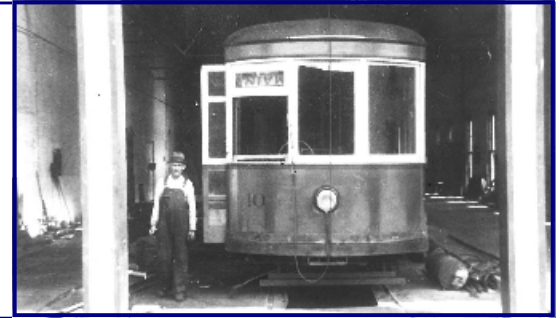


MINNESOTA STREETCAR MUSEUM



Streetcar CURRENTS



Jan-Feb 2016

Minneapolis & Excelsior, Minnesota



Bill the Motorman Says:

- *If you'd like to help out in the shop come to the Isaacs car barn any Saturday morning to lend a hand. There's always something to do in the shop.*

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 6 for details on the schedule.

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Masthead. Winona No. 10 made the last run on the "Main" line of the Mississippi Valley Public Service Winona system. No. 10 pulled in to the carhouse in the wee hours of Saturday, July 22, 1938. This photo was taken Saturday morning with the last motorman, Joe McCormick posing in front of No. 10. Note the upside-down destination sign on the car—an indication of the previous night's revelries perhaps?
(MSM photo archives)

My First Column

Bruce Gustafson—General Supt.

Starting a new phase of my "career" with the Minnesota Streetcar Museum as General Superintendent is both a little intimidating given how professional the museum operates and yet comforting in knowing that the Board, officers, and members are a fantastic group of volunteers with common interests and experiences and an unending desire to help. I appreciate the support the museum's leadership has in selecting me for the position and look forward to the opportunity.

I would like to single out three museum leaders who are stepping down from their current museum positions.

Bill Arends after five years is stepping down as MSM's General Superintendent. Bill redefined the role of General Superintendent by picking up numerous tasks, many of which, I am thankful to say, Bill is willing to keep. Under Bill's leadership there have been a number of initiatives over the last few years, i.e., Point of Sale system designed by **Ben Franske**, CHSL right-of-way fence, and more which Bill has supported or implemented to improve customer service, operations or safety. Bill was also instrumental in supporting Boy Scout Eagle projects building a platform at Cottage City and revamping the garden at 42nd Street.

Charles Barthold has moved to Wisconsin and now works for a short line railroad there. He, therefore, resigned as Merchandise Manager for the museum. Those who have had the opportunity to shop at the CHSL station store know what a magician Charles has been over the years in finding (or creating) items that featured a trolley or streetcar. We will miss Charles' creativity, but wish him well in his new endeavor. Bill Arends will be taking over Charles' duty.

John Prestholdt is stepping down as Head Cashier. This is an extremely important job and John has done a terrific job over the years. I'd like to thank John for his work in this critical back office function.

During the Christmas season the Museum had several very successful holiday events. At CHSL we had great turnout for the Holly Trolley and Vinternatt events. Total ridership for the Holly Trolley was a little over 1,500 and Vinternatt had about 330. Both events saw substantial year-over-year increases in ridership. I would like to thank the many people who made these labor intensive events possible. **Rod Eaton, Mike and Kathy Helde, Patrick Desbonnet, Ben Franske, Scott Heiderich, Dave Higgins** and his spouse **Mary Ann McNeil, Carmelle Abron, Alexandra Howes, Steve Simon, Art Abrahams, Holly Wetzell, Bill Arends, Jim Berry, Davis Gustafson** and **Erik Schwarzkopf. Dave Higgins** and **Mary Ann McNeil**, along with **Scott Heiderich** did most of the decorating of the streetcar and the Linden Hills station as well as un-decorating after the events concluded.

ESL also had an exceptional holiday season. The Christmas Trolley had over 1,400 riders and would not have been possible without the support of a number of volunteers including **Ben Franske, Todd Bender, Bill Graham, Brian Krynski, Cliff Thomas, Craig Canada, Dave McCollum, Elaine Love, Gary**

(Continued on page 4)

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 are:

P.O. Box 16509
Minneapolis, MN 55416-0509
952-922-1096

Streetcar **CURRENTS** January-February—2016

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 edition of the **Streetcar CURRENTS** is March 20, 2016.

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

13326 Huntington Lane
Apple Valley, MN 55124-9481

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



From the Front Platform—Thoughts on Our Museum

Aaron Isaacs — MSM Board Chair

Year 2015 recap. The year 2015 was an eventful year at MSM. Here are some of the events and actions that made the year 2015 memorable.

- Winona No. 10 is being reassembled, the home stretch of a restoration that started in 2004. Specifically, 2015 saw it placed on its rebuilt power truck and the completion of much of the wiring and painting. Wiring continues, followed by installation of the interior and controls. Operational testing should begin this year.
- The George K. Isaacs carbarn addition was built, featuring more storage space, a new machine shop and the first ever library/archive room.
- The Como-Harriet line's Linden Hills station fence was extended.
- At Excelsior Streetcar Line's Water Street platform, a crosswalk made from unearthed original streetcar pavers has been installed.
- ESL carbarn's track 2 has been realigned so that any streetcar can now pass through the doorway and be housed on that track in the carbarn.
- We carried 39,857 passengers, 33,396 at Lake Harriet and 6461 at Excelsior. That's down 2 percent from last year. At ESL, Christkindlsmarkt set a new record of 1407 riders.
- On the people side, 2015 saw the largest class of trainees ever with 27 trained as Operators, greatly improving our ability to cover operating shifts.
- Jim Berry came forward to serve as our first ever Volunteer Coordinator.
- Several long-time volunteers have stepped down from positions of responsibility. They deserve our thanks for their years of service. Thanks also to the folks who have replaced them.



- ♦ **Bill Arends**, who served for five years as MSM General Superintendent, was succeeded by Bruce Gustafson.
- ♦ **Charles Barthold**, who served ten years as MSM Merchandise Manager, was replaced by Bill and Rose Arends.
- ♦ **Don Nielsen**, who served for five years as our Bookkeeper and did an outstanding job, was replaced by Tim Crain.
- ♦ **John Prestholdt**, who served an incredible 34 years as Chief Cashier, was replaced by Bill Arends.

The Annual Appeal. At the end of every year we ask for the financial support of our members and friends, and we suggest a project for restricted donations, although we certainly welcome unrestricted donations.

Last year the fund-raising emphasis was on the carbarn addition. This year we're starting the fund raising to rebuild the trucks under cars No. 1239 and No. 1300. Doing both will probably add up to at least \$200,000, so this will be a multi-year effort and we'll also apply for grants to help fill the gap. However, it needs to be done, or eventually those cars won't run. This Annual Appeal has been quite successful, raising over \$20,000 to date. Of note are \$5000 donations from **Frank Sandberg** and **Ray (Casey) Bensen, Jr.** Special thanks to these very generous donations. See the list of donors on page six in this issue.

Looking ahead to 2016. There's plenty to look forward to in 2016. Winona No. 10 should begin test operations. The design and construction of tracks into the "speeder shed" portion of the Isaacs carbarn addition should begin, along with the design of a new tower car with greater reach capability. New gutters will be installed to divert the runoff from the old portion of the Isaacs carbarn roof into the underground cistern, thus controlling the rate of runoff into Lake Harriet.

(Continued on bottom of next page)

Isaacs Carbarn Addition Report

This will probably be our last special photo spread featuring progress on the addition to the George Isaacs carbarn. As reported by Aaron Isaacs on page 2, the main portion of the project is pretty much complete. However, there are still several things to do and we'll have more news on those projects as they are completed. Here are a few photos for your viewing pleasure.

1. The smaller door on the far left is the entry into the "speeder shed" portion of the addition. A special connecting track will need to be built to allow our speeder and four-wheel track cars to connect with the shop track lead shown in the lower right.
2. Our shop and office automation is now functioning and here we see **Russ Isbrandt**, one of shop crew, using the computer.
3. The Museum reference library is pretty much set up. There are several more bookcases and file cabinets out of the picture on the right. These house back issues of the *Minnegazette* and *Twin City Lines* magazines as well as an extensive collection of electric railway history books. File cabinets contain TCRT records and company documents as well as other artifacts.
4. The shop crew really likes the new machine shop area. It's much easier to do the work without having to worry about lack of space or poor lighting. That's **Jim Willmore** doing some machining on the lathe. The opening at the end of the machine shop is the large access door to the speeder shed portion of the addition.



(From the Front Platform *Continued from page 2)*

ESL will receive new informational and history signage. The intent is to better inform visitors when the car is coming back. A new concrete platform for ESL will be installed at Water Street. Back guys will be installed to straighten and anchor the overhead wire poles. The Linden Hills depot will be repainted and some new displays will be installed. The first-ever refresher sessions for Foremen will happen in February/March. The goal is to uncover issues of concern to the Foremen, make operations more consistent and improve safety and the management of unexpected problems.

On a personal note, the new library has made it possible for me to conduct a series of four streetcar history classes in January. We teach our volunteers how to drive a streetcar, but we need to do more to communicate the history. I'll be working with the trainers to reach this year's new recruits.

Until next time, thank you for supporting our museum. 🌱

The Shop Crew Never Quits

The 2015 operating season is over and our Operating personnel are enjoying a well-deserved rest. As reported elsewhere in this newsletter, our 2015 season was a good one and ended on a very positive note with our very successful holiday special events. Now it's time to take a break—unless you also volunteer in our George Isaacs car barn and shop or the Excelsior car barn and restoration shop. In these Museum facilities, activity actually picks-up during the winter months when we don't operate. Our historic streetcars are old with all except one of them (PCC No. 322) 100-years old or older. So, our historic cars need constant maintenance to keep them mechanically sound and, more importantly, safe for our passengers and volunteers. The photos below depict just some of the things that are going on in the Isaacs shop this winter. The photos on page 5 depict some of the activities surrounding the restoration of Winona No. 10.



Rattan Seats in No. 1300 being refurnished



Rattan Seats in No. 1300 being refurnished



LED ditch lights are being installed on No. 265



The floor in No. 265 is being refinished

IT'S TAX TIME

Our Museum is recognized by the IRS and State of Minnesota as a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt, educational organization. Therefore, dues and contributions to MSM can be deducted on your federal and state income tax return. If you plan to deduct your MSM dues or contribution to MSM you need to refer to IRS Pub 526, Charitable Contributions for specific guidance. As an organization, we can't give you tax counsel, but in summary here's what you need to know.

- All of the dues you paid to the Museum are fully tax deductible.
- If you purchased a uniform item (e.g., your grey shirt and uniform hat) you can deduct the cost of the shirt and hat. However, if you use a piece of your uniform for any other purpose, e.g., you purchase black pants that you then wear to a non-museum activity, then the cost of the pants isn't deductible.
- Cash donations to the Museum are fully deductible and every donation gets a thank-you letter from MSM. If the donation was for \$250 or more then a special letter acknowledging the donation must and will be sent to the donor by the Museum.
- Donation of materials or other goods valued up to \$499 will also be acknowledged by the Museum. To receive this acknowledgement letter, the donor must send a letter to the Museum requesting acknowledgement of the donation. This letter will list the individual donated items/materials along with the cost of the item. Original receipts should be kept by the donor (for tax documentation purposes) but make copies of them and attach the copies to your letter to MSM. Requests for a written acknowledgement of a donation of materials or other items may not be made by a third party.
- If the donation of items, material or artifacts is valued at \$500 or more, and the donor intends to deduct the value of the items donated to MSM, then the donor must complete IRS form 8283 and send it to the Museum, along with a copy of the cash receipts. The 8283 form will be returned to the donor after the MSM Treasurer reviews and authenticates the form.
- If a donor plans to deduct the donation that was not recently commercially purchased (e.g., a 3-year old computer printer, an historical artifact, a photo, etc.) so that there is no receipt establishing the value of the donation, the donor is responsible for determining the fair market value of the item(s) donated to MSM.



- Streetcar Restoration in Six Easy Steps**
1. Find a cadaver and bring it to your restoration shop.
 2. Dismantle the car until you can't go any further. Become somewhat discouraged when you realize that the body isn't in as good condition as you had first thought. Then start to rebuild the car. Winona No. 10 Project Manager, Howie Melco is showing us the all-new steel underframe just installed. For a number of months Winona No. 10 didn't have an underframe and the upper body of the car was supported by wood trusses running through the windows as seen at the top of the photo.
 3. Start putting the car back together using as much of the original materials as possible. Rebuild whatever needs rebuilding and begin the process of installing the power truck, air piping wire conduits and other underbody appurtenances. Continue with interior woodwork refinishing and re-installation.
 4. At the appropriate time, prime the exterior and mask.
 5. Paint the exterior in the appropriate colors. Step back and enjoy the magnificent look of the car. Imagine how it'll look running on the line.
 6. Start final phase by installing air, electrical and traction control appliances.

What's Happening?

March 19 MSM Annual Member's meeting—10:00 AM, Pavek Museum of Broadcasting
 February/March MSM Foreman training sessions. Dates, time and location TBA
 March New Operator recruiting period begins
 April New Operator training and Operator recertification is held. Dates TBA.



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

Jim Vaitkunas — MSM Corporate Secretary & Assistant Ops Chief

Annual Appeal a Big Success. Our 2015-2016 Annual Appeal fund raiser has resulted in a tremendous response from our members and friends. To date we've received over \$20,000 from over 55 donors. We truly appreciate the following members and friends for their most generous support to our Museum.

General Fund: Earl & Bettye Anderson Tom Balcom Phil Epstein Keith Anderson
 Glen Bottoms Steve Colin Ben Franske John DeWitt Rod Eaton Bill & Rose Arends
 Bill Graham Russ Isbrandt Bob Johnson Ed McGlynn Bruce Gustafson Mary Ann Corbey
 Joe Plante & Eric Neumann Bill Preiss Frank Sandberg Charlie McCarthy Give MN.org (match)
 Hon. James Rogers Dennis & Ruth Stephens Walt Strobel Dick & Joan Niemiec
 Eric Tratner Dave Venhuizen

Truck Rebuild Fund: Doug Anderson Darrell Arndt Doug Beedon Ray Benson, Jr.
 Earl & Bettye Anderson Bernie Braun Dave Brostrom Larry Coulter Tim Crain
 Richard Darling Dennis Fischer Gordon Geddes Jim Harrison Rolly Ehrenberg Jim Foster
 Dave Hogan Aaron Isaacs Karl Jones George Kotsonas Marv Krafve Ron Neitzel
 Russ Olson Jim Otto Adam Platt Robert Powell Gary Neunsinger John & Jill Prestholdt
 Steve Simon Mark Sims Tom Gregory Charles Weber Gerald Robertson Jim & Jincy Vaitkunas

Sad News. It is with profound sadness that I report that Cliff Thomas, one of our stalwart volunteers on the Excelsior Streetcar Line's crew roster, has passed away. Cliff was born in Bristol, the United Kingdom and was a multi-talented individual. He worked in the power generation industry and over the years his work carried him to the four corners of the Globe. Most recently he worked at Avant Energy in Chaska and had a variety of interests including square dancing. He was a fine Motorman with MSM and after just two years, he was promoted to the position of Foreman at ESL. Cliff was a consummate professional and he will be very missed by his friends and colleagues at our Museum. ♻️

We are in an election Year!

Of course you knew that. While we are still several months away from the start of our 2016 operating season, we felt it's not too early to remind you of our current policy on the Museum's involvement in any overt political activities while on Museum property or while you are wearing your Museum uniform.

Certainly, it is your right to support whichever party you want and vote for the candidate of your choice. However we do have some restrictions on political talk and activity while you are "on duty" with the Museum or if you are wearing the MSM uniform. Here is an extract from our Museum's Policy #1, Member Conduct Code and Disciplinary Policy.

"1.2.9 Announcements, discussion, or "off the cuff" remarks regarding politics, political parties, or persons holding a particular public office will not be a part of the end of line talk. In particular, discussion, announcements or talk that may be overheard by passengers or our neighbors that disparage any political party or person holding public office at the national, state or local level is strictly prohibited."

This policy is also re-stated in our rule book. While the wording in the second line states "...will not be part of the end of line talk..." the intent of this policy statement is that while you are "on duty" at the museum you are prohibited from injecting politics into your interaction with our passengers regardless of location. In addition, you must ensure that the Museum does not appear to favor one candidate, party or issue over another, especially if you are active in promoting a particular candidate and especially if you are wearing your MSM uniform.

(My First Column Continued from page 1)

Phleger, Gary Reins, Greg Thomas, Jeff Anderson, Jim Berry, Jim and Karen Kertzman, Joel Schuweiler, Bill and Rose Arends, Karl Jones, Pat Desbonnet, Rich Holtz, Rod Eaton, Ron Neitzel, Russ Isbrandt, Steve Simon, Tim Crain, and Tom Dulebohn. ♻️

Streetcar CURRENTS Winter Publication Schedule

With this issue of the Streetcar **CURRENTS**, we revert to our winter publication schedule. You'll now be receiving the Streetcar **CURRENTS** every other month until May 2016. Publication dates for these issues will be on or about: December 1st; February 1st; and, April 1st. If you don't receive your issue on or shortly after those dates please contact me at: jvaitkunas@msn.com