



# Streetcar CURRENTS



August 2005

Minneapolis & Excelsior, Minnesota

## TEA-21 Track Project

- *The Track Rebuilding project is about 80% complete*
- *Target date to resume CHSL service is on or shortly after August 1st*
- *We will hold a project completion ceremony in Mid-September*
- *When operations begin we will issue operations and safety bulletins to advise crews of any special operating requirements*
- *Tell your friends and neighbors to come and check out our new track*

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**Masthead Photo:** No. 322 crosses the pedestrian subway (underpass) on May 27, 2005 during the CERA special operations.  
Photo by Henry Petermann

## TEA-21 TRACK PROJECT NEARS COMPLETION

The TEA-21 track rebuilding project is continuing to make steady progress. For those of you who have not had the chance to visit Lake Harriet or checked out the progress by visiting our website ([www.trolleyride.org](http://www.trolleyride.org)) here is a summary of what has been done on our track rebuilding project.

**Week 1 (May 31–June 3)** Demolition began on May 31 (the day after Memorial Day). MSM’s Tuesday crew removed the bricks at the depot platform and removed the platform at the north end of the line. The prime Contractor (ECI) began cutting the existing rail into 20 foot lengths in preparation for removal and hauling to the scrap yard. On June 2, the installation of silt fence (for control of erosion sediments) began, and cutting of the rails was completed. Loading of the rail, and removal/sorting of ties, was underway (the Contract called for the salvage and re-use of approximately 700 of the existing ties, which were marked for salvage by MSM). The rest of the ties were hauled away for disposal. On July 3, ECI’s crews began demolishing the pedestrian underpass bridge.

**Week 2: (June 6–10)** City crew worked on removal of poor concrete from the steps, retaining walls, and abutments around the pedestrian underpass, completing this work on June 7. A second city crew worked on rehabilitation of the steps leading from Linden Hills Blvd. down to the carbarn. ECI performed subgrade excavation on either side of the 42<sup>nd</sup> Street crossing. The steel pipeline beneath the William Berry Bridge was removed and hauled away for scrap. At the location of the former “trestle”, a storm sewer pipe was installed. The roadbed was rough-graded from the Berry Bridge to the north end. The first load of track materials (rail, plates, joint bars, spikes) was delivered to the site on Wednesday. City crews began work at the Cottage City stop, including excavation and removal of soil from the platform areas and reconstruction of the steps.

**Week 3 (June 13-17)** Progress during this week was hampered by frequent rain, which prevented work on grading and compacting the subgrade. Grading finally began on Thursday of this week.



D-Day (May 31st)— Here’s the Tuesday crew taking up the platform pavers in front of the Linden Hills station.

On Monday, ECI crews began placing ties and stringing rail from 42<sup>nd</sup> Street to the carbarn. We discovered that the crossing rail is not 90#RA rail, necessitating compromise joint bars from the crossing rail to our “new” 90# rail. MSM personnel lowered the overhead near the carbarn so that the contractor could relocate one of the line poles, to make room for the extended siding. The contractor also vol-

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## From the Front Platform

We're close to reopening the Como-Harriet Streetcar Line. And not a moment too soon. We've lost two months of revenue after a cool and rainy May. And summer is waning. The time to make hay is running short. As we've done in the past, we're going to extend haymaking time.

Over the past fifteen years, we've expanded service into May. Back in 1990, streetcars started running Memorial Day weekend. Now, daily service starts the second Friday before Memorial Day and weekend-only service starts on the first Saturday in May. This year, in fact, we opened on Saturday, April 30. Kudos to the Safety and Training Department for accommodating these big bites out of time normally available for recertification and training. We've started holiday "Early Bird Specials" that have been successful, especially and spectacularly so on Memorial Day. We've built the Halloween Ghost Trolley into a neighborhood institution, and a profitable one at that. And we've run through the end of November. These have, collectively, contributed thousands of extra and sorely needed revenue.

This year, look forward to the NEW Halloween Ghost Trolley. Longtime spook **Dave French** has earned retirement after so many years of holding down the demanding north end routine. We're not sure what "new" means yet. But it may mean building new props and developing new skills. And it may mean an extra night (or two?) of service.

Also look forward to the Holly Trolley. We're trying to make it fun but keep it simple. But it could mean operations from 12:30 to 4:30 p.m. on weekends from Thanksgiving weekend through December 18. And it'll involve keeping the crossing, line, and platform clear of snow and ice and cleaning snow and ice off the streetcars and out of the carbarn and stations.

Look for more information about the NEW Halloween Ghost Trolley and the Holly Trolley in the weeks and months to come. Answer the call with enthusiasm. They'll both be a lot of work (and, with the Holly Trolley, when we're getting ready for Christmas in our own families and homes). But they'll be a lot of fun too!

*Jim Vaithunas* — CHAIR OF THE BOARD

## MSM News Update — *Louis Hoffman* — SENIOR SUPERINTENDENT

**More new members and donors recognized.** Welcome to new members **Myles Jarrow, Thomas H. Lowry, Loren Martin, J. Andrew Sack, Martin Van Horn, and Hilmar Wagner**. Thanks to **Thomas H. Lowry** for joining as a lifetime member. MSM now has 167 members who have paid \$11,440 in dues and made \$1,980.30 in additional donations to the "Founders Fund" for total membership income of \$13,050.38. A special thanks to the Chicago-based Shore Line Interurban Historical Society for sending a MSM membership flyer to its membership with its *First and Fastest* magazine.

**Annual Appeal Roundup.** This Annual Appeal's proceeds will help fund the installation of a security system at the Excelsior Carbarn, water service to the Linden Hills Carbarn, and fire suppression systems for the Excelsior and Linden Hills Carbarns and the ongoing restoration of Winona No. 10. Total donations are \$7,810.00. Your tax-deductible donations to the Annual Appeal may be sent to: The Minnesota Streetcar Museum, Annual Appeal, P. O. Box 14467, University Station, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55414-0467.

**In memory of Norm Podas and Dave Aune.** Longtime member and volunteer Norm Podas died recently in Grand Marais, Minnesota, where he and his wife **Marcy** had retired. A professional engineer, Norm was of great assistance with a wide variety of projects including the design and construction of the Linden Hills Sta-

tion. We also regret to report the death of a new but dedicated member, **Dave Aune**. Dave just recently joined us but became a fixture on the "Tuesday crew" where he distinguished himself as a hard worker and a nice guy. We've received a number of donations in Norm's and Dave's memory totaling \$360.00, including from **Brig. Gen. P. S. Boab, Ret., Rebecca Coates** and **Stephen Rholl, Jerome and Jo Anne Forare, Jerrold and Shirley Huntington, Regina and Stanley Kugler, Dr. and Mrs. Charles Lewis, John Lewis and Ralph Podas**, Norm's cousins, **Wayne and Lonnie Johnson**, and **Mr. and Mrs. Robert Quist**.

**From the Board Room.** Minutes of all Board of Directors meetings and the agenda of the next meeting are now available online. Go to the website, [www.trolleyride.org](http://www.trolleyride.org), click on "MSM Learn More About Us" and then on "Members Only." If you don't have the username and password, or have any difficulties, please contact webmaster John DeWitt at [jdewitt@mn.rr.com](mailto:jdewitt@mn.rr.com). If you want paper copies, please contact Museum Secretary Louis Hoffman at [hamhoff@msn.com](mailto:hamhoff@msn.com) or 612.729.0442.

### COMO-HARRIET UPDATE

**Thanks from Lakewood Cemetery.** After another successful Memorial Day operation in conjunction with Lakewood's special events, we received a nice letter

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**(MSM News Update** *Continued from page 2)*

from Lakewood President **Ron Gjerde**: “*We at Lakewood would like to extend our deepest thanks to...The Minnesota Streetcar Museum for being part of our Memorial Day celebration once again. It was a very successful day and we received many positive comments... The streetcar rides were thoroughly enjoyed by our visitors. Thank you for extending your hours of operation that day so visitors could enjoy rides to and from Lakewood for the entire day.*”

**Thanks from the Bakken.** We’ve also received a thank you from the Bakken Library and Museum. The Bakken, a library and museum of electricity, had a

small exhibit created from artifacts and photos lent by your Museum as part of its Family Science Saturday from April through June. The exhibit told the story of how streetcars work from the power plant to the motors and featured “hands on” artifacts like the buzzer box and controller (the former “live,” the latter not!).

**City Hall exhibit winding down.** The fine exhibit created by the Hennepin History Museum in the rotunda of Minneapolis City Hall will finish its run and the artifacts (mostly those previously lend by your Museum to the Edina Historical Society for its “Streetcars in Edina” exhibit) is closing and the artifacts will be coming home.

**(TEA-21 PROJECT NEARS COMPLETION** *Continued from page 1)*

unteered to re-locate an overhead pole on the south side of the Berry bridge at no cost to MSM. Park Board crews removed a tree for us in this same area. Spiking of the new rail began at 42<sup>nd</sup> Street and worked south on Tuesday. During this time, the construction team considered a substitution of limestone ballast in place of the specified basalt trap-rock. This change was eventually approved at a reduced ballast cost. At the end of the week, ECI began placing ties and stringing rail at the north end of the line. City crews continued work at Cottage City and on the pedestrian underpass bridge replacement.

**Week 4 (June 20-24)** Rain continued, including a deluge on Monday afternoon, slowing the grading work. Early in the week, ECI spiked track from the north end approximately to the park maintenance building. Deliveries of rail were delayed by the contractor’s supplier, which forced the work to shift to installation of the switch, siding, and main track at the carbarn. At the end of this week, the conditions finally dried enough to allow completion of subgrade preparation from the pedestrian underpass north to the Park maintenance building. City crews worked on construction of concrete forms for the pedestrian underpass.

**Week 5 (June 27–July 1)** Work continued on the carbarn switch and track. Delivery of rail con-

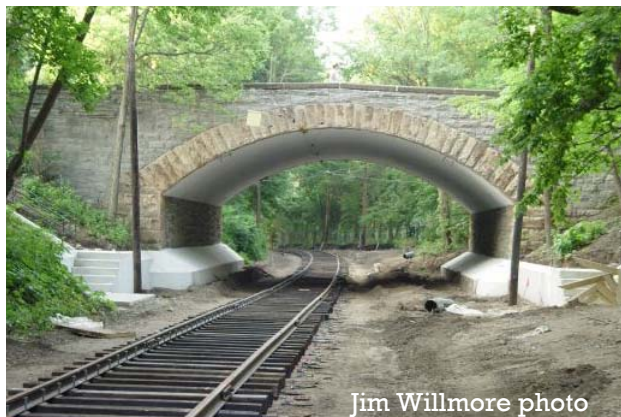
tinued to be delayed. City crews completed the construction of concrete forms for the pedestrian underpass and the installation of the new steel beams. Rails were bolted on the beams to ensure proper gauge and alignment, and on July 1 the concrete slab was placed. Two loads of rail finally arrived and were unloaded on July 1.

**Week 6 (July 5-9)** ECI crews placed ties, placed and bolted the rails, and continued with gauge spiking in the area north of the Berry Bridge. Crew worked overtime, including Saturday. Work was slowed by the onset of the heat wave with afternoon temperatures into the 90s at the end of the week.

**Week 7 (July 11-16)** Work continued on the track north of the Berry Bridge, with the crew working long hours but slowed somewhat by the heat wave. By the end of the week track assembly was nearly completed. Remaining work included completion of the switches on the station siding. Ballast delivery began on Wednesday. By the end of the day Saturday, ballast had been placed south as far as the Berry Bridge. MSM crews walked the line Thursday night to begin planning for the welding of rail bonds. We also began planning for the resumption of operations in early August.

The Contract calls for substantial completion by July 31 and the Contractor expects to meet that date.

*Keith Anderson* — CHIEF ENGINEER



Ninety-nine years separate these two photos of the William Berry Parkway bridge. The photo on the far left was taken in 1906 shortly after the roadbed was lowered to accommodate the new double-deck cars that would carry the crowds to and from Excelsior.

Jim Willmore photo

## Streetcar *CURRENTS* August 2005

Streetcar *CURRENTS* IS A PERIODIC NEWSLETTER FOR THE MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF THE MINNESOTA STREETCAR MUSEUM.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING ITEMS FOR THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE *Streetcar CURRENTS* IS AUGUST 20, 2005.

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 STREETCAR  
MUSEUM

COMO-HARRIET  
STREETCAR LINE

EXCELSIOR STREETCAR LINE

## WHAT'S HAPPENING?

August 5	CHSL resumes regular service (tentative date)
September 5	Special CHSL Labor Day early bird service starts at 9:30 AM.
September 10	Excelsior Apple days festival at ESL.
September 11	Last day of weekend service at ESL
September 17	Tentative date for CHSL grand re-opening ceremony
October 28-31	Halloween Ghost trolley at CHSL and ESL (dates are tentative)

## Lost & Found department

**LOST:** One check endorsement stamp. Last seen in mid-May during weekend operations. If found please leave in box on depot door.

Thanks!

John Prestholdt—Chief Cashier

## AUGUST 2005 SCHEDULE OF OPERATIONS

Included with this mailing is the August 2005 CHSL & ESL Schedule of Operations. If you see a vacancy that needs filling, please contact Jim Vaitkunas.

If you would still like to volunteer to operate on a shift even though there is a full crew shown on the schedule of operations, please call the Foreman and talk with him/her about it. We can especially use you on

those busy weekend shifts. We feel sure that no Foreman would deny you the chance to help out on a shift, especially a weekend shift. So call and sign-up!

**Remember** that you must inform your Foreman of all substitutions or if you are forced to cancel your shift and **please** inform **both Foremen** if you swap shifts

## CHSL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

We'll be operating our streetcars on a brand new roadbed when we begin regular operations somewhere between August 1st and 5th. Right now we do not anticipate making any changes in our sequence of operations. The track layout is essentially unchanged and other than the temporary speed restrictions we put in force at the beginning of the 2005 operating season, we foresee no reason to place any restrictions on our regular operations.

We plan to conduct several hours of test runs prior to resuming operations. This is to make sure that both the track and overhead trolley wire is in operational order. When our track and overhead is declared ready for regular and charter operations by our Chief Engineer, Keith Anderson we will send out special operations instructions to all those who have e-mail. For crewmembers who do not have access to the internet or e-mail, these instructions will be provided when those crewmembers report for their first shift in August. Any special operating and safety bulletins that are issued as a result of the track work will be posted in the usual manner on the operations bulletin board in the maintenance barn and in the station agent's binder located under the cash register in the Linden Hills station.

## Gopher Rail 2005

Friday, August 5th, 2005 — 6:30 PM

The Railroad Club at the University of Minnesota is proud to announce the 3rd annual Gopher Rail multi-media railroad show. This event, one of the first of its kind in the upper Midwest, is patterned after very successful similar events elsewhere in the U.S. (e.g. Winter Rail and other "big screen" railroad shows).

This year's show will be held in the air conditioned comfort of UofM's Murphy Hall room 100. It starts promptly at 6:30 PM on August 5th 2005. This year's show will feature presentations by local railfans Ted Pope, Dennis Holmes and Greg Smith. Admission is \$7.00.

To get additional updated info and to get directions, go to the following website:

<http://www.tc.umn.edu/~rrclubum/gopherrail.htm>