

MINNESOTA STREETCAR MUSEUM



Streetcar CURRENTS



June 2008

Minneapolis & Excelsior, Minnesota



Happy 100th Birthday No. 1300

- Volunteer to help with the various special events that will mark No. 1300's 100th birthday
- Tell your friends and associates about our 100th birthday of No. 1300 events
- Put up the flyers you get by e-mail. Put them where they'll be seen to help boost ridership



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Masthead Photo: Here's a photo of the birthday girl taken in the spring of 2004. Sitting in front of the Isaacs car barn, the car cleaning crew is getting her ready for the coming 2004 operating season.
(MSM Photo archives)

2008 Season Update

Rod Eaton—General Supt.

After a very cool spring, it's finally summer and another streetcar season is underway. Let's all have an enjoyable and successful year.

Our Training Department, **Dave French**, **Clyde Hawkins** and **Tom Fairbairn**, did an outstanding job with recertification this year. It was efficient and quick, thanks to their planning and preparation. They're now busy working with one of the biggest groups of new operator trainees we've seen in years. We should be seeing lots of new faces on our crews.

I hope you've had time to take a look at our new displays in the Linden Hills station. On my first shift this year, I heard some nice comments from regular riders who immediately noticed the changes. Even though he calls it a "labor of love," thanks again to **Mike Buck** for a great job.

And you've probably noticed the new TCRT 1300 merchandise **Charles Barthold** brought in for this summer's birthday celebration. Maybe you've already bought one of the new blue TCRT 1300 T-shirts. Also new this year are some genuine streetcar artifacts--number boards, door signs, and other items scavenged from TCRT cars destined for destruction. We have quite a large number of these items. **John Prestholdt** has conducted an inventory and is deciding which things to part with. Those who purchase these one of a kind treasures take home a great piece of Twin City streetcar history. Charles has also added some new video programs and books. If you haven't read *Until They Bring the Streetcars Back* by Stanley Gordon West, you can pick up a copy in the station. Over the last couple years we've had many high school students visit us as part of school projects connected to the book. Later this summer, we hope to have a book signing party with the author.

And by now you may have spent an hour or so behind the cash register. There have been some minor changes in the way we ring up sales, and I hope it hasn't caused too much confusion. With an increasing inventory of merchandise, keeping track of what's sold and what we need to pay sales tax on becomes increasing important. So the changes in the register layout are necessary.

Although not as necessary, the policy change in our use of tokens for Season Pass and multiple ride ticket holders is also causing some confusion. Essentially, in an effort to get a more accurate count of "paid" riders, we'll be giving tokens to all passengers in a Season Pass group. Additionally, when multiple ride ticket holders (10 and 25-ride tickets) use their rides, the station agent will punch out the number on the ticket and give them tokens to drop in the fare box. Hit "No Sale" to open the cash register drawer for tokens but don't enter any transaction. If you pick up passengers at the north end or Cottage City stops, and they present Season Passes or multiple ride tickets, just take the appropriate number of tokens out of the fare box for them to drop back in. Since no cash is involved, it's not necessary to report anything to the station agent. Museum members, who have always ridden free, continue to do so without tokens. Let's have a terrific summer. I'll be looking for you on the platform. ☺

MINNESOTA STREETCAR MUSEUM



The Minnesota Streetcar Museum is a non-profit, all-volunteer organization with the mission to preserve and communicate to the public the experience of Minnesota's electric street and interurban railway history. To accomplish this mission the Museum operates historic streetcars at two demonstration railways.

COMO-HARRIET STREETCAR LINE
Excelsior Streetcar Line

For more information on our Museum, our collection of historic streetcars and our demonstration railways, visit our website:

www.trolleyride.org

The museum's business address and telephone number is:

P.O. Box 14467, University Station
 Minneapolis, MN 55414-0467
 952-922-1096

Streetcar CURRENTS
 June 2008

Jim Vaitkunas—Editor
 Bill Graham—Distribution

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 July 20, 2008.

Please send items to editor Jim Vaitkunas at the following address:

155 Chaparral Dr.
 Apple Valley, MN 55124-9774

You can send input or enquiries by e-mail to: jvaitkunas@msn.com

NO JULY
Streetcar CURRENTS

There will be no July issue of the Streetcar Currents. The next issue you will receive will be the August 2008 issue. This issue will be sent to you on or about July 25th. Thanks!

From the Front Platform Dave French — Board Chair

One of the interesting things I've learned during my short tenure as Chairman is how much "stuff" is going on at MSM all of the time. Of course, everyone sees our beautiful cars moving back and forth on our lines and that is the most obvious sign of museum activity. But there is an amazing variety of "behind the scenes" work being done by our dedicated volunteers almost every day. One example is MSM is now going to become part of the Museum Adventure Pass program sponsored by Macy's and the metro area public libraries. People with a library card can get a pass for two or four free passes to several area museums, including MTM, the Twin City Model Railroad Museum, and now MSM! One advantage for us is that we get free promotion and a link to our website on the library website. Thanks to **Jim Otto** and **Dennis Stephens** for reminding me about this program and **John Diers** for doing the paperwork. Look for an upcoming operations bulletin explaining the procedure for honoring these passes.



Another behind-the-scenes item is that two of our favorite authors, **John Diers** and **Aaron Isaacs**, have been named as recipients of a prestigious award from the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission for their book *Twin Cities by Trolley*. MSM previously won this award for the restoration of TCRT PCC No. 322. Congratulations to Aaron and John for this well-deserved honor. And if you're still in the market for the book for yourself or as a gift (hey, Fathers Day is coming up!) we just ordered a supply of them and they are on sale in the Linden Hills station at Lake Harriet. Remember, when you buy it from us instead of another outlet MSM benefits.

And one more behind-the-scenes activity that will gradually become quite obvious when you see new faces on your crew, we have a **BIG** class of trainees this year! Around 25 people expressed interest in learning to drive a streetcar and we've started 16 training on the car so far. Many thanks to **Clyde Hawkins** for helping me this year, as this is one of the biggest classes we've ever had. Now you're probably asking, what did we do differently this year to get this many new volunteers? The answer to that is—I don't know! We really did not do any additional promotion of our learn-to-be-a-motorman program this year. As these new Operators start revenue training, please do all you can to make them feel welcome and help them as they perfect their skills. We all know that running the car is a never-ending learning process. Veterans with thirty years experience tell me they still learn something new every year. Hopefully this influx of new people will ease our difficulty in filling all of the shifts each month.

I have notified our General Superintendent, **Rod Eaton** that effective the end of the year, I will step down from being the Chief Trainer so that I can focus more on my duties as Chairman. Clyde is aware of this also and I'm sure we'll be talking later about who will run training in 2009. I'll still help out with on-the-car training but we need someone better able to keep it organized. If you're interested, talk to Clyde or me.

One thing I've mentioned to our new Operators is I still get as big a thrill running the car in 2008 as I did when I started in 1998. I hope you all feel the same way! This is going to be a great year for MSM, so have fun and stay safe on the line. ☺

Historian and Archives Update

Aaron Isaacs—Historian

More donated photos. Longtime museum member Barney Olsen has donated most of his collection of black and white Minnesota streetcar photos to MSM. Olsen rode the Twin Cities streetcars when they were still in service and has vivid memories of them. In all, he donated 271 photos.

MHS photo scanning agreement. In the Minnesota Historical Society's collection are thousands of uncatalogued negatives from the Minneapolis and St. Paul newspapers. I recently finished looking through the Dispatch-Pioneer Press negatives dating from 1947 through 1953. I found over 200 excellent streetcar photos that would be new to the MSM collection. However, purchasing copies at the usual MHS price is more than we can afford.

With considerable help from retired MHS audiovisual curator **Bonnie Wilson**, we now have an agreement that will get us scans of these photos for free. Beginning in July, I'll spend one day per week at MHS, scanning the photos on their equipment and cataloguing them. In exchange, they will give us copies at no charge. It's a win-win for both organizations. MHS gets more of its photos scanned and catalogued. MSM gets access to some great streetcar photos.

Once the St. Paul photos are complete, I will go through the Minneapolis negatives for 1947-54 and scan them. This is a long-term project that will probably take a couple of years to complete. Look for these photos in future issues of *Twin City Lines* magazine.

Railway Museum Quarterly. There's a great new benefit to being an MSM member. You will now receive an electronic version of *Railway Museum Quarterly*. MSM is a member of the Association of Railway Museums (ARM), the trade industry group for North American railway and trolley museums. ARM publishes *Railway Museum Quarterly*, a journal of rail preservation news and best practices. In the past, access to

the Quarterly was limited to eight copies mailed to MSM Board members and officials.

At its Spring meeting, the ARM Board decided it needed to reach more museum volunteers. To do so, it will send an electronic version of the Quarterly to a single contact at each museum and that person will forward it to any members with email. So look for it in your email in-basket soon. It would cost you \$15 per year to subscribe and receive a paper copy, so this is a great deal. If you want to receive *RMQ* send in your e-mail address to jvaitkunas@msn.com.

Online photo hits keep growing. This is starting to be old news, but MSM's online historic photos continue to be the most-viewed on the Minnesota Reflections website and the number of hits keeps rising. The number of individual pages viewed (one photo per page) rose from 130,895 in March to 165,023 in April.

Como Park bike trail. The City of St. Paul has converted the Como-Harriet line right of way through Como Park into a paved bike trail. It extends east from the corner of Como and Hamline Avenues to Horto Avenue. A block east of Hamline Avenue, it crosses over Beulah Lane, a long-closed street. A new bridge has been constructed using the historic streetcar bridge abutments. (see photos below)

In other related news, funds have been authorized to rebuild the deteriorated pedestrian bridge over the streetcar tracks at the Como Park station, just east of Lexington Avenue. Because a fence separated the tracks, passengers used the concrete arch bridge to cross. The arch structure survives intact, but the ornate concrete hand rails are gone. The City applied for and received a federal Transportation Enhancement grant. This is the same pot of money we used to rebuild our track and historic infrastructure in 2005. The Como Park project is scheduled for 2013. ⊕



Shop Update

John Prestholdt—Shop Foreman

We finally took on the last (?) possible area for our de-wiring problems. In talking it over with some of the “old timers” we realized that the trolley bases, the thing that the pole is attached to, probably haven't been serviced since 1980 for No. 265 and much earlier for No. 1300. **Neil Howes** and company made up 3 bases when they created the one for No. 1239 in Excelsior so there were 2 extras to use as replacements. While it took two days for each car, we now have re-built bases that follow the trolley wire and swivel just the way they are designed to do. We have also been working on some of those small projects that have been put aside due to other restorations and maintenance projects like newly machined trolley wheels and parts, extra heaters on No. 265, re-printed car signs in No. 265 just to mention a few.

We also are beginning to get some pieces from Excelsior to work on, and work on Winona No. 10 is progressing at a good rate under **Ken Albrecht's** guidance. All of our projects have been a great learning experience for us all. Remember Saturday mornings, or Tuesday day times are our regular work times, but give me a call and I can open up for anyone else. ☺



Right. OK, What the heck is all this about? Are we making a new piece of equipment operated off our trolley wire? A motorized flat or shop switcher? Well, not quite. Actually the shop guys have been tackling the problem of our trolley poles de-wiring at the south passing siding switch and, as **John Prestholdt** describes above, the guys are trying everything to solve the problem. Here they have mounted a trolley base and pole on one of our work flats and are testing the spring tension of the trolley pole and base. In the foreground you see (Left to right) **Russ Isbrandt**, **Jim Otto** and **Dick Stoner**. In the background are **Phil Settergren**, **Keith Lindberg** and **Roy Harvey** doing some clean-up work behind No. 1300. (Dennis Stephens photo)

TCRT No. 1300 Birthday Special Events

Rod Eaton—General Supt.



We plan to celebrate TCRT No. 1300's 100 years of service throughout the summer with several special events. The first, **Classic Cars and Streetcars**, is Sunday, June 1 from 1 PM to 4 PM. **Dave Irej** is putting the event together and hopes to have many vintage autos from the streetcar era on display along Queen Avenue. In order to receive permission to close the street to regular parking during the show, several of our members canvassed the neighborhood asking people to agree to the event. The neighborhood response was overwhelmingly positive.

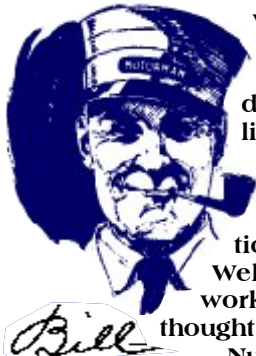
Sunday, July 13 is the date set for our “official” birthday party. We'll have the traditional cake and ice cream, a few (very brief) speeches, some honored guests, entertainment, and maybe one or two surprises. We're hoping to receive some support from local businesses. This event is still very much in the planning stages under the direction of a new events and public relations committee: **Tom Balcom**, **Jim Harrison**, **Maggie Koerth**, **Kathy Kullberg**, **Ron Middlestaedt**, with **Ashley Todd** and **Christine Clayburg** providing backup support. Watch for more details.

And, so you know, the above photo is actually an image of a special No. 1300 commemorative post card that will be on sale in the Linden Hills station in about two weeks. The great photo of No. 1300 was taken by **Mike Buck** in the mid-1990s. ☺

TCRT No. 1300 History

Bill the Motorman (with help from Russ Olson)

BILL THE MOTORMAN



Well, folks, here I am back again. I haven't spoken to you since earlier this year when I talked a little bit 'bout TCRT's snow plows and how they worked. Well, my good friend Russ Olson told me not too long ago that you folks there in the streetcar museum were celebrating the 100th birthday of your first streetcar, Twin City Lines Number 1300. Well when I heard that it brought back some memories. For you see, I was assigned to Snelling station in 1908 when No. 1300 was put into service and boy was she a honey of a car. She was built specially for the Minneapolis to St. Paul "Interurban Line" that ran right smack-dab down the middle of University Avenue. She was faster than the cars that I used to run on the line and that made time keeping much easier for us motormen. 'Course one problem I still had to deal with was cows on the track. And there weren't a lot of passengers at the beginning. But soon University was so built-up that all that farm land was turned into houses and shops and those cows were not much of a problem. And ridership went up, too. I noticed that back last issue of your newsletter you got just a little on the history of No. 1300. Well, there's more to that story so I went and talked with my good chum, Sven Svensen, who works at Snelling Station. Sven went to the records room and gave me what I needed. So, I thought I'd re-tell the story and give you the entire history of this fine TCRT-built standard car.

Number 1300 was part of an order of 19 cars, numbers 1291-1309, built in the Snelling Shops, in St. Paul during March-May 1908. The cars in this series were designed to be faster cars to cut the running time on the "Interurban" line (St. Paul-Minneapolis). This was the first group of cars to have 34" steel wheels. No. 1300 was completed April 9, 1908, and assigned to Snelling Station, St. Paul.

In case you like this sort of thing, here are some technical details fer ya—Length 46' 7 1/8", width 9' 2 1/2", height 11' 5". Baldwin #5 trucks (6'0" wheelbase). Four G.E. 213 motors (50hp each), gear ratio 15:71. K-37-A controller. G.E. CP-21 air compressor, one 10" brake cylinder. G.E. R.B. trolley base, 7" trolley wheel. Peter Smith hot water heater. Arc headlight. Weight 47,800 pounds. Hinged motorman's cab door, two pair rear gates.

At Snelling Station No. 1300 was operated on the "Interurban" (St. Paul-Minneapolis) line for many years. We don't know on which other lines it may have been operated. On April 21, 1920 it was one of eight cars transferred to Lake St. Station, Minneapolis. But on August 2, 1921 it was transferred back to Snelling Station. During August 1921 TCRT decided to put newly rebuilt front-exit cars on all the inter-city lines which required extensive transfers of cars among the various car stations. On September 1, 1921, cars 1289-1330 were transferred to Duluth Ave. Station, St. Paul. These 44 cars were then equipped with front marker brackets for "St. Paul-Wildwood" service on the Stillwater Division.

During 1920-1924 526 cars (1329-1854) had been rebuilt with front-exit doors. For unknown reasons TCRT decided to rebuild an additional 64 cars with front-exit doors: 1254, 1266-1328, July through December 1928.

As a result of all this rebuilding, No. 1300 and its sisters were reclassified as I-8-f-203. The cars got a lot of new mechanical and electric equipment underneath. Here are the details: Length 46' 0", width 9' 2 1/2", height 11' 5". Twin City #9RB trucks built new. Four G.E. 203G motors (50 h.p. each), gear ratio 16:68. K-43-F2 controller. All electric heat. Weight 46,140 pounds. Upon completion on 12-31-1928 car 1300 was assigned to East Side Station.

Cars 1854 and 1328 were experimentally rebuilt for one/two man operation in May and June 1931. They performed so well TCRT decided to rebuild additional cars for one/two man operation. During October-November 1931, cars 1293-1327 were so rebuilt, all of them being from the latest front-exit cars rebuilt during 1928. DB987LB line breakers were installed along with LB-2A devices on the controllers. The gear ratio was changed from 16:68 to 18:66 so that these heavier cars with G.E. 203 motors would have the characteristics of lighter cars with the same motors. Car 1300, now Class N, was completed 11-24-1931 and was one of ten cars assigned to Lake St. Station, Minneapolis. In 1931 automatic thermostatic control equipment for the electric heaters was installed. These were discontinued in the 1930's and removed in 1942.

Number 1300 was one of three cars transferred to Snelling Station February 7, 1934, and later in 1934 to East Side Station. At East Side Station 1300 was used on the **Como-Harriet** and **Oak-Harriet** lines from 1934 through 1953. Field shunts were installed during 1934. In the spring of 1935 special tests were made on increasing braking ratios because of the increase in speed after installation of the field shunts. Numbers 1293 and 1300 were equipped with one 12" brake cylinder, and compared with one 10" brake cylinder on the similar cars. With larger brake cylinders 2.4 seconds was cut from stopping time when speed was 19.2 m.p.h.

At East Side Station posts that supported the roof were set between certain tracks. These posts prevented anyone from getting at the cars on some tracks to fire up the hot-air heaters beneath the cars. In earlier winters old standard cars could use these tracks and one could squeeze through from one car into the next, walking through the cars, and fire the hot-water heaters in the cabs. Now all these old cars were

How much did it cost to build No. 1300?	
Carbody, wire and mount	\$ 2,539.68
4 Gen. Elec. 213 motors K-37 controller	2,447.50
Freight on motor and controls	65.00
2 TCRT No. 5 trucks	469.04
Gen. Elec. CP-21 air brakes	241.00
Freight on air brakes	6.00
TOTAL	\$ 5,768.20

(Continued on page 6)

What's Happening?

- June 1 Special vintage auto rally at CHSL to commemorate No. 1300's 100th birthday
- June 4 Wednesday afternoon service at CHSL starts (1 PM to 4 PM). Wednesday afternoon operations at CHSL will run thru the last Wednesday in August.
- June 7 Streetcar cleaning at CHSL, Isaacs carbarn—9 AM to 11 AM. Juice & rolls are served.
- June 21 First CHSL Moonlight trolley ride of the season operates. Start of run is 10 PM.
- July 4 Special "Early Bird" operations at CHSL start at 9:30 AM
- July 11-13 Excelsior "Crazy Days" festival. Special operating hours at ESL.
- July 13 Party to celebrate 100th birthday of No. 1300. Cake cutting will occur at 1:00 PM
- July 19 Moonlight trolley ride at CHSL. Start of run is 10 PM

(History of No. 1300 Continued from page 5)

gone from regular service. On October 17, 1936, it was ordered that all electric-heat standard gate cars (1254, 1266-1292) and one/two man cars(1293-1328) be assigned to East Side Station. Rear-end controls for backing up were installed on all one/two man cars during 1936-1937.

Shop records indicate No. 1300 was repainted 10-19-1934 (recoat) and 1-13-1939 (sides coated). Rehabilitation and repainting was completed 5-18-1936, 7-22-1940, 9-18-1945, and 3-6-1950.

Cars 1301-1304 became the regular cars on the **Inter Campus** line from the summer of 1953. Car 1300 was added about February 15, 1954. Thus 1300-1304 were the regular **Inter Campus** cars until the end of operation June 18, 1954. I remember running No. 1300 on that line and even at the end she still was a nice car.

Friday June 18, 1954 was the last full day of streetcar operation in Minneapolis and a sad day, indeed, for all us platform men. On Saturday, June 19th, a Minnesota Railfans Association special charter trip was operated with Numbers 1300 and 1775 over the **Como-Harriet** and **Inter-Campus** lines.

Number 1300 was then donated to the Minnesota Railfans Association, removed from the Snelling Station yard September 17, 1954, and hauled by a Milwaukee Road freight train to storage on a Minneapolis-Moline plant spur track in Hopkins. In August 1962 it was again moved to the Minnesota Transfer Railway roundhouse in St. Paul. Its first public operation occurred on the Transfer yard tracks in July 1963. Power was supplied by an engine-generator set mounted on a trailer, towed by No. 1300. In August 1971 it was finally moved to restored trackage at Lake Harriet and operation of the Como-Harriet Streetcar Line (CHSL) began.

And thank God for those old timers who saved No. 1300 way back in 1954, eh? Thanks also should go to those who worked on the car in 1962 and 1963 and later in 1970 and '71 to restore the last mile of the great **Como-Harriet** Line. If it wasn't for them we wouldn't be celebrating old No. 1300's 100th birthday this year.

I went thru some of my old photos I had and thought you might like to see the ones below. ☺



Left. No. 1300 drops a lady off at the 33rd Street stop of the **Como-Harriet** line. This stop is located about 1/2 mile north of our present north platform, and the right-of-way is now an alley.

Bottom Left. Taken at the Oak Street wye track, No. 1300 is in front of No. 1775 on the MRA chartered "last run" held on June 19, 1954, the day following the end of regular streetcar service in Minneapolis.

Below. Here's No. 1300 in July 1963 on a side track of the Minnesota Transfer Railway in St. Paul. No. 1300 received its electricity from the contraption shown at the rear affectionately called "the goat" which was a gasoline engine connected to a 300-volt trolley bus motor that acted as a generator. (All photos from MSM's photo archives)

