were added, becoming the Railway Express Agency (REA) after WWI.

Car 163 served most of its latter years in Colorado as the Express Baggage Car on the San Juan consist running from Alamosa to Durango over the San Juan Extension. It will be restored to around the 1916 time period.

2022-2023 Museum Hours

Open Wednesday through Saturday

Museum opens at 9:30 a.m.

Last tour at 3:00 p.m.

Adults \$9; Active Military & Seniors \$7;

Children 5-12 \$5; Children under 5 free

2022 Holiday Hours

Thanksgiving weekend: Closed Thursday, Friday, and Saturday (November 24, 25, and 26)

Christmas weekend: Closed Friday and Saturday (December 23 and 24)

New Year's weekend: Closed Friday and Saturday (December 30 and 31)