

Transportation - Trolley Collection

Collection Summary

Title: Transportation -Trolley

Collection Group: Transportation

Dates: 1889-2010

Location: Archives B, Shelf B12

Quantity: 3 boxes

Abstract: Trolleys emerged as a form of public transportation in Denver in the 1880's. By 1888, a line had extended into Montclair and was converted to an electric line in 1889; shortly thereafter the line was purchased by Aurora developers Donald Fletcher and Samuel Perry. Trolley route 14 ran between Denver and Aurora until 1950. Led largely by private restorer Joe Garrett, a group of citizens authorized by the Aurora Chamber of Commerce organized in 1975 as the Citizens Trolley Advisory Committee to reestablish limited trolley service in Aurora as part of the Bicentennial celebration. The collection documents the efforts of the committee, and the continued interplay between trolleys and revitalization efforts, both in Aurora and Denver.

Arrangement: This collection accumulated from different sources over the years. Where the source was known, the documents have been kept together. Otherwise, the collection has been ordered thematically first, and then by region. Box 1 contains clippings, correspondence, posters for CTAC, newsletters and drafts, internal documents from CTAC, collected legal documents (photocopied), hand drawn and photocopied maps, laser print and photographic images, blueprints, stickers, a cloth patch, a ribbon, and pamphlets. Box 2 contains a ten page photo album with 4x6 photos, Polaroids, and clippings, and twelve 11x14 inch scrapbook pages with photos and trolley tickets. Box 3 contains editions of various trolley and transportation magazines, as well as issues of American History Illustrated.

Contents

Series and Subseries

Box 1 of 2

Series: Aurora Trolley Restoration Efforts

Subseries: C-TAC documents

Folder 1:

- Announcement for the Citizens Trolley Advisory Commission (CTAC) organizational meeting dated May 27, 1975.
- Hand-written minutes from C-TAC meetings, summer and fall 1975.
- A photocopied map with marker showing the Galena Street trolley

- A bound collection of documents including news clippings, a C-TAC minutes, and advertisements for train supply companies organized by researcher Don Robertson in 1986.
- Photocopied maps of trolley routes leaving from Montclair.
- A memo from Aurora department of Planning and Community Development on the feasibility of a trolley line between Del Mar and downtown, dated April 1, 1976.

Subseries: C-TAC/Aurora Trolley Commission publications

Folder 2:

- Announcements for public meetings, summer and fall 1975.
- Flyer for garage sale fundraisers, probably 1976. C-TAC newsletter, dated August 12, 1975.
- Photocopied clippings, August 1975.
- Typed draft of a letter from C-TAC president Joe Garret to Mr. Jim Jones, with clipping, undated.
- Commission newsletter "The Track Record" and photocopied clippings concerning the RTD purchase of a proposed trolley park, January 1977.
- C-TAC poster.

Subseries: News clippings

Folder 3: Newsprint and photocopied clippings from April 1972 to January 1976, arranged chronologically. Subjects include Joe Garrett's restoration work before C-TAC, the development of C-TAC in 1975, the restoration of car 770, and funding issues around the Bicentennial projects. Sources include the *Aurora Sentinel*, *East Suburban Scout*, the *Daily Journal*, the *Denver Post*, and *Metropolitan News*.

Subseries: Joe Garrett biography

Folder 4:

- Booklet of printed images, probably autobiographically assembled by CTAC president and trolley restorer Joe Garret. Includes his military portraits from 1949 and 1982, photos of trolley car restoration projects (cars #312, 770, 54, and 109), ads for his painting business, business cards, a letter to *Traction: Prototypes & Models*, and a copy of *The Track Record* dated 1990.
- One ten page photo album with clippings and photos detailing a lawsuit brought by neighbors Jerald and Terry Brown in 1975. Sources include the *Aurora Sun*, the *Aurora Sentinel* and the *Denver Post*. Probably assembled by Joe Garrett (oversize, stored in Box 2).

Subseries: Trolley organizations post-CTAC

Folder 5:

- Drafts of the Aurora Central Electric Company newsletter in sleeves, including photo prints of cars 109 and 106, dated 1940's. One of the sleeves contains a patch for Colorado and Southern Railroad Company. Probably created from December 1976 to 1980.
- Educational drawing of proposed light rail car.
- Full version of Denver Central Electric Railway newsletter *The Track Record*, dated January 1981 which contains several letters from co-founders Joe Garrett and RTD historian James Kunkle. Also, pasted draft of pages.
- Printed list of members of the Denver Rail Heritage Society, dated March, 1990.
- News clippings (2006) regarding RTD light rail service in Aurora, trolley proposals on Colfax

Series: Aurora Trolley Island redevelopment project

Folder 6:

- Chronological printed email correspondence between various parties dated Feb 2003 to December 2005 regarding the development of Trolley Island redevelopment project on Colfax and Dallas. Main parties are Urban Renewal project manager Kay Miller, Doug Lamson of landscape architect firm EDAW, Aurora History museum director Gordon Davis, James Cooper, and James Rakke (Aurora historic Preservation Assistant).
- Project description , objectives, timeline, and announcement for project kickoff meeting dated April 13, 2004.
- Drafts of the condensed history that appears at the project site.
- Research materials, including business registries for the area by the history trolley turnaround, site photos, and photocopied pictures of the old turnaround at Poplar Street.
- Clipping regarding funding.
- Public Places press release dated Nov 2, 2004.
- Artist's rendition of the project site.

Series: Car 610

Folder 7:

- Newsprint and printed online clippings dated 2006 to 2010. Coverage follows the discovery, transport, and restoration of car 610, which was found in an Aurora farmhouse after police responded to a vandalism call in January 2006.
- Correspondence between the Aurora History Museum, the Aurora Trolley Commission volunteer group, the State Historical fund, and city agencies regarding historical designations, restoration work, funding options and applications, and the final placement of car 610 at the AMC campus

Series: Denver Tramway Company

Folder 8:

- Small pamphlet dated 1950 published by Denver Tramway Company to celebrate the official transition from trolley to bus service.
- One punched trolley ticket for route 14 to Montclair, undated.
- Reproduction of a trust certificate for Denver South Park and Pacific Railway Company.
- Photocopied numbering, lettering, and painting specifications, addressed to Joe Garrett.
- Technical drawings of Denver Tramway cars, reproduced by National Railroad Historical society, 1965. Denver and Intermountain Railroad Company timetable, 1943, reproduced 1965.
- Technical drawings of a closed double-truck car, source unknown.
- Restoration description of Denver and Intermountain Railroad car #25, dated late 1990's.

Subseries: Beverly Garrett collection Acc #2009.089

Folder 9:

- Blue ribbon for the Retired Tramway Reunion held in 1974.
- Yellow advertisement for Caboose Hobbies entitled "Warning! Contagious - Model Railroad Disease."
- Booklet from the Denver Tramway Company, "Street Car Trolley Coach Motor Bus Guide" probably 1940's.
- Typed letter from James Kunkle to "Retired Tramway Brothers," dated 1962.

- Letter from James Kunkle to RTD employees, dated 1974.
- Two copies of hand-drawn street car schedules, stamped James Kunkle.
- 12 oversize scrapbook pages (stored in Box 2) with tickets and photos of Denver Tramway Corporation trolley cars in Denver and Arvada, motor buses, and the restored car #54 at the Old Spaghetti Factory. Most of these photos are dated 1940-1946.

Subseries: James Kunkle collection

Folder 10: RTD historian James Kunkle, parts of personal collection.

- Photocopied image and technical description of car 840, typical of trolleys that ran in Aurora.
- Technical drawings of Denver Tramway Company trolley cars.
- Two thick notebooks of photocopied legal documents (1886 to 1891) regarding an electrical line to Montclair, which was purchased and renamed the Fairmount Electrical Railway.

Series: Aurora and Denver trolley history -Secondary research and guides

Folder 11:

- Excerpt from Model Railroader Magazine, undated.
- Web printout of Denver Tramway Company publications available at the Denver Public Library in 2006. Photocopy of The Greeley History museum newsletter, May 2006.
- Real estate listing for Joe Garret's residence at 187 Del Mar Circle.
- Photocopied excerpt from a book on the Denver Tramway Company, title not available.
- Typed model railroad tips, dated 1990.
- Excerpt from *Denvers' Street Railways* by Don Robertson and Rec. W. Morris Cafky covering the reduction of trolley service in Aurora in 1932. Book available in museum library.
- Excerpt from "Early Aurora," including an oral history of Denver Tramway worker Thurston Cox.
- Excerpt from "Mile High Trolleys: A Nostalgic Look at Denver in the Era of the Streetcars."
- Two copies of a 1988 CSU graduate paper by Chris Geddes entitled "Fletcher and her trolley: A suburb's link to the city, our link to the past," one with a City of Aurora memo dated 2004 regarding the "trolley island" development project.

Series: Colorado trolley restoration projects

Folder 12:

- Yellow sticker with "Get Aboard the Trolley – Fort Collins" printed on it.
- Two ads from *The Means Gazette*, 1981 for train equipment used in movies.
- Clippings (some dated 1992, most undated photos) about vintage trolley service along the South Platte and an RTD plan to build commuter passenger lines on old railroad and trolley rights-of-way.
- Copy of "The Colorado Time-Table: Colorado's Only Railroad Newspaper," July-August 1993.
- Booklet published by the Aurora Central Electric Railway proposing a trolley park on the historic Springhill and Coal Creek Line, along Fitzsimmons parkway and Sandy Creek, undated.
- Yellow folder with clippings, photos, and a map for a trolley park in Parker, dated 1981.

Series: National Trolley and Light Rail clippings

Folder 13: Clippings dated 1975-1976 on trolley service restoration projects around the country, particularly in Yakima, Washington for the Bicentennial celebration.

Series: Misc. Trolley images

Folder 14: Calendar photos of trolleys from around the country

Box 3 of 3:**Series: Trolley Magazines**

- 14 issues of *Trolley Talk*, 1969-1996
- 17 issues of *Scale Model Traction and Trolleys*, 1978-2001. Of interest is edition #7 with an article on the route between Denver and Greeley.
- 24 issues of *Traction: Prototypes and Models*, 1987-2002. Of interest is Vol 3, No 5 which advertises Denver Tramway car No. 846 for sale.
- 13 issues of *Transportation Heritage*, which reprints old transportation journals, 1968-1979. Vol 3, No. 5 covers the Denver & Intermountain Railway. Vol 5, No 1 contains "Trucks for Denver and Interurban RR."
- 81 issues of *Traction & Models*, 1970-1985.
- 21 issues of *American History Illustrated*, 1967-1981.
- Also contains issues of each of the following: *New England Electric Railway Historical Society newsletter* (1983 and 1988), the *Gauge One Journal* (1987), *Model Railroader* (1970), *Locomotive & Railway Preservation* (1991). Of interest is an issue of *Tramway Connection* (1986), published in Aurora.

Additional Transportation-Trolley items in other collections:**Archives C**

- Twenty photos, mostly black and white, from Beverly Garrett, Acc #2009.89.
- 170 photos and negatives, from Joe Garrett, Acc #2008.011
- More detailed information on the restoration and funding processes for car 610 can be found through the Historic Preservation Assistant

Books in Aurora History Museum Library

Centennial State trolleys: The Life and Times of Colorado's Streetcars (1995), MUS 388.46 FLE

Denver's Street Railways, Vol I, (1999) MUS 388.460978 Rob Vol. 1

388.460978 Rob Vol. 1 (held at the Central Library branch)

Denver's Street Railways, Vol II, (2004) MUS 388.460978 Rob Vol. 2

Denver's Street Railways, Vol III, (2010) MUS 388.460978 Rob Vol. 3