

MINNESOTA STREETCAR MUSEUM



Streetcar CURRENTS

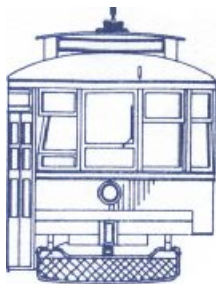


May 2012

Minneapolis & Excelsior, Minnesota

2012 Season Starts in a Few Days

- Come and ride the streetcars and encourage your neighbors and friends to do likewise
- Visit ESL and take a ride. See the progress on Winona No. 10 up close
- Consider becoming more involved in your Museum's operations and administration
- Renew your membership as soon as you get the reminder notice—save your Museum some money



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Masthead. It is very unusual for us to run three streetcars at the same time; we do so only for special occasions. Our celebration of 40 years of historic streetcar operations at our Museum's Como-Harriet Streetcar Line certainly qualifies as a very special occasion. The date is August 6, 2011. A great time was had by all present.
(Photo by Dawn Holmberg)

The Pre-Season Checklist

Bill Arends—General Supt.

The start of another season is upon us. It seems like only yesterday we were towing car 1300 into the car barn in a light snowfall with electrical and air compressor issues. But as I write this the start of our 41st season at Lake Harriet and our 13th season at Excelsior are less than a week away. The start of the season is not unlike getting ready for a vacation. There's a checklist of items that need to be checked off to make sure everything is in order. And when one has historic streetcars to operate the list is long. While checking off the items doesn't take much time, completing of the tasks begins even before the previous season ends.

Item number one: Are the streetcars ready to go? Has all of the annual maintenance been completed?

Mark Digre and Russ Isbrandt began the maintenance on PCC No. 322 last October. And throughout the winter they crawled under, inside and on top of all three streetcars at CHSL to make sure they are in top operating condition: the controllers were inspected; air compressors repaired; brake shoes inspected and changed as necessary; all parts lubricated. Check off item number one. The cars are ready to go.

Item number two: Are our foremen and operators ready to go? We always place safety as our number one priority so each year every foreman and operator needs to be re-certified to operate the streetcars. This includes a written exam regarding the rules and sequence of operation of the car for everyone and a random selection of operating personnel to complete a check run on the streetcar. Thanks to our Chief Trainer, Chris Heck, I can check off item number two.

Item number three: Are we getting foremen and operators signed up? After many years of being the crew caller to fill the operators' schedule, Jim Otto has decided to retire. Thank you Jim for your many years of your efforts doing this important job. So with this job open it was decided to move into the 21st century and implement an on-line scheduling system. Thanks to Jim Vaitkunas and Chris Heck I can check item three off the list.

Item number four: Is the depot ready to go? Have the shelves been stocked with merchandise? This year additional shelves have been installed in the depot to accommodate the new merchandise our Merchandise Manager, Charles Barthold, has added to the inventory. Rod Eaton and Eric Neumann assisted Charles with getting the merchandise on the shelves and getting the depot in tip top shape for the season. Item number four checked off the list.

Item number five: Do we have public operating schedules available for our riders in the streetcars and in the depot? With the schedule set at our annual planning



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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 inter-urban 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
 Minneapolis, MN 55414-0467
 952-922-1096

Streetcar CURRENTS
 May—2012

Jim Vaitkunas—Editor
 Bill Graham—Distribution

Streetcar CURRENTS is a newsletter published 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, 2012.

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


From the Front Platform — Thoughts on Our Museum

Dave French — Chair, MSM Board of Directors

Hi everyone! Last month I promised to share some of the ideas offered by members who attended our annual meeting in March. I already mentioned the “toga trolley” idea and I’m still waiting for details on that one! Someone else thought that since we sell a fair number of season passes but relatively few 10 and 20 ride cards, we should do more to advertise those two options to our passengers on the website and with signage in the station and on the cars. Another person suggested that we develop a “buy one, get one free fare” coupon that we could hand out at model railroad shows and historical presentations and to adult passengers on charters to encourage them to ride again.

One excellent idea offered was to find a way to get our spouses involved in Museum activities as active volunteers. Perhaps they don’t want to run the streetcars but there are certainly many other tasks they can help with, and the surviving spouse might remain active after one of them passes away. Another suggestion is to encourage and assist members to include MSM in their estate planning. This has been suggested before and I certainly support the idea, but don’t know much about it. If you have some expertise in this area, would you contact me? As always, I can be reached at (651) 728-2837 or drfcd152@aol.com.

One member suggested that we have next year’s meeting at the Metro Transit’s Hiawatha shop. He said they have a nice meeting room there and perhaps they would give us a tour of the facility also. I received one other suggestion in the mail from John Kennedy. He sent us a flyer for the 2012 Pennsylvania Trolley Museum Volunteer Recognition and Member Banquet which was held at a golf club. John wonders if we could do something like this at a local restaurant such as Curran’s on Nicolet in Minneapolis and combine it with the annual meeting. The PTM charges \$15 for adults and \$5 for children for their banquet. Would you be willing to pay for an event like this? Of course we’d have to use a restaurant with a banquet room so we can enjoy the historical presentation which is always a highlight for our annual meeting.

Thanks for all your ideas and feedback, that’s all for this month and I’ll see you on the car soon. ☺



(The Pre-season Checklist Continued from page 1)

meeting, **Rod Eaton** has taken and completed the task of getting the schedules printed. Check item number five off the list.

Item number six: Have the deteriorating benches on the platform at our Como-Harriet station been repaired? In this case the answer is no. But even better, they have been replaced. **Ken Albrecht** and the Excelsior car barn crew built the benches at Excelsior and on a recent Saturday the parts were moved to the Lake Harriet Station. Under the direction of Ken they were assembled and installed. These very fine cedar benches will allow me to check item number six off the list for many years.

Now it's time to roll! All that's remaining is for each of our operators and foreman to sign into our new on-line scheduling system and fill up the shift slots. Please check your schedules and sign up early so this item can be checked off the list also. Looking forward to seeing you on the line soon. ☺


MSM Historian's Update — We make Minnesota's Electric Railway History Come Alive!

 Aaron Isaacs — *MSM Historian and Photo Archivist*

You might be surprised how many people contact MSM with streetcar history questions. **Bill Arnds** monitors the museum's e-mail in-box. When a history question appears, he sends it to me. Here's a sample of those received this year.

In the Twin City Lines Spring 2010 Special Issue, Streetcars In Linden Hills on page 24 lower left, there is a picture of a derailed car on the private right of way, North of 44th Street between Abbott and Beard. In the bottom right corner of the photo there is a boy wearing a light colored jacket (first person in the row of people) I believe that is me. Is it possible that I can purchase a good quality photograph of the photo. There were several worried kids there that day because we had been playing in the right of way placing pennies on the track. Most of us had returned home (43rd and Zenith) for lunch and this occurred. Thinking we had caused this to happen when in fact the rail gauge had spread. I do not recall the exact date but believe it was a Saturday in the early spring of 53 or 54. I would bet on 54 shortly before they abandoned the last line Como-Harriet. I misplaced the envelope containing this issue and recently found it unopened. I enjoyed this issue the most since it was in the neighborhood where I grew up. — *John Neibart*

I sent him the photo and supplied him with the correct date, March 23, 1953.

I am curious if any history, or pictures, might exist regarding the streetcar "station" or waiting facility, that was located at the corner of Hazel and east Maryland from the late 1800's to the 1940's? It shows up on aerial photos during that time period. I am a neighbor to that area. The property to the south of me, built on what would have been the property on which the station existed, has a house on it that is being torn down in a few weeks. I believe that the building originally was some sort of business. I am trying to figure out exactly what kind of business. — *J. A. Rarick*

In this case we both learned something. I hadn't known of the streetcar station, which was built by TCRT predecessor St. Paul & White Bear. I found and sent him two photos that showed the corner of Hazel and Maryland.

My son and his classmate at students at DeLaSalle High School and are doing their history project on the history of street cars in Minnesota. Is there someone available that they could interview like a former conductor? — *Paul Barry*

I introduced him to Marv Krafve, who was a part-time TCRT conductor back in high school and they interviewed Marv for the report.

My name is Nicholas Thyr and I am a high school student at Breck School in Golden Valley. For my AP US history class, I am writing a paper, and the topic I chose was the end of streetcars in Minneapolis and St. Paul. I would like to interview someone at the museum about my topic, if at all possible. I noted that Aaron Isaacs and John Diers are part of the MN Streetcar museum, and an interview with either of them would be fantastic. — *Nicholas Thyr*

I set up a meeting with Nicholas at the CHSL car-barn. He wrote an excellent report and sent us a copy.

I was looking at Minnesota Reflections and came across a picture of my grandma. Her name was Evelyn McGinty. She was a Motorette. Is there any way to get a copy of this picture? — *Jennifer Bakken*

I sent her the photo, taken at Snelling Station by Gene Corbey, when he worked there in 1946.

My wife Audrey and I were checking through some old family relics here in England, and this morning Audrey found two pairs of tickets, some of which I have scanned in the attached file. We wondered if they would be of interest to your museum: if so, you would be most welcome to have them.

As yet, we have no idea how they came to into Audrey's family. We can only imagine it was an early tourist bringing back souvenirs of a trip to the Twin Cities. Checking the name on the tickets (Willard J Hield, Gen'l Man.) it seems that he held that position in the Company around 1891. Could you please provide any more information on the likely date of the tickets? It could perhaps give us a clue as to who visited Minneapolis about then! — *Drs. John & Audrey Carpenter, Leicestershire, England*

I confirmed that Dr. Carpenter has two 1894 TCRT transfers. We have several of them in our collection, so he's keeping them, but now knows what he has.

I had an ancestor that worked as a motorman in Minnesota. His name was Theodor Dahlberg. Did anyone know anything about him? I would be glad if you send me a message. He died in 1970 in December.— *Anna-Lena Norman* from Sweden (This inquiry came in via the MSM Facebook page and Chris Heck.)

I visited the Minnesota Historical Society, searched the TCRT Employee Appointment Cards, found Dahlberg's card and emailed her a copy. ☺

What's Happening?

May 3	Start of Thursday afternoon operations at Excelsior Streetcar Line
May 5	Start of weekend operations at Como-Harriet Streetcar Line and at Excelsior Streetcar Line
May 25	Start of daily operations at the Como-Harriet Streetcar Line
May 27	Classic car rally at CHSL starts at 1 PM
May 28	Memorial Day operations at ESL & CHSL. CHSL early bird service starts at 9:00AM

**MSM News & Views — News of our Museum's Administration and Membership**

Jim Vaitkunas — *MSM Corporate Secretary and Superintendent of Operations*

Donations Received. Here are the members and friends who have responded generously to our 2011-2012 MSM Annual Appeal since the last report in the March-April issue of the **Streetcar CURRENTS**.

General Fund: The 3M Foundation, Clark Hoffman, Shari DeBlick in memory of Harold Dalland, Mary and Tom Beaumont, Kathryn & Gary Gustafson, and Eric Tratner.

Winona No. 10 Restoration Fund: Charles McCarthy.

Many thanks to all donors for your generosity.

New Member. We've had one new member join the MSM family in the last month: Charles (Chic) Anding. Chic is also training to be an Operator on our Excelsior Streetcar Line.

Special Donation Received. Mike Helde writes to us as follows. "Not long after Chrissy Senko, my sister-in-law, passed away in January, a few of her friends held a fund raiser and raised about \$300 or so to be donated in Chrissy's name to whatever organization my Mother-in-law selects. Christine (Chrissy) Senko was Kathy's (Helde) sister. Her and their mom, Elaine Senko both rode the streetcars at Como-Harriet quite a few times each year. Chrissy also helped with the Ghost Trolleys in recent years. She was an alien in 2010, the Frankenstein monster in 2008, and helped behind the scenes for 2007's Ghost Trolley with Kathy."

We appreciate this kind gesture even with the circumstances under which we receive the donation.

3M Volunteer Match Received. The 3M Foundation has donated \$250 to our Museum in recognition of **Matt Leibel's** commitment to the community and our Museum. Matt has volunteered for 42-plus hours to our Museum, both by operating our historic streetcars at CHSL and in the George Isaacs shop. Matt also does a lot of our PR work out of his home. "3M employees generously give their time and skills to help others," reports **Robin Torgerson**, vice-President of 3M Community Affairs. Torgerson goes on to say: "We are pleased to recognize their commitment to their communities."

The 3M Company has been a good citizen and neighbor to our community and throughout the country, giving over \$60 million in 2011 alone to education and charitable organizations like ours. Since 2000, 3M has donated over \$4 million to over 2,600 schools or non-profit organizations in 50 state plus the District of Columbia.

We thank the 3M Company for the generous donation and **Matt Leibel** for arranging the donation. ☺



Operator training has begun. We have over a dozen trainees at CHSL and eight at ESL. Here is an ESL class photo taken on April 20th inside gate car No. 1239. From left to right is **Dave** and **Deb Koefod**, **Chic Anding** and trainer **Bob Johnson**. (Photo by Jim Vaitkunas)



Dig we must! It's not only University Avenue where you can see old streetcar rails being unearthed during street construction. Here we see Riverside Avenue in Minneapolis being rebuilt and what do they find? Tons of old TCRT 90-pound "T" rail. Not much good except to the scrapper. (Photo by Aaron Isaacs)