



Streetcar CURRENTS



July 2009

Minneapolis & Excelsior, Minnesota

Have a Safe and Great Summer!

- Give our new Operators a warm welcome when they work on your shift, and help them as much as you can.
- Are you retired or semi-retired? We can use you on those Wednesday afternoon shifts and for charters.
- Stay cool. We're now into the warmest part of the year. Wear loose clothing while you volunteer and drink plenty of water.



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Masthead Photo: Twin City Rapid Transit No. 1300 is running on the mainline while PCC No. 322 loads passengers at the platform of the Linden Hills station. Soon No. 322 will head north to Lake Calhoun. The date is May 31, 2009 and out of the photo to the right, vintage automobiles from the early 1900s up to the 1950s and 60s line Queen Avenue South for about 400 feet. As you can see, the weather was absolutely gorgeous! (Jim Vaitkunas photo)

The Training Corner

Clyde Hawkins—Training Chief

It has been a busy spring getting everyone recertified and training our new Operators. This year we recertified 30 Foremen and 54 Operators. Many thanks to you all for your patience during this important part of our Museum's training program.

We currently have 15 Operator trainees with 8 of those in revenue training, which is the last phase of training before they receive their Operator's license. These folks include Bjorn Berntson, Roger Carpenter, Danny Goddard, George

Henes, Jim Lipscomb, Brad Masson, John Reinan, and Bob Weatherall. We have three others that are very close to entering the last phase of training: Darryl Streeter, Norm Larson and Matt Leibel. In addition to these three, we also have some late arrivals who have just started, or will soon begin, their basic Operator training: Roger Leclaire, Mark Tracy, Patricia Bjorkland and Damon Matthews. Our training has been delayed somewhat with the mechanical problems we had recently at both railways but we're making good progress.

We also conducted Operator training at our Excelsior Streetcar Line where Tom Fairbairn and Bob Johnson did the training. Jim Willmore was also a great help with ESL training. At the Como-Harriet Streetcar Line in Minneapolis, John Prestholdt and Rod Eaton helped with training.

I'd like to ask offer a tip of the Motorman's hat to Jerry Olsen and John DeWitt for conducting three training sessions on PCC No. 322. Everyone's efforts to help with training is much appreciated.

Let's give a hearty welcome to our new Operator trainees and make them feel welcome if they happen to be on your shift over the next few weeks. After graduation these fine folks will certainly help ease our Operator shortage at both railways. BTW, please don't take offense if I misspelled your name. Blame it on spellchecker.

PJ Party Trolley

Rod Eaton—General Supt.

It's said that during the streetcar era, mothers would take their youngsters for a trolley ride on hot summer evenings. The cooling breeze through the windows and gentle rocking of the car worked wonders with wide-awake tykes. This little piece of streetcar history was the inspiration for our PJ Party event.

Thursday evening, June 18, was hot and humid. Sixty moms, dads, and kids crowded the Como-Harriet platform enjoying milk and cookies. Then TCRT

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Here are some of our Operator trainees who took a moment out from their training to pose in front of Duluth No. 265 (left to right): Clyde Hawkins, Chief of Training, Norm Larson, George Henes, Brad Masson, Darryl Streeter and Jim Lipscomb. (Rod Eaton 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 is:

P.O. Box 14467, University Station
 Minneapolis, MN 55414-0467
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Streetcar CURRENTS
 July 2009

Jim Vaitkunas—Editor
 Bill Graham—Distribution

Streetcar CURRENTS is a periodic 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 July 20, 2009.

Please send items to editor Jim Vaitkunas at the following address:
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 Apple Valley, MN 55124-9774
 You can send input or enquiries by e-mail to: jvaitkunas@msn.com

From the Front Platform

Dave French—Board Chair

Hi everybody! As MSM's Board Chair one of my duties is to promote safety at our museum. Of course, this isn't just *my* duty, it is the duty of every member every time you're on the property. I recently acquired a program for TCRT's First Annual Safety Award Dinner which was held June 17th, 1950 at the Radisson Hotel in Minneapolis. Vice President and General Manager, James A. Gibb wrote in part:

"To all our employees being honored tonight, for the first time in the history of this Company, congratulations. We, the new management, are very proud of our safety record. Eight of our operator employees here tonight represent 246 years of operation without an at-fault accident. Six of these men have 198 years of employment with our company, and have never had an at-fault accident during their entire service, so you can see "Safety is no accident."

You are going to receive our help and recognition to be safe operators. Your interest and assistance in helping your fellow worker to be safety minded will be of tremendous assistance, and we earnestly solicit your cooperation.

In conclusion, the management is definitely behind our Safety Program, and every employee is expected to exercise Care-Caution-Courtesy, and remember, "Safety is no accident."

I think Mr. Gibb expressed very well what the Directors and Officers of MSM would like to tell **you**. I know I could calculate the years of service of any eight of our senior volunteers and come up with an equally impressive number of years without *any* accident. MSM has a truly admirable safety record and like Mr. Gibb said, that does not happen by accident.

TCRT President Charles Green wrote, in part:

"Nothing is more important than Safety, the safety of the public, the safety of our employees, and the safety of the company. You protect all of these when you do your job carefully. A great responsibility has been entrusted to every motorman and bus driver of this company. The lives of our passengers are entrusted in your care. What could be more important than to safeguard life and limb? Every day we have gruesome reminders of terrible accidents that happened here and elsewhere. All of them are due to the carelessness of someone. Nothing could be more praiseworthy than a resolve on the part of every one of our employees that from this day on every precaution will be exercised to safely transport the citizens of this community. The consequences of negligence are injuries, cripples and death. The rewards of carefulness are happiness and pride."

Well said, Mr. Green! Our excellent safety record at MSM is not only due to our carefully planned operating procedures (our sequence of operations) and training, a great part of our safety depends on **your own common sense**. It is our duty to protect our passengers, the public, and MSM by operating and working safely. It can be truly said that just one catastrophic accident could result in the closure of MSM. I want all of you to feel happiness and pride when you leave the carbarn, knowing that you have worked safely.

Looking at the 1950 program, I wish we could have a Safety Award Dinner at the old Radisson. While I might not choose to have Fred Ossanna as Toastmaster like they did, I am impressed by the speakers which included the Mayors of Minneapolis and St Paul and the Chief Justice of the State Supreme Court. Dinner featured Roast Minnesota Turkey and entertainment was provided by the Biddy Bastein Band with Jeanne Arlen, Song Stylist. Sounds like a hot time on the old town, doesn't it? I'll see you, working safely, on the car! ☺



Historian & Archives News & Notes

Aaron Isaacs —Historian

Whatever happened to the sprinkler system? We thought the sprinkler system would be installed in the George Isaacs carbarn by now. What wasn't anticipated was the complexity of the Minneapolis permit process. Keith Anderson has been working on the grading permits with the Park Board and another from the City. The Park Board approved theirs quickly. The city treats hi-rises and tiny grading jobs the same, but after multiple meetings with the city, eleven copies of the application have been distributed to multiple city departments for review. Hopefully that won't take too long and the permit will be granted. That's not the end of the story. After the grading, we'll need permits to install the water and sewer, prior to finally hooking up the sprinkler system.

Glenwood Park, not Wirth Park. I am also frequently asked, "Whatever happened to moving the Wirth Park streetcar shelter to Lake Calhoun?" For those who missed it, we're referring to the original TCRT streetcar waiting shelter that was located at the end of the Glenwood Avenue line. That line was abandoned in 1954, yet the shelter remained in place. In fact, the Park Board appears to have maintained it. We know it was painted maybe 30 years ago, because we have a photo from the 1960s that shows it to be a different color than today. Other than a large tree that is growing against it, the 16 X 24 foot open sided structure is in good shape and structurally sound.

The earliest photo of the shelter is 1948, but we think it was built in 1916 when the track was extended into the park. **Peter Sussman**, who is a student of Minneapolis park history, correctly points out that Wirth Park is a latter-day name. It was originally Glenwood Park, and from now on we'll refer to it as such.

Originally we thought the shelter would be moved last year. For various reasons, the deal didn't come

together. However, the Park Board has assigned one of its landscape architects to work with us. Peter and I met with her on June 10th. We agreed on a different location than was originally proposed. Instead of being placed in front of the existing gate in the cemetery fence, we're proposing to place it along the fence a short distance beyond the end of track. We arrived at that through process of elimination, since no other location seems to work.

The Park Board staff will draft a memo of understanding that defines who pays for what. Once that is finalized, hopefully the move will happen before fall.

Harlyn Qualley collection donated. Thanks to **Phil Settergren**, MSM has received a huge collection of vintage railroad slides and movies. It was assembled by the late Harlyn Qualley, a railfan, modeler and retired Milwaukee Road engineer. He died in 2006 at age 91. His daughter and son-in-law live two doors away from Phil, who referred them to me. There are 51 slide carousels holding 4500-5000 slides. There are numerous rolls of Super 8 and videotape. It's all railroad, no streetcar stuff, from the 60s and 70s, maybe earlier and covers all of North America.

Obviously this falls outside our collection policy, and we don't propose to accession any of it. We're planning to donate the Minnesota stuff to MTM and sell the rest. **Bruce Gustafson** has had good luck selling vintage slide sets on Ebay, and we could create plenty of them from the non-Minnesota slides.

Dave French donates photos. **Dave French** has donated 20 vintage Minnesota streetcar photos, including one from Mankato, one from Duluth and the rest of TCRT. They are notable in that most are at least 100 years old. Several show the employee musical bands, including views of a band outing on Lake Minnetonka. ☺

(PJ Party Trolley Continued from page 1)

PCC No. 322 arrived and Motorman **Jerry Olsen** welcomed everyone aboard. The car made a quick trip to the north end, then returned to the carbarn for a bed-time story. Guest Storyteller **Phyllis Root**, local author of dozens of children's books, read some of her work as kids in their jammies gathered 'round. Then the car returned its sleepy load to the station.

Our PJ Party partner is **Wild Rumpus Books** in Linden Hills. Tickets were sold in advance only at the book store, and all 60 were gone several days before the event. Since there was such a high demand

for tickets, we're considering running two PJ Party trips on July 23, when our guest will be illustrator and author **Derek Anderson**. Once again, tickets for the event will be available only at **Wild Rumpus**.

Many of us grew up with streetcars and have fond memories of riding them. Through events like the PJ Party, we provide the opportunity for today's families to create their own memories as well as recreating a bit of streetcar tradition and history.

If you're interested in helping with our next PJ Party Trolley, please give **Rod Eaton** a call. ☺

What's Happening?

- July 4 Special CHSL *Early Bird* service start at 9:30 AM. ESL runs from 1 PM until 6 PM.
- July 11 Streetcar cleaning at CHSL, 9 AM to 11 AM. Juice and cookies/rolls will be provided.
- July 11 Moonlight Trolley at CHSL starts at 10 PM
- July 9-11 Excelsior *Crazy Days*. ESL streetcar runs on extended schedule, 2 PM to 8 PM
- July 23 PJ Party Trolley at CHSL, 7 PM
- Sept 27 MSM annual family picnic at CHSL

Shop Update

John Prestholdt—Shop Foreman

The summer months are usually quiet at the Isaacs car barn since our main function is to make sure all three cars are in good operating order. We have had a few problems, however, trying to figure out all the tasks performed by **Roy Harvey**, the one who keeps this place really running. Early in May Roy fell and broke his ankle while working around home. Since it is his right ankle he can't drive so we all have had to fill in for him. Things like filling our water jugs and emptying the garbage were taken over by **Jim Otto**, sweeping the stairs was tried by Shop Foreman **John Prestholdt**, and we continue to find things waiting for Roy or a replacement to work on. Roy—we miss you as well as your “Ole and Lena” jokes.

We have started a couple of projects that have been waiting for warm and better weather. **Dick Stoner**, **Keith Lindberg**, **John Prestholdt** and **Phil Settergren** worked on putting blocks around a couple of the garden sections at the station and are now getting ready to do some planting. The entire Tuesday crew also started working on adding bricks to the open section of the original car barn that was built in 1971 to house our “mother car,” TCRT No. 1300. This has always been a problem area that we will now get fixed. All this as well as having **Mark Digre**, **Russ Isbrandt** and **Walt Strobel** all working under PCC 322 checking on motor brushes, oiling bearings and generally checking everything out, under the supervision of **Neil Howes**.

Great job to all who helped on these projects. And we always have **Dennis Stevens** working on metal parts for **Ken Albrecht** and Winona No. 10 and **Jim Willmore** is still working on parts for our rebuilding of several trolley bases. To all thanks for great work on these projects. ☺



(Top Left) When the weather is nice, our shop forces like to get out and get some sun by doing outside projects. Here is a nice area in our garden across the tracks from the Linden Hills station that received the beautification treatment from the shop guys.

(Top Right) This is the “way back” in our “ready barn” at the Como-Harriet Streetcar Line’s George Isaacs car barn. This portion of the ready barn was built in early 1971 to house the first streetcar to operate at the Museum, TCRT No. 1300. Here you see (from left to right) **Russ Isbrandt**, **Keith Lindberg**, **Jim Otto**, **Phil Settergren** (Jim and Phil are barely visible in the back of the barn) and **Neil Howes**. **Mark Digre** is on the far right and along with Russ is providing the proper level of supervision to this hard-working crew. (*John Prestholdt photos*)

Merchandise Alert! New Ballcaps are in!

We have two new styles of baseball caps for sale for \$15. These fine caps feature the TCRT “cloverleaf” logo and come in two color styles—tan with a black bill and all Black. For the locals, you can get yours at the Linden Hills station. For the out-of-towners, you can order yours at our Museum Store by going to our website: www.trolleyride.com. Limited supply, so get yours soon!

