

# Join the Southern California Traction Club!

The Southern California Traction Club is dedicated to the demonstration of the fun and practicality of modeling electric traction vehicles from a powered overhead wire. You don't have to be an expert or even a Master Model Railroader (MMR) to belong to the club. In fact, we prefer it if you are neither. All you need is four things; (1) the desire to model operational traction; (2) ability to use basic modeling tools; (3) normal level of interest and (4) time and willingness to support club public appearances.

The club was founded on October 15, 1995 in the former All Aboard Model Railroad Emporium (Hobby Shop) in Torrance, CA by five individuals, one of whom is still an active member. In 1997, the club acquired its first trailer for transporting up to twelve modules to the public displays. In 1998, the club acquired a clubhouse in the Baldwin Hills (Los Angeles) area, which is a converted two-car garage behind a private residence. In 2000, the club obtained the use of a second trailer, which can carry up to eleven additional modules. At the clubhouse is a test-track for overhead and two-rail DC and DCC equipped HO vehicles, club tools and storage for the club trailers. There is a small library containing back issues of Model Railroader; issues of Railroad Model Craftsman; Traction Fans Directories; and other traction publications. The club also makes use of the extensive Trolleyville library ([www.trolleyville.com](http://www.trolleyville.com)). Members have access to resistance soldering equipment and a bead blaster for the maintenance and finishing of brass models. The clubhouse has a wall-mounted television set, a stereo VCR, stereo sound equipment, microwave and refrigerator for members' use. Also several traction videos are available for viewing. There is even a 35mm projector and screen for viewing slides.

All club models are HO scale and powered from overhead wire using trolley poles as currently found on cars running in Dallas, TX, Kenosha, WI, Los Angeles, CA, Memphis, TN, New Orleans, LA, Philadelphia, PA, San Francisco, CA, San Jose, CA, Seattle, WA, and Toronto, ONT, and in other heritage trolley lines and operational trolley museums throughout the United States and the world. All existing models must be converted from the normal two-rail method to run from overhead power.



The club has not only developed its own proficiencies in this area but also has had some parts fabricated for this purpose. The club has developed standards, largely based on those developed in 1969 for the East Penn Traction Club, but those standards have been updated to allow the operation of larger electric railway vehicles such as the 72' long Pacific Electric "Blimps" and trains of PFE reefers hauled by steeple cab electric locomotives.

The club's major purpose is to demonstrate the feasibility and enjoyment of operating scale model trolley cars from powered overhead wire. As such we make six to eight appearances each year, normally at local National Model Railroad Association (NMRA) shows, Great Train Expo shows and the World's Greatest Hobby on Tour Shows. Traditionally, we have used ordinary D.C. voltage to power the cars but we are now experimenting with Digital Command Control (DCC) for overhead wire power. As we are just beginning to explore this new technology, this is a great time for new members to join in the learning process.

The standard club display configuration is a 16' by 26' foot rectangle consisting of 22 modules. But the club has set up a display as large as 22' by 27' at the August 2000 National Train Show in San Jose. In the next three photos are a four-loco lash-up of Pacific Electric 1619 class steeple cabs with a freight train in tow; a three-car train of Pacific Electric "Blimps" on one of the six-foot modules and a two-car train of Boeing Standard Light Rail Vehicles, equipped with the new Bowser mechanisms running on one of the three-foot square corner modules.



By the end of 2006, the club had displayed their operational modules on over 65 occasions from San Jose, CA and Las Vegas, NV to San Diego, CA, including the 2000 NMRA sponsored National Train Show, the 2004 HobbyVisions Trade Show and the 2005 Long Beach World's Greatest Hobby on Tour Train Show. The club also supports the local NMRA by appearing at local shows at the South Coast Botanical Gardens, Los Angeles Arboretum, Descanso Gardens and the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County. Club members have been invited to operate their equipment on the San Diego Model Railroad Club in Balboa Park in San Diego on more than one occasion. In 2006, the club began displaying a subway train module using [Digital Command Control \(DCC\)](#) and in 2007 began operating some trolleys on overhead wire also using DCC.

Membership requirements include attendance at club quarterly business meetings, participation in conducting and staffing the majority of club displays and the acquisition of two completely painted and operational models. As circumstances dictate, new members may be required to complete an individually owned operational module, or to participate in the completion of a club-owned module, dependent upon club needs at the time. Quarterly business meetings are normally held at noon on the fourth Sunday of the January, April, July and October, except when there is a conflict with a scheduled appearance. Usually there are members at the clubhouse on most Sunday mornings and Tuesday afternoons. For more information, feel free to contact the Club at 310-990-5422 during normal business hours. You can also E-mail the club at [sctc@customtraxx.com](mailto:sctc@customtraxx.com). You can even view the club Internet pages at [www.trolleyville.com](http://www.trolleyville.com). Click on the destination sign (**HO MODULES VIA SCTC**).

If you decide that you wish to join our club, you will be invited to a meeting to discuss your desires. If the membership feels that you can contribute to the club, you will be invited to join. That is all that it takes. There is an initiation fee of \$50.00 and dues are \$20.00 monthly, paid on a quarterly basis. Dues support the monthly clubhouse rent, maintenance of the club trailers and development and repair of club owned modules. There are no probation periods. Each new member has one year to meet all of the club requirements as to modules and /or operational models

The club is governed by a three-person Board of Directors that sets the goals and conducts the business of the club. They are elected each December for one-year terms. There are standards, mostly interface, to follow for modules and equipment. All business is conducted at the quarterly board of Directors meetings, voted upon and if passed by a majority, become official club policy. The club seeks participating and contributing members to broaden our abilities in and knowledge of all aspects of traction modeling from four-wheel city streetcars to four-truck electric locomotives. We do not seek couch potato or armchair modelers. Traction models and modules are a lot of enjoyment but they do take their share of work to develop and maintain. The SCTC is interesting in having you join us!