



Meeting Notice

Our next Zoom Meeting is on
Friday, January 15, 2021, 7:30 pm

Presenting This Month: Jack May

The January meeting will be presented by longtime ERA member and photographer Jack May. The first portion of Jack's program is called **Modern Streetcar Systems in the U. S. A. - A personal survey with digressions, detours and diversions.**

Over the past four decades many new electric traction lines have been opened in North America. These "**light rail**" systems, which now provide a superior type of mobility to the residents of certain lucky cities, are quite long, with most reaching far into suburban areas. Although called "**light rail**," those in our avocation know that they merely reflect a modern update and technological evolution of the streetcars and interurbans that operated all over the U. S. for well over a century--and almost two.

But more recently, certain cities like Detroit, Cincinnati, Milwaukee, Kansas City, and others, which once had large streetcar systems that were replaced by buses, have built new rail lines to spur downtown development and rehabilitation, to serve major traffic generators, and to increase the mobility of residents and visitors so they can easily and comfortably circulate between local neighborhoods and city centers. The transit industry has reintroduced the name "streetcar" to identify the shorter rail transit lines that have begun operating on streets within certain areas of these cities, categorizing them separately from "**light rail**" lines. Some of these new lines use rolling stock that look like the trolleys of old, and have even restored older rolling stock for the sake of authenticity, while others have opted for a new contemporary appearance and state-of-the-art technology, with low floors to allow easy access for disabled users and those burdened with baby carriages and shopping carts; many of these are now partly "wireless", powered by stored electricity in batteries. This presentation will feature many of the new "**modern streetcar**" lines, and explore the question of what is truly modern--could it just be in the eye of the beholder?

The second portion of the show will include a potpourri of foreign and North American views of electric traction from trip reports not published in the *Bulletin*.

Jack's ERA involvement dates back to the start of the 1960s, including a 7-year stint as the editor of *Headlights*. Many know him as the organizer and leader of ERA annual conventions held all over North America traction cities for some 30 years, including numerous international tram and traction tours to Europe. Jack still uses film, and the program will mostly consist of digital scans of slides he exposed while criss-crossing the U. S. in the past ten years.

Jack traditionally opens each year of ERA meetings with his outstanding presentations. Please join us for our first program of 2021 to welcome in the New Year!

How to Join Our Zoom Meeting

Please go to ERA's website at www.erausa.org for the Zoom link to join. The home page with the evening's program will have the "Zoom Login" button for joining the Zoom meeting posted about five days before the meeting. The Zoom meeting becomes available for signing on at 7:15 PM. The show begins at 7:30 PM.

If you have any problems getting in, email Bob Newhouser at bnnyc1955@aol.com, or on the night of the meeting call or text Bob at 917-482-4235.

Other Important Announcements: President Bob Newhouser

2021 Meetings—Our monthly meetings will remain virtual on Zoom until further notice. With the speaker's approval, all meetings are recorded and posted on ERA's website, www.erausa.org.

ERA Has Made It Easy to Donate—Thank you very much to those of you who have already made generous contributions to support our programs along with your dues renewals! The membership's response to date has been outstanding! As we explained in our 2021 dues renewal letter, even with our streamlining program and dues adjustments, our expenses are projected to exceed revenues by approximately \$40,000 per year, making it difficult for ERA to continue beyond the 2023 membership year. If you have not already done so, please consider a donation this year to help ERA continue its 86-year record of traction education and entertainment. Our new online form makes it much easier to donate! ERA is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt corporation. Your donations are fully tax deductible and can be made using the new donation form on our website: www.erausa.org/donate.