



# Meeting Notice

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Our next Zoom Meeting is on  
**Friday, September 17, 2021, 7:30 p.m.**

## Presenting This Month: Tony Schill

Retired transit operations executive and ERA member **Tony Schill** will present “PCC: The Amazing Streamlined Streetcar,” a comprehensive survey of the dawn, zenith, abandonment (in most cities), and survival of the PCC, an outstanding example of American systems engineering which helped spark the modern revival of light rail transportation. Every North American and some foreign PCC operations will be featured in Tony’s presentation.

Without question, the PCC car was an unprecedented technological and esthetic triumph that brought tremendous improvements in all aspects of urban electric railway service, and in so doing it also brought excitement and new life into a troubled industry. Cities had public celebrations when the new cars went into service! However, as early as 1950 some of the systems with PCCs started to entirely abandon rail operation. By the mid-1960s more abandonments began prompting many observers to think that the future of the North American streetcar — other than as a historical curiosity — was very dark indeed. But, perhaps the greatly diminished number of PCCs that continued to soldier on into the late '70s is what eventually sparked the spectacular revival and increasing number of light rail and modern streetcar operations.

Tony’s life-long interest in railroads and streetcars dates back to his early years in Pittsburgh, back when all 650+ of Pittsburgh Railways PCCs were still in service. In 1969 he became a bus driver for the Chicago Transit Authority, and later a CTA rapid transit motorman and towerman, bus supervisor, and assistant district superintendent. Tony moved to Buffalo in 1982 to become the first rail transportation superintendent of the city’s new light rail line, then still under construction. Tony retired from managing daily transit service in 2001, after a decade as general manager of operations of the combined bus-rail system. For the next nine years he consulted on rail transit operations for a major engineering firm. Today Tony is a volunteer operator at the Pennsylvania Trolley Museum, where he has been a member for more than 50 years.

## How to Join Our Zoom Meeting

A “Zoom Login” button will be posted on our homepage about five days before Tony’s presentation. Please go to ERA’s website at [www.erausa.org](http://www.erausa.org) to join. You can sign in at 7:15 p.m., and the show begins at 7:30 p.m. If you have any problems, email Bob Newhouser at [bnnyc1955@aol.com](mailto:bnnyc1955@aol.com), or even better, on the night of the meeting text or call Bob at 917-482-4235.

## Other Important Announcements: President Bob Newhouser

**Save the Date!** Our next presentation will be on Friday, October 15th, at 7:30 pm. Our featured speakers will be Dr. Rich Allman and Charles Long of the East Penn Traction Club. They will make two presentations, one being a survey of deck roof cars throughout the U.S., followed by an in-depth survey of Philadelphia PCC car operation, both with many historic photos.

**ERA Convention Announced!** The 2022 convention will be based in San Diego, July 7-10, with trips throughout Southern California. We will have more details soon.

**It’s Easy to Join the ERA!** Members, feel free to share this flyer with your friends. If they enjoy our Zoom programs, they should feel free to join at [www.erausa.org/join](http://www.erausa.org/join).

**It’s Easy to Donate!** Please consider a donation this year to help ERA continue its 87-year record of traction education and entertainment. 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 at [www.erausa.org/donate](http://www.erausa.org/donate).