

# COMO-HARRIET STREETCAR LINE



# COMO-HARRIET CURRENTS



January, 2004

Minneapolis, Minnesota

## KEEP THE STREETCARS ROLLING!

- *Our Campaign for Como-Harriet has Exceeded its original goal*
- *So far we've received over \$190,000 in donated cash, pledges and materials*
- *We have expanded the project to include additional important work*
- *We still need YOUR help*

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**Masthead Photo:** Sisters at Excelsior. Duluth St. Rwy., No. 78 (left) and Winona No. 10 in front of the Excelsior carbarn, 6-11-99. Work has begun on No. 10 as described on page 3.  
*Photo by Jim Vaitkunas*

## THE Campaign For Como-Harriet **ROLLS ON!** We Have Reached Our Goal and Then Some!

In December during our holiday party we reported that we had attained approximately 75% of our Campaign For Como-Harriet fund raising program goal. Well, on behalf of all Museum volunteers and friends who have contributed to the Campaign I am very pleased to report **that we have exceeded our goal of \$174,000 in donated funds, pledges and material.**

**W**hat a tremendous feat! Many, many thanks to each and every one of you who either donated or pledged towards the Campaign. The success of what is certainly the largest capital fund-raising campaign undertaken by the Museum is due, in large measure, to the contributions and hard work of many, many people. I will not attempt at this time to list all the names of those who donated to the Campaign—that list would go on for pages—close to 300 individuals, corporate sponsors and foundations have donated! We will recognize all of these most generous contributors in a special insert to the *Minne Gazette* this spring.

**B**ecause of our terrific success, the Traction Committee decided to raise our Campaign goal and expand the project by including a fire suppression system in the Linden Hills carbarn and shop at Lake Harriet. After the disastrous fire at the national Capital Trolley Museum in Maryland last fall when 8 historic streetcars were totally destroyed in a fire with no known cause, it became clear that despite all precautions we might take to prevent such a disaster, such a tragedy very well may happen to Como-Harriet. When you consider that we have the only comprehensive collection of Minnesota streetcars in the U.S. at Lake Harriet, the importance of preserving our collection becomes evident. So, right now we are in the beginning stages of finding out how much such a fire suppression system might cost. We are confident that with the help of the donated materials we have now, and hope to get this spring, that the addition of the fire suppression system will not exceed the estimated overall cost of the project.

In addition, MnDOT has increased the overall limit of the project to approximately \$580,000 because of inflation over the last four years. That means that our matching funds requirement went from \$110,000 to around \$117,000. Even though we have exceeded our initial Campaign goal we need to continue to press ahead so we can ensure the success of the project. So, if you have not yet donated or pledged to the Campaign please consider doing so. We have received donations or pledges as large as \$23,000 and as small as \$5. All donations and pledges, regardless of the amount, are gratefully accepted and will help us attain our important objectives.

**S**peaking of the project, the latest word from our engineering firm, SRF Consulting, is that the required project memorandum is nearing completion. This keystone document should be submitted to MnDOT by the end of January at the latest. In preparing this document much coordination was done with the City of Minneapolis, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board and The Met Council/Metro Transit, our partners and sponsor for this project. What we don't know yet is when the actual work will be done. Much additional preparation work must be done before we get to that point. But we will certainly keep all of you advised regarding this aspect of the project.

## TRACTION DIVISION TAKES CHARGE OF EXCELSIOR STREETCAR LINE

During its December 2003 meeting, the Museum's Board of Directors directed the Traction Division to assume control and management of the Excelsior Streetcar Line (ESL). This means that the Museum's historic streetcar operations at Excelsior will now be managed and operated by Traction Division volunteers.

This decision will have an impact on the Como-Harriet Streetcar Line's operations, but what that impact will be on CHSL is unknown right now. At a minimum CHSL's leadership and volunteers will have to focus on making the ESL a "going concern." ESL has never been a money-maker—for most of its short six-year life, the Excelsior Streetcar Line has been a marginally break-even operation. Some years it lost money and some years it had a modest operating surplus. It will be up to your Traction Division leaders to evaluate the operation and make whatever changes are necessary to ensure that, at a minimum, ESL's revenues covers its expenses. In addition, the line needs a lot of work to repair the overhead wire system. ESL's overhead wire was constructed very poorly and the condition of the wire has deteriorated over the years. So, a lot of work will be required to ensure that the overhead is safe and that our cars can use it.

How does this decision by the Museum's Board affect all of us? Well, for some of us who have volunteered to operate at Excelsior in the past there will be not

much change. Therefore, we ask that all ESL Foremen and Operators continue to volunteer to operate No. 78 and No. 1239 in 2004. For those of you who have not operated at Excelsior, we will be scheduling new Operator training and car qualification training for ESL in early May—be on the lookout for that announcement and please sign-up for this training. And, when you are called by **Marv Krafve**, our ESL crew caller, please sign-up to operate at least once per month—twice would be better. ESL's schedule is less demanding than Lake Harriet's: Thursday afternoons 3:00 PM to 6:00 PM (in conjunction with Excelsior's weekly farmer's market); Saturdays from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM (two 3-hour shifts); and, Sundays from 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM. These times may change slightly, by the way, as we test the market.

Over the coming months, and especially in April, you'll be receiving calls for help out at Excelsior. Some of these will be one-time calls for work crews for such things as repairing the overhead. Some calls will be recurring like operating venerable No. 78 and the newly restored TCRT "gate car" No. 1239. In all cases we ask that you pitch-in and help out as best you can. We will truly need your help during ESL's first year under new management.

*Jim Vaitkunas—General Superintendent*

## NEWS, ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPDATES

**Organizational Changes.** The Traction Committee has approved a couple of changes to the Traction Division organizational structure. These changes are:

- The **Personnel Department** is now the **Safety and Training Department**. The new head of this department is **Greg Taylor**. Greg will be assisted by **Dave French**. This department will focus on new Operator and recertification training but will expand its responsibilities to include increased emphasis on both operational and shop safety awareness. Greg is looking for someone to take charge of the safety program. If you are interested in doing this most important job please call him at 612-377-4867.
- The **General Services Department** has been redesignated as the **Passenger Traffic Department**. This department will be led by **Rod Eaton**. Rod is a former Marketing Manager for the Target Corporation so his expertise and experience will greatly help Traction Division in this area. Rod will be assisted by **Louis Hoffman**, **Tom Beaumont**, **Wendy Dunham**, **John DeWitt** and several others. If you are also interested in helping us out with this vital work please call Rod at 763-576-0608.

**Fare Increase in 2004.** The Traction Committee reluctantly decided to increase the basic fare for a ride at Lake Harriet to \$2.00 for a passenger four years of age or older. The last fare increase occurred in 1998 and with the continuing rise in operational expenses, especially insurance premiums, the Committee felt that it had no choice. To soften the blow of the increase, we will be offering our regular passengers special discounted multi-ride tickets and all-day unlimited ride tickets. We will also marginally increase the price of the individual and family season pass. You will learn more about all these changes during recertification training this April and in a special Bulletin which will describe in detail these new fares and services we will offer to our passengers.

**MTM Membership Renewals.** Several of you who had your Museum membership expire in November and December mentioned that you had not received your renewal notices yet. This was reported to MTM admin and the response was that a combination of personnel changes and computer glitches caused a delay in sending out the renewal notices. The re-

*(Continued on page 4)*

## RESTORATION BEGINS ON WINONA NO. 10

We have begun restoring Winona No. 10. Even though we have very limited funds to do all the work, we do have enough money to at least start the process.

Some brief history might be in order. The streetcar we commonly refer to as Winona No. 10 was built in 1914 by the St. Louis Car Company, part of a four-car order (cars number 9 thru 12) that was delivered in April, 1914 to the Winona lines of the Wisconsin Rail-

way Light & Power Company. The car entered service on May 3, 1914 and was part of the initial effort on the part of WRL&P Co. to modernize its Winona streetcar lines. No. 10 operated through the 1920's and 1930s in several paint schemes and No. 10 actually made the last run in Winona on July 22, 1938. After retiring from service No. 10 was sold to a family who moved it about 8 miles down the Mississippi river and set it up as a cabin overlooking lock and dam No. 6 and a mere stone's throw from the Milwaukee Road's Chicago-Twin Cities mainline. The Museum learned that No. 10 was available in late 1998. We looked at the car and we were amazed at the excellent condition of the carbody. We subsequently purchased No. 10 and moved it to the Excelsior carbarn in June 1999 where it has rested ever since.

What we are now doing is called curatorial research. While the carbody remains in the cold part of the Excelsior carbarn some windows, doors and wood trim have been removed and careful stripping of paint is being done to determine the various paint schemes of the car. There is some debate over the various liveries No. 10 reportedly wore—no company records remain and period newspaper articles are very vague on the subject. Hopefully the curatorial research being done by our ace color expert, **Bill Graham**, will reveal the various colors so we can accurately match the paint when we refinish the carbody. No decision has yet been made regarding the era the car will be restored to. Some would like to see the car painted in it's as delivered



No. 10 operating on a Winona street in the early 1930s.

1914 look with a yellow body and cream window band. Others would like the car to be painted in it's 1930s paint scheme of traction orange body with cream

windows and red trim. We have most of the electrical and mechanical components needed to restore No. 10. In fact, one K10 controller is already rebuilt and the other is being worked on. We have decided that rather than rebuild the Brill 21E truck that was obtained several years ago for No. 10's restoration, we are going to fabricate a replica of the original St. Louis Car Company

No. 46 "Dupont" truck on which the car rode for it's entire service life. This will entail obtaining two wheel, axle and motor sets and design and fabricate the steel truck frame, springs, motor mounts, etc. This is a daunting task but we feel it is very doable given the simple design of the No. 46 truck.

Since No. 10 was a true double-end car the seats were the "walk-over" style in which at the end of the line you simply flipped the seat backs so that the passengers always faced in the direction the car was going. Luckily we have a source for the metal working parts of the exact seat we need from our friends at a sister streetcar museum in Canada, the Edmonton Radial Railway Society. We plan to coordinate with them to have the parts we need cast. We will then have to machine and finish the metal pieces and fabricate the wooden seat bottoms and backs into a finished product. No. 10 had 12 of these flip-over seats.

I briefly mentioned available funds earlier in this column. Right now we have just enough money to do the curatorial research and to do some stripping and finishing of those parts easily removed from the car. The more expensive work will have to wait until we conduct a formal fund raising campaign later on this year. Here is the estimated restoration costs for No. 10:

- \$20,000 — Build replica SLCC No. 46 truck
- \$6,000 — Build replica seats
- \$3,000 — Exterior restoration
- \$2,000 — Interior restoration
- \$9,000 — Restore or refurbish mechanical & electrical components including motors

In summary, we estimate that it will cost us approximately \$40,000 to restore No. 10 to service.

Would you like to join the work crew to restore No. 10? If so, please contact **Bill Graham** at 952-435-9724 and let him know you're interested. Work on No. 10 will be done at both the Excelsior carbarn and at the Linden Hills carbarn for those parts that can be easily transported there.



No. 10 is being gently lowered onto the trailer for it's five-hour move to Excelsior on 6-11-99.

**COMO-HARRIET CURRENTS**  
January 2004

**COMO-HARRIET CURRENTS** IS A PERIODIC NEWSLETTER FOR THE VOLUNTEERS AND FRIENDS OF THE COMO-HARRIET STREETCAR LINE, MINNESOTA TRANSPORTATION MUSEUM.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING ITEMS FOR THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE **COMO-HARRIET CURRENTS** IS MARCH 1, 2004.

PLEASE SEND ITEMS TO JIM VAITKUNAS AT THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS:

155 CHAPARRAL DR.,

APPLE VALLEY, MN 55124-9774

YOU CAN SEND INPUT OR INQUIRIES BY

E-MAIL TO: [jvaitkunas@msn.com](mailto:jvaitkunas@msn.com)



**MINNESOTA  
TRANSPORTATION  
MUSEUM**

**COMO-HARRIET STREETCAR LINE**

Minneapolis (Linden Hills) Minnesota

### WHAT'S HAPPENING?

April 3	Grand opening of the Hiawatha light rail line
Mid-April	New Operator Training begins—Dates to be announced
April	Operator recertification at CHSL—Dates to be announced
May 1	Beginning of weekend-only service at CHSL
May 14	Beginning of daily service at CHSL
May 15-16	Linden Hills festival
May 15	<b>Campaign For Como-Harriet</b> Celebration and rally
May 29	Beginning of service at Excelsior Streetcar Line

### Address and Telephone Number Changes

**If you have moved, changed your telephone number or have a new e-mail address please let Jim Vaitkunas know. You need to keep our CHSL address list current to ensure that you get all of the forthcoming 2004 season announcements and training notices.**

### LINDEN HILLS CARBARN HEATING FUNDRAISER A SUCCESS

As many of you know, starting in mid-2003 it became evident that MTM was in some financial distress. I won't go into the details of this situation here but after the problem was identified, the Museum's Board of Directors took bold but painfully necessary action to fix the problem and the actions have been successful. The Museum has weathered the financial storm and will be able to sustain itself until the start of the operating season in May. One of the several cost-cutting measures taken was to direct that all Museum operating sites reduce their utility bills, especially their heating bill, by 50% or come up with additional funds to cover the costs. In the case of the Como-Harriet Streetcar Line, we chose to raise additional funds to make up the difference. If we hadn't we would have been forced to reduce the hours of operation at

our Linden Hills car barn and shop.

In typical Como-Harriet fashion, the fund raising ball got rolling during our annual holiday party when several CHSL volunteers spontaneously chipped in anywhere from \$40 to \$100. Then over the next several weeks as the news of the special "car barn heating fund" spread, more donations came in. All told, \$765 was donated towards covering our utility bills over the winter.

Many, many thanks to these fine CHSL volunteers for their donations to this special car barn heating fund:

**Pat and Roy Harvey, Bill Arends, Charlie McCarthy, Walt Strobel, Jan and Ken Albrecht, Scott Reed, Mike Miller, Alfred Aeppli, Kathy and John Prestholdt, George Isaacs, Bettye and Earl Anderson, Phil Epstein, Phil Settergren and an anonymous donor.**

*(NEWS, ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPDATES Continued from page 2)*

renewal notices were sent to all members in early January and you should have received yours by now. *If at any time in the past, or in the future, you have not received, or do not receive, your renewal notice, please call the Museum's main office at 651-228-0263 ext. 3104 and talk to Pat Kytola the Museum's Office Manager.* If Pat is not there leave a message on her voicemail with your name, phone number and when your membership expired and she will get the renewal notice to you ASAP.

**MTM Membership Application Now Available On-line.** The new MTM membership application form is now available on-line. This is the time of year when we talk to our friends, associates and neighbors

about the benefits of joining the MTM and especially about the joys of operating genuine and historic Twin City streetcars. You can now go to our website [www.mtmuseum.org](http://www.mtmuseum.org) and click on the "membership" button in the navigation bar at the top of the main page. You can then download or print out the membership application and give it to your friend and prospective member.

**Volunteers still Needed.** We are still looking for volunteers to help in several areas. Specifically we are looking for people who are interested in working in publicity and promotion, in station operations, and with our merchandise operations. If you have an extra hour or two per month and can help out, please contact **Rod Eaton** at 763-576-0608. Rod, and CHSL, can really use your help.