



Streetcar CURRENTS



May 2009

Minneapolis & Excelsior, Minnesota

Our 38th Operating Season is about to Begin

- Please consider volunteering for an extra shift or two in May and June at CHSL to help us with our crew shortage there
- Encourage your neighbors and friends to come and enjoy a ride on our streetcars
- Post the "Ride the CHSL and ESL" flyers and posters when you receive your in a couple of weeks



Inside This Issue

Motorman Bill	2
Historian & Archives Update	3
Shop Update	4
Excelsior Update	5
Upcoming Events	6
Training Update	6
Operations Newsletter	6

Masthead Photo: Duluth Street Rwy No. 78 (LaCleda Car Co, 1893) is seen here approaching the Morse Street crossing in Excelsior. John Prestholdt is at the controls. No. 78 will be 116 years old in 2009 and she's still going strong! (Wendy Dunham photo)

Partners

Rod Eaton—General Supt.

I've heard that, back in the day, mothers would sometimes take their young children for evening streetcar rides before bed. Cool breezes from open windows and the gentle motion of the streetcar quickly quieted even wide-awake kids.

This summer, we'll build on that wonderful notion with our new PJ Party. Moms and children (dads and grandparents, too) will meet on the Linden-Hills platform at 7 PM for cookies and milk. Then they'll board a streetcar for a pleasant evening ride. Instead of the usual end-of-line talk, the car will stop for a bedtime story. Then our sleepy passengers will return to the station.

One of the things that makes this event really special is the involvement of our new promotional partner Wild Rumpus, the amazing Linden Hills bookstore for young readers. Wild Rumpus brings a number of things to the PJ Party. The event will be promoted in the bookstore, and people will be able to buy advance tickets there. Then, through their contacts in the world of children's publishing, they'll arrange for an author to read their work on the streetcar. Parents and children will be able to meet their favorite storytellers. For our part, we'll include Wild Rumpus in all of our event advertising. We'll also promote the author and their books in the Linden Hills station.

The first of our three PJ Parties is scheduled for Thursday, June 18. The PJ car will operate as a Special on the line, just as a charter would. The regular two-person crew is required, but we'll need at least one additional person to act as Milk and Cookie Wrangler on the platform. The car will leave the platform when the line is clear, run to the north end, reverse and go to the barn where it will stop for story time. This is a quieter location than the north end and is completely out of the way of the regular revenue car. After the story, the car will return to the station. The entire event will last about 45 minutes.

During last year's Pumpkin Patch event, with the large number of children, we had car counts of 60 passengers (No. 1300 and No. 265 seat 55 passengers). With Wild Rumpus as our partner, I think the PJ Party has the potential to be equally popular with our younger folks and their parents.



We're also gaining a partner for our Moonlight Streetcar rides. The Moonlight Ride recreates dating by streetcar, and the night will be even more romantic for couples who enjoy their dinner first at Cafe Twenty-Eight in Linden Hills. Diners will receive a fare discount, making the ride even more attractive. We'll promote Cafe Twenty-Eight in our advertising of the event. The first of our monthly Moonlight Rides is Saturday, June 6th.

These partnerships are exciting and bring new energy to the Como-Harriet Streetcar Line. They extend our promotional reach and add value to our operations. Bringing Linden Hills businesses and The Minnesota Streetcar Museum together is a win for all of us. ☺

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* May 2009

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 May 20, 2009.

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

You Folks Volunteer to do this work?

You know, as I watch you volunteers there at the Museum operate old number 1300, or that new-fangled streamlined thing (I think it's number 322), past Lakewood Cemetery (my current resting place) I never cease to wonder why you guys (and some Motor-ettes I noticed!) do what you do. Don't get me wrong—I'm as pleased as a live turkey the day after Thanksgiving that you folks are doing what you do—preserving a method of getting 'round town and a small slice of a way of life that almost no one can relate to anymore. But, running that streetcar can be hard work and I think it's a darn good thing that you folks are doing what you're doing.

Back in my day things were a might different. For us platform men we had to juggle so many things to keep on a very tight schedule. First we had to report in to get our assignments and mark-up our run cards at the station. Then we had to go out and find our assigned streetcar and make it ready for our run. If I had a Conductor, he'd get his paperwork from the Station Clerk and maybe he'd shake the grates of the coal stove under the car if it was a cold day and throw some more coal in it. Then it's out of the station and on the line to provide the excellent service to our passengers that the comp'ny was famous for throughout these United States.

Early in my career I worked a "split shift," running the morning and afternoon rush hours on a "loop" run out of Nicollet Station. No, we're not talking about the Chicago Loop. For those of you who are new volunteers, a TCRT loop run was a rush hour tripper that lasted maybe 3 or 4 hours. A loop run ran from the outer end of a line, or maybe from a turn-back point on a line, into downtown Minneapolis and then looped around a city block and out on the same line to start another run into downtown. This was to handle the rush of people who were headed into downtown in the morning. Thus the destination sign read LOOP. Normally a TCRT line ran right smack through the downtowns and out to the opposite end of the line. But not a loop line. Between the rush hours I'd stay up in the station's crew room and took a nap, played some cards or maybe get a haircut. The Station Superintendent was a stickler for appearance of us platform men.

Later on in my career, after I built up a little seniority, I bid on a run that was straight 8 hours or so. My favorite run was—you guessed it—the Como-Harriet "interurban" run. I liked that run because it had the pretty right-of-way past Lakes Calhoun and Harriet and it wasn't near as busy as the main interurban run down University Avenue. Another plus was that I lived just a few blocks from Eastside station where I would start my run. By the way, here's another bit of TCRT info (I think you people call it trivia these days) that you might find interesting. The Twin City Rapid Transit Company called the buildings and tracks where they stored the streetcars during the slow times of the day "stations." Some trolley systems called their stations car-barns or carhouses or some such. But here in the Twin Cities we called

BILL THE MOTORMAN



(Continued on bottom on next page)



STREETCAR CLEANERS WANTED !

Our Museum is noted for the exceptional mechanical condition and the cleanliness of our historic Minnesota streetcars. We have earned that reputation by the fine work of our shop volunteers and the hard work of volunteers who clean our streetcars each month. If you would like to help us with this seldom thought about but very important task of car cleaning, please call **Bruce Gustafson** at 952-920-0920 for CHSL or **Bob Johnson** at 952-937-9378 for ESL. Cleaning dates are usually shown in the "What's Happening" section on page 6. No experience is necessary and this is the perfect way for you and your family to support your Museum in a tangible way. It is traditional that juice and rolls are served during the morning break for those who help with the monthly streetcar cleaning.

Historian and Archives Update

Aaron Isaacs—Historian

More grants. In the last Currents, we reported that the 20th Century Electric Railway Foundation had approved a \$5000 challenge grant for the restoration of Winona No. 10. They require the \$5000 match to come from non-member contributions. The match is coming from this year's \$2000 grant from the Onan Family Foundation, \$2000 from an anonymous foundation and \$1000 from the Linden Hills Neighborhood Council.

The Onan Family Foundation is a long-time funder of the museum. They have given grants every year, going back decades. This year the amount is less, due to investment losses. Our thanks to the Foundation for its continued support over so many years.

An anonymous foundation matches Ken Albrecht's donation. Although its grant is not restricted to Winona No. 10, Ken is concentrating his efforts on that project, so restricting the funds seemed appropriate.

This is our third grant from the Linden Hills Neighborhood Council. The first funded the history signs that are posted along CHSL's right-of-way. The second supported the carbarn sprinkler project. The third is for Winona #10. The Council accepts grant applications twice a year for amounts up to \$1000.

MSM helps the Central Corridor. The Central Corridor light rail line will have a station on 4th Street directly in front of the St. Paul Union Depot. Federal law requires an assessment of the impact of new projects on historic sites. This has led to a series

of meetings to design an LRT station that fits in with the Union Depot. MSM members **John Diers** and I have been invited to be history experts on streetcars and the depot itself (Diers is writing a book on history of the depot for the University of Minnesota Press).

We've had an impact. In order to reach the Central Corridor light rail line's new maintenance facility along Kellogg Blvd. east of Broadway Street in St. Paul, the original alignment would have turned from 4th Street onto Wacouta Street, cross Kellogg Blvd. on a bridge and run along the north edge of the depot track embankment. In the process, it would have destroyed part of the embankment and dramatically altered the front view of the depot. We were part of a large majority within the group that objected to the impact. That, combined with the maintenance site being in a flood plain, caused it to be moved into a former industrial building just east of 4th and Broadway, which will be reached by tracks within 4th Street.

Our other impact was the conversion of the overhead wire from center poles to side poles with span wire. We opposed the original pole design, which has 31 inch concrete bases, and succeeded in getting the bases removed. Besides being historically appropriate, the side poles will now be less visually intrusive. We've argued for replicating the historic TCRT black capped poles, and have even loaned a pole cap to the Central Corridor office. We've also provided photos and maps showing the TCRT tracks and types of pavement. ☺

Last call for the MSM Embroidered Clothing

Don't forget that May 10th is the deadline for ordering your short or long sleeve shirt with the MSM embroidered logo. You can also have your name embroidered on it as well. See the sample on the right.

These shirts are very high quality and come in the standard sizes. Besides the denim shirt shown on the right, you can order a short sleeve dark blue polo shirt with a pocket, and a stone colored short sleeve shirt.

We are also offering the black windbreaker with MSM logo that has a flannel lining that would be perfect for those cool Minnesota spring and fall days.

You can check out these special items by going to our website www.trolleyride.org and click on the **Museum Store** button. The special order form can be found there.



(Bill the Motorman Continued from page 2)

them stations. Stations had mechanics and a small shop with tools so they could do daily and weekly maintenance and light repairs on the cars. However, for major work the cars would run to the Snelling Shops over in St. Paul for the heavy repairs and such. And I think you folks know that the comp'ny took real good care of the cars. About every five years Snelling Shops would remove everything they could from the car and repair or replace everything. When the car came out after this shopping it was practically brand new.

So, while you folks can't take a trolley trip from downtown St. Paul to downtown Minneapolis or out to lake Minnetonka anymore, it makes this old Motorman smile to know that you volunteers have the good sense of tradition and history to enjoy something that is so out of tune with the modern computer age you live in. So, my Motorman's cap is tipped to you Motormen and Motorettes and the fellows who keep the cars running in your shop and repair the trolley overhead and tracks. Thanks!

Shop Update

John Prestholdt—Shop Foreman

The CHSL is just about ready for a new year of operation. Our electrical gurus **Neil Howes** and **Keith Lindberg**, with help from several others including **Walt Strobel**, are done with the upgrade of the control relays and switches located at the rear of CHSL's "ready barn." We are now able to control the AC 3-phase and 600-volt DC power supplies from the remote control panel located at the front of the maintenance barn.

We have 101-year old No. 1300 ready to take on the season and are just about complete with pre-season maintenance on PCC No. 322. Duluth No. 265 is being held up for a week or two because we had to replace badly worn motor brushes. This is not a real big problem since we have already ordered new brushes which should be available before the start of the season on May 2nd.

For an update on progress on the restoration of Winona No. 10, see **Bob Johnson's** report on page 5.

One addition from last month's thank you's was to **Frank Sandberg** who is doing work on parts for Winona No. 10's manually operated door controls. I knew I would forget some of the behind the scenes work that is so valuable. A big thank you and apology to Frank for forgetting him in the first go-around. ⊕



(Left) We made major improvements to our electric traction power supply over the past winter. Here you see **Neil Howes** (left) and **Keith Lindberg** working on the project to upgrade our power supply. This is located in the corner of the original CHSL carbarn. *(John Prestholdt photo)*
(Right) Here's the finished product. Boy, does it look good! What you don't see is better and heavier wire and better overcurrent protection with all the electrical conductors enclosed in approved wire troughs, raceways and conduit. Total cost was around \$3,300. *(Jim Vaitkunas photo)*



(Left) Work on restoring Winona No. 10 has picked-up over the winter. In this photo new volunteer **Steve Mages** is drilling into the head of one of the rivets holding the frame to the side sheet of Winona No. 10. *(Bob Johnson photo)*
(Right) Here you see the next step after Steve drilled into the old rivet. **Ken Albrecht** is punching out the rivet using a cold chisel and 10-pound sledge hammer. Now you know why Ken's forearms and biceps are so big. *(Bob Johnson photo)*

Excelsior Streetcar Line News

Bob Johnson—Superintendent

Winona 10 progress. The ramp-up to operation at ESL has seen some significant milestones for the Winona No. 10 project. Our crew began the laborious task of dropping the frame of the car in preparation for fabrication of a new frame. This involves removing some specialized bolts and rivets in order to release the frame from the carbody. Each body window frame is held tightly to the frame by the bolts. The rivets include all four sides of the car body tying the body to the frame. The rivets have a shaft size approaching 5/8ths of an inch and the rivet heads are about 1-1/4 inch. During assembly, the installer uses a red-hot rivet installed through a hole drilled through the two materials being joined. Our restorers remove the rivets by drilling a hole in the head that is slightly smaller than the shaft. This weakens the bolt so that a hammer and a cold chisel can be used to knock off the rivet head; then the restorer can use a tool to pound out the shaft of the rivet.

The seats for Winona 10 have been assembled, and effort now has been to apply a finish. Tung oil is applied in several coats, producing a golden sheen. With use, this finish develops a patina that can be renewed, allowing a long lasting finish that is pleasing to the eye. The supporting frames of the seats have been cast, and will be painted soon. The seat backs are currently being produced.

TCRT No. 1239 and DSR No. 78 have been receiving some intensive pre-season maintenance. **Tom Fairbairn** has done a major rebuild of No. 1239's controller. Test runs of No. 1239 reveals a marked improvement in controller action. While working on No. 1239 Tom found errors in some of the mechanical linkages. One error increased wear on

the controller and caused excess arcing during operation. Duluth No. 78 is now undergoing maintenance on its two controllers.

Routine preventive maintenance is done by **Clyde Stephens** and **Chip Kemppainen**. This includes over 60 individual checks for No. 78 and an equivalent set of checks for No. 1239. These checks range from fairly complex to a simple visual inspection. Naturally, all these checks can't be done in April, so portions of this set of tasks are done all season long. Our restoration crew lends a hand on many of the preventive maintenance tasks.

Our profound thanks to volunteers **George Ittner**, **Ken Albrecht**, **Marv Krafve**, **Steve Mages**, **Tom Fairbairn**, **Jim Willmore** and **Marsh Ginthner**. Preventive maintenance is done by **Clyde Stephens**, **Chip Kemppainen** and **Marsh Ginthner**. Without these gifted and dedicated men we couldn't run this streetcar line.

Special events. Most of the events at Excelsior will run again this year. Our flagship events are the Halloween trolley and "Christkindlsmarkt". They are our best revenue producer and are always popular with our operating staff. We are currently studying one new special event, and the rest are being evaluated. All special events are reviewed annually.

Buildings and grounds. We plan to paint the wood fence that we installed last year separating our track from the bike/walking path at the Water Street platform. We have worked out an agreement with the Excelsior-Lake Minnetonka Historical Society for a joint project to paint the fence. We also have started our overhead wire rehabilitation project. This project includes raising and adjusting the overhead for better operation. **Scott Heiderich** and (electric) **Mike Miller** are working on this project. Ⓢ



Over the course of the winter **Ken Albrecht** reduces the number of trips he makes from his home in North Mankato to Lake Harriet and Excelsior (it's over 60 miles one-way on hiway US 169!). But that doesn't stop Ken's work. Over the winter he works in his home wood working shop. Here you can see the fruits of Ken's labor over the winter of 2008-2009—seat bottoms for Winona No. 10's seats freshly delivered to the Excelsior carbarn. These seats are the classic "walkover" (flip over) seats so common on streetcars throughout the world—except for the streetcars operated by Twin City Lines. TCRT streetcars, with only a handful of exceptions, had rigid seats so passengers always faced forward because the vast majority of TCRT's 1,200+ streetcars were single ended. When No. 10 starts operating on the Como-Harriet Streetcar Line we'll have a new experience for our passengers. We'll have to ask them to stand up and flip over their seats at each end of the line. (Bob Johnson photo)

What's Happening?

- May 2 Streetcar cleaning at CHSL, Isaacs carbarn—9 AM to 11 AM. Juice & rolls are served
- May 2 Start of Weekend operations at ESL and CHSL
- May 15 Start of Weekday service at CHSL
- May 16 Linden Hills Festival at CHSL. PCC No. 322 will run on this Saturday afternoon
- May 25 Memorial Day—CHSL special early-bird service starts at 9:00 AM
- May 31 Second annual vintage automobile rally at CHSL starts at 12:30 PM
- June 3 Wednesday afternoon service at CHSL starts (1 PM to 4 PM)
- June 6 Streetcar cleaning at CHSL, Isaacs carbarn—9 AM to 11 AM. Juice & rolls are served

Training Update

Operator Training. As of April 25th we have 17 new trainee volunteers signed up. The trainees seem very interested in becoming operators. The initial training dates set for the start of their training are:

- Session one on the car: April 30, 6:00 PM at Excelsior; and, May 2, 9:30 AM At CHSL
- Classroom Sessions: May 7 at 6:00 PM; and, May 14 at 6:00 PM

Recertification of Foreman and Operators is continuing 2 days a week through May 6. Twenty Seven Foreman have recertified as of April 20. Operator recertification began on April 22. If you are a Foreman and have not recertified yet contact Clyde Hawkins or Tom Fairbairn to schedule a time. Operators please try to recertify on one of the schedule dates so we can have recertification done by May 6. The remaining dates are:

- Wednesday April 29 6:15 PM Excelsior
- Saturday May 2 9:30 AM Excelsior
- Wednesday May 6 6:15 PM Lake Harriet

Clyde Hawkins: chawkb@Yahoo.com 763-544-5963
Tom Fairbairn: tnfairbairn@gmail.com 612-866-8295



(Left) 2009 Recertification Training. Here you see one of our Operator recertification classes held April 25th on board TCRT No. 1300.
(Right) Tom Fairbairn is talking about safety which was the main theme during this year's recertification. (Jim Vaitkunas photos)

Operations Newsletter

Jim Vaitkunas—Operations Chief

Operations Newsletter. If you receive by e-mail your **Streetcar CURRENTS** newsletter and operations-related materials, such as monthly schedules and such, you should have received your copy of the new MSM Operations Newsletter. The Operations Newsletter was started in 2008 and its purpose is to give Operating Department volunteers important instructions, information on special events, safety reminders, updates on changes in operations and administrative procedures, etc. In subsequent months the newsletter won't be as large as the issue just sent out (#1-09). In fact, in some months we may not even issue an Ops Newsletter. It depends on what information needs to be given to the Museum's operating volunteers. We are also producing this separate operations newsletter because there's no point in taking up space in the **Streetcar CURRENTS** newsletter [that all Museum members receive] with voluminous nitty-gritty information that pertains only to our operating volunteers. If you have any questions about the newsletter and/or its contents please call me. ☺