

MINNESOTA STREETCAR MUSEUM



Streetcar CURRENTS



September—2017

Minneapolis & Excelsior, Minnesota

Heritage Rail Alliance 2017 Conference—Putting Our Best Foot Forward

Jim Vaitkunas—Assistant Ops Chief

The HRA annual fall conference will be held from October 5 to 7, 2017. There are several pre-conference trips and activities scheduled for October 3 and 4. Rather than go through the full schedule here, you can go to our website www.TrolleyRide.org or HRA's website www.atrrm.org, and get all the information you need on the conference including the detailed schedule. This will give you a good idea of what will be happening during the conference. In a separate e-mail to you, we'll send you more detailed information on the personnel needed to support this major event.



BACKGROUND. The HeritageRail Alliance annual fall meeting is the highlight of HRA's annual activities. The HeritageRail Alliance was formed three years ago when two groups with very similar or duplicate goals and objectives merged—the Tourist Railroad Association (TRAIN) and the Association of Railway Museums (ARM). Initially the merged organization was named the Association of Tourist Railroads and Railway Museums (ATRRM). That's a mouthful, eh? The ATRRM Board soon recognized the organization's new name really didn't roll off the tongue very well, so in 2016 ATRRM rebranded itself as HeritageRail Alliance. This name better describes the purpose of the organization and is much easier to say. Currently HRA has over 250 North American members both large (e.g., Illinois Railway Museum, Seashore Trolley Museum, etc.) and small (e.g., our Museum, depot museums, etc.). Our Museum had been a member of ARM since the early 1980s when it was formed. Currently [Jim Vaitkunas](#) is an HRA Director and [Aaron Isaacs](#) is HRA's newsletter editor.

In 1995 the Museum hosted ARM members at the fall conference in the Twin Cities. The conference was a success. In early 2015 the Museum's Board agreed that it would be good to host another conference to showcase our Museum and the progress that we've made over the last twelve years. As a Museum, we certainly have much to be proud of and it never hurts to toot your own horn, or whistle in our case, when justified.

THE SUPER BOWL OF RAIL MUSEUMS. Basically, that's what the HRA fall conference is. It's a pretty big deal, a bit like our State Fair. The conference allows attendees a time and place to attend great educational seminars, take interesting field trips, and most importantly, to meet with others in the rail heritage community who share similar experiences and concerns. It takes a lot of work to put one of these together, and much work has already been done in 2016 and this year. A group of our members has been active in planning and making arrangements that need to be made in advance. (See Aaron Isaac's column on the next page.) We're at the point now, however, when we need to call upon all active volunteers to sign-up for the various conference support positions that need to be filled to ensure a smooth functioning conference. You can go to [Humanity](#) now and see what we need and what's currently available. Some "early birds" have already signed-up, for which we are grateful.

Typically, the fall conferences have around 200 attendees. With an excellent schedule of seminars and field trips, we hope to host at least that many HRA members and guests at this fall's conference. YES, this is a pretty big deal for us and why we really need your help to pull it off. 🍀

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Masthead: This rare three-car line-up was taken in 2011 to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the start of historic streetcar operations at CHSL. We'll be operating all three cars in October during the two HRA conference visits to CHSL. We'll also have three cars operating at ESL for the visit by the conferees.

(Jeff Terry photo)

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
September—2017

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 September 20, 2017.

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

Gearing up for the HRA Conference. We're coming down the homestretch toward the HeritageRail Alliance Conference October 3-7. **Rod Eaton, Tim Crain, Jim Vaitkunas** and I have been leading the overall planning effort. Particular thanks to **Tim Crain** for working on food arrangements and to **Rod Eaton** for recruiting seminar speakers and planning the evening club room activities. **Rod** and **Jim Vaitkunas** have been preparing all the graphics and signage. **Bruce Gustafson** and **Todd Bender** have pulled the Railway Operating Department together to plan and staff the three visits to our streetcar lines. **Phil Epstein** is coordinating the bus charters, including recruiting volunteer drivers to reduce our cost. **Jill Seinola** has planned separate tours for spouses and traveling companions. **Bill** and **Rose Arends** will be staffing the registration table and retail sales. **Ben Franske** is handling the audio/visual setup. Thanks to everyone who has helped to date.

We're still recruiting bus guides, seminar hosts and a few other miscellaneous jobs. If you're a regular operating volunteer, go to msm.humanity.com to sign up. If you're not a regular MSM volunteer but want to get involved, contact me at aaronmona@aol.com.

We'd like you to attend. Go to www.atrrm.org to see the entire program and register for the full conference. MSM members have two options to attend the conference besides full registration. Anyone who volunteers can attend the seminars, visit the vendor room and attend the evening Club Room activities at no cost. This is a great opportunity to learn more about railway museums and preservation.

If you don't choose to volunteer and don't want to pay the full \$300 registration, \$40 will allow you to attend the seminars, visit the vendor room and attend the evening Club Room activities. Go to Trolleyride.org to sign up.

We're offering three pre-conference trips, which require a separate ticket.

1. A Tuesday October 3 railroad tour of the Twin Cities.
2. A Wednesday October 4 traction tour of the Twin Cities.
3. A Wednesday October 4 trip to Duluth to visit the Lake Superior Railroad Museum and ride the North Shore Scenic Railroad behind steam.

Carbarn brick apron complete. Thanks to all the recent construction projects and repeated abuse by heavy trucks and trailers, the poor bricks in front of the Isaacs Carbarn have suffered. We've pulled them up and re-laid them repeatedly. With the construction and No. 1300 motor deliveries finally over, we wanted to spruce up the place for the upcoming HeritageRail Alliance conference in early October.

Everyone has been busy finishing the speeder shed track, installing the new switch stand and working on No. 1300's parts, so Maintenance Projects Coordinator **Dennis Stephens** suggested we should hire a landscaping firm to re-lay the bricks on a proper subbase. He and **John Prestholdt, Bill Graham, Pete Connors, Tom Schramm, Pat Kriske, Steve McCulloch** and **Aaron Isaacs** removed, sorted and piled the old bricks on pallets. The landscaper has now finished the work (see photos on next page). Looks really nice. ☺


Surplus (to you) Railroad and Trolley History Books Needed

Our stock of duplicate or surplus railroad and trolley history books is almost depleted through sales at the local train shows and on eBay. We need to re-stock our supply of these books so we can sell them during the visits to ESL and CHSL by attendees at the HRA 2017 annual fall conference sponsored by our Museum (October 5-7). If you have books to donate please drop them off at the Excelsior carbarn merchandise area or at the Linden Hills station or the Isaacs carbarn in the Russell Olson library.

CHSL Car barn Work—Brick Apron Pavers are Placed in Front of the Isaacs Car barn



(Above & Below) Project Finished! We may put more pavers in at a later date but for now, the project is finished. The pavers really improves the appearance and footing in front of the Isaacs car barn.
(All brick apron project photos by Dennis Stephens)



Trolley Pole Problems! Russ Isbrandt (on No. 322's roof) and Mark Digre are adjusting the spring tension on No. 322's trolley pole that just didn't want to stay on the wire. *(Jim Vaitkunas photo)*

What's Happening?

- September 1 -----Last Day of weeknight service at CHSL
- September 4 -----Labor Day operations at both CHSL and ESL.
- September 9 -----ESL reverts to reduced Saturday & Sunday operating hours for September
- September 9 -----CHSL Saturday & Sunday operating hours ends at 7:30 PM
- September 16 -----ESL operates on Saturday for Excelsior Apple Days festival, 10 AM to 4 PM
- October 3-7 -----Heritage Rail Alliance conference events at both ESL & CHSL



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

Jim Vaitkunas — MSM Corporate Secretary & Assistant Ops Chief

New **MSM Member.** We are pleased to welcome new MSM member Carol Frey, who joined our Museum since the last issue of this newsletter.

Donations to **MSM.** We received a good number of donations to the Museum in memory of Gary Neunsinger. We thank the following for their generous donations: Patty Franssen, Kathy & Scott Heiderich, Kammerman/Larson Charitable Gift Fund, Bonnie Neunsinger, Candace & David Bokusky, Joy & Randy Frevel, John & Janyce Moroz, and Elizabeth & Ken Snyder. Richard Darling also made a generous donation to MSM. ☺

TCRT No. 1300s Truck is Going Back Together

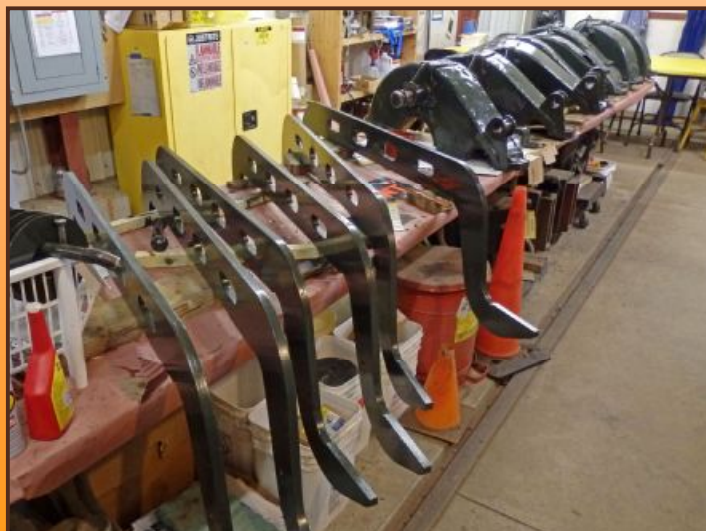
The major work to repair the trucks of our Museum's "mother car," Twin City Rapid Transit Company No. 1300, is done. Now, the task is to put the parts back where they are supposed to go, with no extra parts left over. Our stalwart shop forces are working hard to do just that, so No. 1300 is presentable and operating for the HRA conference visitors. Here are some photos of the parts as they sat several weeks ago in the Isaacs carbarn maintenance bay. *(Photos by Dennis Stephens)*



Rob Mangels, Jr. (left) and **Tom Schramm** position one of the axle-motor sets delivered earlier.



Elliptical springs ready to be re-installed



Equalizers and gear cases are painted in TCRT green.



New pedestal bolts manufactured by **Rob Mangels, Sr.** in his shop.