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WORLD'S LARGEST ROTATING TRAMCARS

PALM SPRINGS, CA – After the \$8.15 million private revenue bonds that financed the original construction were paid off in 1996, Tramway officials announced their plans to upgrade the attractions facilities.

By April 1998 the Tramway announced that they had signed an agreement with Von Roll Tramways to undertake the construction and installation of Tram improvements at a cost of \$15 million. Von Roll Tramways, headquartered in Thun, Switzerland, designed and constructed the original Palm Springs Aerial Tramway back in 1963.

The improvements consisted of new cables, drive system, rock removal and new cabins. The cabins are the first in North America to rotate 360-degrees during their ascent to the Mountain Station, plus they are the largest of their type in the world. The roomier tramcars feature a larger viewing area with more window space. The addition of the rotating floors ensures every visitor has a spectacular aerial view during their trip to and from the Mountain Station.

The rock removal process began in the fall of 1999 and was expected to require four to six weeks to complete. The Tramway operated normally during the rock removal period. Tramway officials worked closely with several state agencies and environmental groups to ensure that the construction program did not harm wildlife or cause a negative impact on the surrounding environment.

The new tramcars left Switzerland in February 2000 and were at the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway by May. In June, installation of the tramcars began, and the Tram was officially closed for renovations.

September 2000, nearly 37 years to the day after the original opening, marked the grand reopening of the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway and the inaugural trip of the rotating tramcars. Dignitaries included the honorable Mary Bono, U.S. House of Representatives; Will Kleindienst, Mayor of Palm Springs; and a representative for Roy Wilson, State Representative for Riverside County.

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