

# MINNESOTA STREETCAR MUSEUM



# Streetcar CURRENTS



October 2014

Minneapolis & Excelsior, Minnesota



## Bill the Motorman Says:

- *Our Halloween and Santa trolleys will be operating in the fall, so spread the word about them to your friends & neighbors.*
- *Annual Appeal is coming up soon. Main effort is the shop addition. Please give generously.*

## A Very Busy Labor Day-Kudos

Bill Arends—General Supt.

Many of you heard about it. A number of you participated in it. I've talked with many of you about it. I think it was too important and too much fun to not share it with all of you. It was a charter scheduled on Labor Day.

Not just "A Charter" but a "Big Charter." The Electric Railroaders' Association scheduled their annual convention in Minneapolis and St. Paul over Labor Day weekend. I think it was not a coincidence that this was scheduled in the Twin Cities shortly after the opening of the opening of Metro Transit's Green Line. But whatever their reason for selecting Minneapolis and St. Paul, we can be proud that they included our museum on their list of places to visit.

On a very beautiful late summer morning on Labor Day at about 9:45 AM over 80 ERA members arrived at ESL via historic buses provided by MTM. Foremen and Operators **Marv Krafve, Mark Brothen, Scott Heiderich, Bruce Kobs, Ron Neitzel** and **Jim Vaitkunas** treated them to rides on TCRT No. 1239 and Duluth No. 78. Their visit included a carbarn tour where **Ken Albrecht**, the lead volunteer on the Winona No. 10 restoration project, along with **Steve Mages, Art Ruder,** and **Carl Floren**, gave them a tour of the carbarn and Winona No. 10.



After their time at ESL, the ERA group boarded historic Twin City Lines buses and arrived at CHSL about 11:30 AM for the second hour of their two-hour charter. Streetcars TCRT No. 1300 and PCC No. 322 were waiting at the Linden Hills station upon their arrival with Duluth No. 265 spotted outside the George K Isaacs Carbarn. **Rod Eaton** and **Jerry Olsen** operated No. 1300 and **Aaron Isaacs** and **Russ Isbrandt** were at the controls of No. 322. Our guests could ride either car and get off and board the cars at either the station or the carbarn. At the carbarn they were given a tour by Docents **John Prestholdt** and **Mike Buck**, including being able to walk through, inspect and admire No. 265. They were also provided photo opportunities at the north end of the line and at the station, featuring both streetcars.

At the Linden Hills Station, tables were set up outside with a large selection of Railroad and trolley books, magazines and memorabilia for sale. **Bruce Gustafson**, assisted by **Ben Franske**, handled sales at the outside tables while **Charles Barthold** and **Rose Arends** were kept busy with sales in the station.

With regular revenue service beginning at CHSL at 12:30 PM and the ERA group on a tight schedule, they boarded the historic buses on their way to ride the newly opened LRT Green Line. Starting with scheduling this charter in January, to pre-event planning, to event day set-up beginning about 9:00 AM, the execution of this charter went very smoothly at both sites. I think all who participated in this event, both guests and volunteers, had a very good time. And it also raised some

Streetcar CURRENTS  
Winter Publication Schedule  
With this issue of the Streetcar CURRENTS we'll revert to our winter publication schedule. See the notice on page 2 for details on the schedule.

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**Masthead.** It's summertime in Excelsior and TCRT high-speed car No. 1122 has just dropped off a load of pleasure-seeking passengers who are waiting to board one of TCRT's express boats, in this case the *Como*. The TCRT car is travelling on what is now Lake Street, but back in 1906 it's on an exclusive streetcar right-of-way. (MSM Archive photo)

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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 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](http://www.TrolleyRide.org)

The museum's business address and telephone number is:

P.O. Box 14467  
 Minneapolis, MN 55414-0467  
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**Streetcar CURRENTS**  
 October—2014

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 November 25, 2014.

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**From the Front Platform—Thoughts on Our Museum**

Dave French — Board Chair

Hi everyone! Well, I *finally* made it down to the Cities the weekend of September 20-21. I attended the MSM Board meeting on Saturday morning and worked both shifts at CHSL that day and also on Sunday. I started volunteering on the streetcar in 1998 and this is the first year I have not worked *at least* two shifts per month every month throughout the operating season. One thing I learned this season is I am definitely not “burned out” as far as MSM goes. *really* missed it and when I learned in July that our next Board meeting would be September 20th. I was glad that I could sign up for all four shifts on Shift Planning and I started counting the days. Since I am still not driving I took the Jefferson Lines bus from Crookston to St. Paul. I was staying in Minneapolis and could have gotten off in the Mill City. However, I really wanted to see our renovated St Paul Union Depot and take my first ride on the new Green Line light rail back to Minneapolis, so I bought my ticket to SPUD. I was very impressed with the Depot and the LRT, and really appreciate the State of Minnesota providing a subsidy which enables Jefferson to give intercity service to some small towns in Minnesota. To those who criticize government subsidized trains and buses, saying that such services “should pay for themselves,” I say would you feel the same if you could not drive anymore?



If there was an advantage to not working a shift between Sept. 2013 and Sept. 2014, it is that I really noticed the many small but important changes that have occurred at CHSL during my absence which have been done by many hard-working volunteers. The new fence along the garden to discourage pedestrians from cutting across our tracks, the new step at the north end platform making it safer for passengers to get on and off and much easier for the Motorman to spot the car correctly, the new cash register which works even better than I thought it would when I first tried it in March, the new flat screen in the depot showing great historic photos of TCRT “back in the day,” the new merchandise (being diabetic I really like those sugar-free peppermints), and many other things. Two things which haven't changed is the professionalism and good humor of my fellow crew members, both “newbies” and experienced, and the delight of watching our passengers, both young and old, react with so much joy to what we do at MSM. If you haven't volunteered much this year, I hope you will make a point to “get active again” if not this season than definitely in 2015. I am confident that you will rediscover, as I did, the Joy of Streetcars!

So did anything not go well during my big weekend? Well, yes, we all know that life isn't perfect. My big regret was I had to choose between working at Como-Harriet on Sunday and attending the MSM Volunteer Picnic at ESL. I'm sure I could have gotten a ride to Excelsior and back, and would have really liked seeing more MSM folks and enjoying the picnic lunch in beautiful weather and riding the cars and seeing the current status of Winona 10. It is very likely that I will not be able to work on a crew again this year, so I chose to work CHSL on Sunday. Well, attending the picnic in 2015 makes a good goal for next year!

Finally, we have some very cool Halloween events on both lines in October so please come out and enjoy them. I'll see you on the car! 🚗

**Streetcar CURRENTS Winter Publication Schedule**

With this issue of the **Streetcar CURRENTS** we will revert to our winter publication schedule. After this [October 2014] issue, you'll be receiving the **Streetcar CURRENTS** every other month until May, 2015. Publication dates for these issues will be on or about: December 1<sup>st</sup>; February 1<sup>st</sup>; and, April 1<sup>st</sup>. If you don't receive your issue on or shortly after those dates please contact me at: [jvaitkunas@msn.com](mailto:jvaitkunas@msn.com)



HISTORY OF AUGUST HALGREN AND STREETCAR NO. 78 IN DULUTH, MINNESOTA

In the photo shown below left, August Halgren is the Motorman and Charles Sheridan is the Conductor. August began his streetcar career driving a Duluth mule car. It was called a "hay burner" because that's what the mules ate. The track ran for one mile along Superior Street starting at Third Street.

No. 78 was built by the Laclede Car Company of St. Louis, and was placed in service on November 8, 1893. August Halgren was the first Motorman. No. 78 ran in Duluth for 18 years over a much expanded system. The car was dismantled in 1911 and given to Miss Florence Lee, city nurse, to be used as sleeping quarters for tubercular patients. In 1917, it was set up in Fairmont Park for use as a cottage, then a refreshment stand at the zoo in 1920. Mrs. Henry Fedi gave it to our Museum (then a part of MTM) in 1971. Restoration began in 1983 and placed into service at CHSL in 1991. No. 78 was moved to Excelsior in 1999 where it operates today.

Streetcar No. 78 has controls at both ends which allows operation from either direction without turning the car around. (The trolley pole needs to be turned so that it trails the car.) The Motormen were not allowed to sit down, smoke, or talk with passengers while on duty. During Duluth's cold winter months, Motormen wore long underwear, a woolen uniform, cloth overcoat, heavy buffalo coat, a slicker over that, plus heavy mitts as they operated the car in an open vestibule.

At age 61, Halgren, was forced to retire because he suffered from rheumatism. According to the St. Louis Apist newspaper, circa 1933, "A friend told him to try the old time cure: that of permitting a bee to sting the suffer several times each day on the hands. Halgren tried it and it helped. The favorable results obtained from the treatments prompted him to purchase a farm on the Lester River. In retirement, he made his living in the bee business getting honey from 157 hives. He continued to loan his bees out to men afflicted with rheumatism."

This information came from Sue Shaffer, grand daughter of August Halgren. Sue visited ESL on August 28, 2014 and rode No. 78 for the first time. We are indebted to her for this history from her family archives. Sue is pictured (below right) with Chick Anding and Bruce Kobs who were operating No. 78 during her visit.



Bruce Kobs photo

MSM Picnic. Great weather + great food + great fellowship = a Great 2014 family picnic. Many thanks to Bruce Kobs, chef Scott Heiderich and all the helpers who made the picnic a success. It was also great to see the progress on Winona No. 10 and get insights from Ken Albrecht, Howie Melco and the other W10 volunteers who were at the picnic.



Aaron Isaacs photo

**What's Happening?**

October 11	Last day of Saturday service at ESL. (Sunday service ended on September 7th)
October 11 & 12	Farmer Ken's Pumpkin Patch at CHSL—12:30 PM to 4:30 PM
October 23	Last Day of Thursday service at ESL
October 24 & 25	CHSL HALLOWEEN GHOST TROLLEY—6 PM to 9 PM
October 24 & 25	ESL Halloween Trolley—6 PM to 9 PM
October 25	CHSL's TRANSYLVANIA TROLLEY—12:30 PM to 4:30 PM
October 26	Last Day of Sunday service at CHSL—Saturdays only in November 12:30 to 3:30 PM
October 26	ESL & CHSL's Trick 'R Trolley—CHSL 1:30 PM, 2:30 PM and 3:30 PM—ESL 1:30 PM & 2:30 PM
October 26	CHSL's Ghost Trolley LATE SHOW THE GRAVEDIGGERS SECRETS at 8:00 PM—for adults only!
Nov 28, 29 & 30	ESL's Santa Trolley in conjunction with Excelsior's <i>Christkindlsmarkt</i> —daily times are: 11/28—10 AM to 7 PM    11/29—10 AM to 7 PM    11/30—11 AM to 4 PM
Nov 29 & 30 —Dec 6 & 7	CHSL's Holly Trolley featuring Santa Claus—12:30 PM to 3:30 PM
December 6	WINTERNÄTT trolley at CHSL—6:00 PM to 8:00 PM

**HALLOWEEN EVENTS AT COMO HARRIET**

**H**ere's the inside scoop on Halloween and Holiday events at Como-Harriet. The Pumpkin Patch returns Saturday and Sunday, October 11 and 12. We can use help assembling the fence and moving pumpkins Saturday morning. Contact Bill Arends for info. And thank Farmer Ken Albrecht for growing and donating the pumpkins – without his contribution this event wouldn't be possible. New this year, we'll be selling two treats at the station – a StreetCARamel Apple Dish and a Decorate Your Own Halloween Cookie.

**G**hosts **Wanted!** for the shocking climax of this year's Ghost Trolley, Friday and Saturday, October 24 and 25. You'll be haunting passengers in the comfort of the carbarn and we'll provide the makeup. Contact Rod Eaton to signup. And Transylvania Trolley returns for the second year the afternoon of Saturday the 25th. Count Karl the Vampire Motorman (Karl Jones) will be stalking the platform handing out treats to everyone riding in costume. This is a great event for children too young for the more intense Ghost Trolley.

**T**rick 'r Trolley with Wild Rumpus Books runs three trips on Sunday afternoon, October 26. Then at 8PM, Dave French will reveal "The Gravedigger's Secret's" to those adults bold enough to ride The Late Show. Those of you who saw Dave's performance last year will agree this is not to be missed. You can purchase tickets online or at the station.

**H**olly Trolley runs Saturday and Sunday, November 29 and 30, and again December 6 and 7. Santa and the lovely Mrs. Claus (who somewhat resemble Mike and Kathy Helde) will be onboard. And on the evening of Saturday, December 6, *Vinternatt* will allow riders the opportunity to experience the beauty of a winter's night by streetcar. Volunteer are needed to help add holiday touches along the line, or just stop by to toast a marshmallow and chat by the fire.

Happy Halloween! **Rod Eaton** — *Special Events Coordinator* ☺

**Judy Sandberg—R.I.P.**

It is with profound sadness that we report the untimely passing of MSM member Judy Sandberg. Judy and her husband Frank are seen in the photo on the left in 2004 chatting with Scott Heiderich. Frank and Judy were founding members in 1963 (member #1 & 2) of the Minnesota Transportation Museum. (MTM was formed to save our Museum's "mother car," TCRT No. 1300 and MTM's first operating site was/is our Museum's *Como-Harriet Streetcar Line*.) Pioneers in rail preservation, Judy and Frank were instrumental in creating the Tourist Railway Association (TRAIN), a National Trade Organization. Judy was a TRAIN board member and corresponding secretary. Judy and Frank have been members of MSM since its founding in 2005 and have provided very generous support to our Museum ever since. Judy was also well known in the rail preservation community. For the past 20 years she was a Director and administrator for the Minnesota based non-profit *Railroading Heritage of Midwest America, Inc.*, owners and operators of a fleet of historic railroad passenger cars pulled by the world famous Milwaukee Road steam locomotive No. 261. She will be missed by the vast family of members belonging to MTM, MSM, the rail preservation community and "The Friends of the 261".

(A Very Busy Labor Day-Kudos *Continued from page 1*)

most welcome additional funds.

**B**ut operations were not yet finished for the day at either site. **Scott Heiderich** stayed on as Foreman at ESL for the 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM shift and **Rod Eaton**, **Russ Isbrandt** and **Rose Arends** stayed on the 12:30 PM to 4:00 PM shift with me at CHSL. By days end, at 7:30 PM, another 627 passengers has ridden our streetcars. A very enjoyable Labor Day.

See you on the line and don't forget about all the fun events coming up during October. ☺