

OERM and IRM Announce Historic Trolley Coach Agreement July 1, 2009

The Orange Empire Railway Museum (OERM) and the Illinois Railway Museum (IRM) are pleased to announce an historic cooperative agreement. The deal will provide for the restoration of a significant piece of Los Angeles transit history and help to build IRM's national collection of trolley coaches. In exchange for the donation of four trolley coaches in OERM's collection, IRM will restore to operating condition the only surviving Los Angeles trolley coach, *Los Angeles Transit Lines* 8002, built by ACF-Brill in 1946.

As part of the extensive "Yellow Cars" city streetcar system, Los Angeles operated a small network of two trolley coach lines from 1947 to 1963. All but one of the Los Angeles trolley coach fleet was sold to Mexico City in 1968, and only coach 8002 stayed in the L.A. area. The coach was used by aerospace manufacturer Garrett-AiResearch as a mobile test lab and was significantly modified as a result. The partially stripped coach came to OERM in 1972 and has been in storage ever since. Between 1969 and 1981 OERM also acquired five operating trolley coaches from San Francisco and Seattle as those systems phased out older equipment.

IRM owns the country's largest and most comprehensive collection of trolley coaches, and also operates them regularly over a half-mile line. The IRM Trolley Coach Department will undertake the restoration of Coach 8002 over a five-year period. The 8002 will soon leave for Illinois along with Seattle Fageol-Twin coach 633 and San Francisco Fageol-Twin coach 614. Upon completion of the 8002 restoration, San Francisco Marmon-Herrington 536 and Seattle Pullman 656 will then move to IRM. OERM is supplying parts for the LATL 8002 restoration and the two museums are also cooperating on sharing the spare parts for the San Francisco and Seattle coaches.

The deal will permit OERM to focus resources on its comprehensive collection of streetcars and interurbans from the Los Angeles area while still providing for the restoration of LATL 8002. In exchange, IRM will add four very significant pieces to its growing national collection of trolley coaches as well as share its trolley coach restoration and operation expertise with a fellow museum.

Founded in 1956, the Orange Empire Railway Museum is a non-profit 501(c)3 educational organization whose mission is to preserve and display artifacts and documents of the rail transportation industry in order to educate the public on the technology, history and impact of the rail transportation industry in the West and more specifically Southern California.

Founded in 1953, the Illinois Railway Museum is a non-profit 501(c)3 educational organization whose mission is to demonstrate the vital role railroads have played in the growth of the Chicago area as well as the United States through the preservation and operation of railroad and mass transit rolling stock and the display of related artifacts in a realistic setting.

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