

MINNESOTA STREETCAR MUSEUM



Streetcar CURRENTS



Jan-Feb 2011

Minneapolis & Excelsior, Minnesota

Winter is a Time for Rest and Reflection

- *It's not too late to make a donation to our 2010-2011 annual appeal*
- *Many thanks to all our volunteers for your dedication and hard work*
- *Consider becoming more involved in your Museum's operations and administration*



Streetcar CURRENTS Winter Publication Schedule
The **Streetcar CURRENTS** is well into its winter publication schedule. Next issue will be sent to you on or about April 1st.

Inside This Issue

From the Front Platform	2
MSM Merchandise Report	3
MSM News & Views	3
Shop Update	4
ESL Update	5
Upcoming Events	6
CHSL is 40 Year Old!	6

Masthead Photo: You gotta start someplace! This photo was taken in 1970—41 years ago—and shows the first single car barn and the first few feet of track at our Como-Harriet Streetcar Line. No. 1300 wasn't even on site yet—that would come in 1971. We've come a long way since then, eh?
(MSM Photo Archive)

2010 Was A Good Year

Bill Arends—General Supt.

Maintaining and Operating an all-volunteer historic streetcar line with century old streetcars has its challenges. Year 2010, our 39th season of operation on the Como-Harriet Streetcar Line, was no exception. However, it also provides a lot of rewards and enjoyment. It was a great year for recruitment. Thanks to the many hours devoted to training by our training staff, **Clyde Hawkins** and **Tom Fairbairn**, twelve new operators were trained and certified at both the Como Harriet and Excelsior Streetcar Lines. We also gained non-operating volunteers who have brought new ideas and energy to the maintenance and restoration efforts at both of our Museum's demonstration Railways.

Of course, one area which is always of importance is revenue. In 2010 MSM had a good year, generating a little over \$144,000 in total revenue. Of this amount, about \$31,000 is "earmarked" for specific purposes including the car barn improvements, Winona No. 10's restoration and 42nd street crossing rebuild. About \$50,000 was generated by regular revenue service, with an additional \$23,606 from Charters and Special Events, including the Halloween and Christmas events. Thank you Foremen, Operators, Station Agents and Crossing Guards. Your countless hours of volunteering accounted for over 50% of our revenue. Thanks to our Accountant/Bookkeeper **Russ Olson**, we can easily track our finances.

Ridership over the past several years has remained at about 41,000 riders per year at our two railways. This year at the Como Harriet Streetcar Line we were down about 1,900 riders. But 2010 was an unusual year weather-wise. We lost eleven full shifts due to rain or snow plus another eight shifts that were cut short by rain after not more than three trips. This included a 4th of July shift and two Holly Trolley days. So I think we can say that, if weather had not intervened, our ridership would have been on par with previous years. Thanks to **John Prestholdt's** excellent job of maintaining this statistical data, we can look as far back as our inaugural year of 1971.

Year 2010 was another successful year for MSM. We overcame two broken trolley wire support poles. We had to deal with more than a normal amount of inclement weather. We got a new security system installed at the CHSL. We replaced the 42nd street crossing. We repaired the crumbling east wall of the George K. Isaacs car barn. We made significant progress on the restoration of Winona No. 10. We provided 41,000 people with an enjoyable streetcar ride. And we had fun!

In closing, as the incoming General Superintendent, I want to thank **Rod Eaton** for the excellent job he has done as the General Superintendent for the past five years. I don't consider myself "replacing" Rod but rather I am assuming the duties of the GS. With the help of our great volunteer base, that I think I can do. ☺



Here's our new General Superintendent!

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, University Station
 Minneapolis, MN 55414-0467
 952-922-1096

Streetcar CURRENTS
 January-February—2011

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 March 20, 2011.

Please send items to editor Jim Vaitkunas at the following address:
 155 Chaparral Dr.

Apple Valley, MN 55124-9774

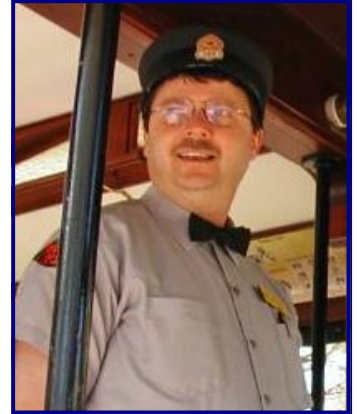
You can send input or enquiries by e-mail to: jvaitkunas@msn.com



From the Front Platform — Thoughts on Our Museum

Dave French — Chair, MSM Board of Directors

Turnover. One of the secrets of success here at MSM, or any non-profit, is the ability to find volunteers to fill important jobs. We don't need experts or professionals, but we need hard workers willing to learn. Once they have served their sentence (or maybe I should say their term!) they can resign with our thanks and we will find their replacements. I think it is very important that these positions are not the permanent property of the office-holder. These jobs take a lot of time and effort and all of us have other things we can do, and new officers have new energy and ideas. Ideally, we serve for 2 to 8 years and move on, helping to train and advise our successor who is ready to take his or her turn. Three who have taken their turn and are now ready to move on are General Superintendent **Rod Eaton**, Treasurer **Scott Heiderich**, and Bookkeeper **Russ Olson**. Thanks to **Rod**, **Scott**, and **Russ** for your service. You have made MSM a better museum!



Is it your turn? **Bill Arends** has taken the General Superintendent position, but we still have openings for Treasurer and Bookkeeper. We want to have replacements for Scott and Russ by the Annual Meeting in March. The budget for 2011 has already been set so you won't have to worry about that. The Treasurer watches spending, pays bills, and submits reports to the Board for their quarterly meeting. The Bookkeeper receives information from the Treasurer and enters the numbers in QuickBooks. Won't you consider serving MSM in this way? It's a great way to "give back" to an organization that gives you much joy. Scott and Russ are ready to help you get started and will be available to answer questions as you go along. If it is **YOUR** turn, please e-mail me a drfcd152@aol.com or call 651-728-2837.

Annual Appeal off to a great start! As I've mentioned before, I'm the guy who picks up the mail every week, which gives me a chance to see donations coming in for the Annual Appeal. We have received donations from \$10 to \$2,000 and all three funds (Carbarn Expansion, Winona No. 10, and General Fund) have attracted strong support. I have been unemployed since last August, and one thing for me to decide is how does this affect my charitable giving? In the past when I've hit hard times I've often cut donations down to zero. This time I am taking a more balanced approach and

donating what I can afford, even if it is less than what I've done in the past. I came to the obvious conclusion that any non-profit would much rather see a check from me than no check at all! I know that many of you are still struggling as our economy slowly turns around, but if you can spare 10 or 20 dollars it will be as welcome as any larger amount. Many small efforts will add up to much good! If you haven't made your donation yet, do it now. If you need a donation form, see our website (www.trolleyride.org) or call me at 651-728-2837.

MHS Collections. You might recall that last year **Aaron Isaacs** and I cataloged the collection of Twin City Rapid Transit Appointment Cards at the Minnesota Historical Society. These are thousands of index cards which were filled out by TCRT whenever a new Motorman, Conductor, or Bus Operator was hired. Last summer I received three requests from customers to look up the card of an ancestor and I was able to find all three in the collection. I know these folks were pleased to learn when their ancestor hired on, when did they quit or retire, what was their badge number, and other basic information. If you have a friend or family member who

(Continued on bottom of page 5)



MSM Merchandise Year-end Report — What was Hot and What Was Not

Charles Barthold — MSM Merchandise Manager

Merchandise sales in 2010 rose five percent over the previous year, to \$13,405. It's an important contributor to the museum's bottom line. The largest share of sales occur at the Linden Hills station. However, we also sell some items at our Excelsior Streetcar Line, through the museum's website, at local train shows, on EBay, and by wholesaling to local merchants for resale.

Sales of particular items were mixed. The large prints (Como-Harriet, Change at Excelsior, 1909 streetcar map) increased, helped by good sales at Bayers Hardware. Despite the decline in old fashioned letter writing, postcard sales rose from 697 in 2009 to 785 in 2010. Even though there was an overall revenue increase, sales of some items at the station and online were down from the previous year. For example, book sales declined from 110 in 2009 to 99 in 2010. Baseball hats dropped from 49 to 26.

It's interesting to see what the public will buy. One way is to divide the merchandise into two categories, items that reinforce our history message and souvenir items that don't necessarily have anything to do with the history that is our primary mission. This would include items like hats, T-shirts, candy, hand

towels, wood whistles and Christmas ornaments. Excluding postcards from the count, we sold about 400 history-related items versus about 900 souvenir items.

Sales to members make a difference. We sold 13 conductor hats and numerous hat badges and uniform badges to members. We especially appreciate you buying books like *Twin Cities by Trolley* at the museum, rather than a commercial bookstore or online dealer, so the museum gets the revenue. Also, check out our used rail books and albums of Minnesota streetcar photos. You may be surprised at what is available.

I'd like to thank the people whose volunteer efforts supported the merchandise operation this year. They worked on Ebay sales, train shows, website updates, wholesaling to retail stores and the annual winter inventory. I especially want to offer thanks to **Bruce Gustafson, Aaron Isaacs, Bill Arends, John DeWitt** and **Jim Berry** who helped with the year-end inventory. **Rod Eaton** helped on a regular basis with re-stocking and keeping the display areas organized during the year, as did **Eric Neumann**. And, last but not least, a BIG THANKS to all the station agents who sold merchandise and accurately rang-up the sales and to those Foremen who did restock during their shift. ☺



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

Jim Vaitkunas — MSM Secretary and Superintendent of Operations

Donations Received. Our annual appeal kicked-off in mid November and as reported by Chair Dave French, we've had a terrific response from our members and friends. The following members and friends have responded generously to our 2010-2011 MSM Annual Appeal.

General Fund: Scott Ingram; Professor George Smerk; Dave & Diana Ubl; Mrs. Florence Isaacs; Bob & Kirsten Jacob and family; Edward Magnuson; Fred Raiche; Frank & Judy Sandberg; Bill Preiss; Scott Watson; Ken and Jan Albrecht; Tony Bauman; Gordon Geddes; Will Graham; John Cartwright; Sharon Deblieck; John DeWitt; Scott Heiderich; Ed McGlynn; Bob Powell; Gerald Robertson; Dick Niemiec; and, Barb & John Risken.

Carbarn Improvement Fund: Rod Eaton; George Kotsonas; Rick Krenske; Dave French; Louis Hoffman; Bill Arends; Doug Beedon; Glen Bottoms; Dennis Fischer; Russ Isbrandt; Ben McPheeters; Judge James Rogers; Dave VenHuizen; Dick Zawacki; Larry Coulter; Gary Neunsinger; Russ Olson; Ray Bensen, Jr.; Dennis Stephens; John Heinl; Hal Johnson; Dick Levering; John Prestholdt; and, Jill Seinola.

Winona No. 10 Restoration Fund: Doug Anderson; Richard Darling; Dave French; Louis Hoffman; Mrs. Blair Dollery; Bob Johnson; Larry Coulter; Gary Neunsinger; Russ Olson; Bernie Braun; Dennis Stephens; George Ittner; Bob Johnson; and, Marv Krafve.

From November 15th to January 23rd we've received the following amounts: General Fund—\$4,023.79; Carbarn Improvements Fund—\$6,050.00; and, Winona No. 10 Restoration Fund—\$1,250.00. That totals up to \$11,323.79. **WOW!** That's great! Many thanks to all donors for your generosity.

MSM Board Meeting. The next meeting of the MSM Board of Directors will be held on Saturday, February 26th, at the Linden Hills Park recreation center building, 43rd Street and Xerxes Avenue. The meetings start shortly after 9 AM and normally do not go past 11:30 AM. Agenda can be found on our website about one week prior to the meeting. Our Board meetings are open to any Museum member who would like to attend the meeting. We encourage our members to come and see YOUR Board in action. ☺



Shop Update — News from our George K. Isaacs and Excelsior Carbarns

John Prestholdt — MSM Shop Foreman

As many of our members know, our historic streetcars do not just show up in the Ready Barn in perfect condition ready to run. Our Museum is fortunate to have a very dedicated group of volunteers who put in almost 10,000 hours each year to get the streetcars ready to operate, clean them monthly, and sometimes more frequently, and keep the CHSL right of way a place riders will want to visit.

While I have mentioned most of this crew for special projects, here is a thank you to all, by name. They are **Bill Arends, Mark Digre, Neil Howes, Russ Isbrandt, Keith Lindberg, Jim Otto, Phil Settergren, Bob Smith, Dick Stoner, Walt Strobel, Dennis Stephens**, all of whom are our regular shop crew. We also have a dedicated group that helps out as their time allows or when we need a few extra hands: **Andy Stephens, Scott Ingram, Dave Irey, Karl Jones, and Matt Leibel**. **Scott Heidrerich**, “electric” **Mike Miller** and **Erik Schwarzkopf** and his son work on the overhead and right of way projects. Cleaning the streetcars at Como-Harriet has been done well by **Bruce Gustafson** and his sons and their scout troop.

Out at our Excelsior carbarn and restoration shop, we have a second dedicated crew working on the Winona No. 10 restoration project. The Winona No. 10 volunteers include **Ken Albrecht, Jim Willmore, Tom Fairbairn, George Ittner, Mark Brothen, Dick Zawacki, Jim Peschong, Tom McGruder, and Scott Ingram**.

On December 15th we hosted our annual Holiday party, postponed one day due to one of our all to frequent snow storms. For several years we have also collected canned goods for a local food shelf, and this year I received a thank you from the Joyce Uptown Food Shelf for our donation of 50 lbs of canned goods. And I thank all who contributed. ☺



(Above) **Mark Digre** is asking the photographer to join him in checking the grease and oil levels in the myriad of locations on the rear truck of TCRT No. 1300. The photographer had to decline. Would **YOU** like to help Mark?

(Left Above) Carrying thousands of passengers on a “ride back in time” each year takes its toll on the painted floor. Here we see (front to rear) **Keith Lindberg, Neil Howes and Walt Strobel** sanding the floor of No. 1300 to prepare it for a couple of coats of floor paint.

(Left) In this photo we see most of a typical Tuesday work crew (L to R): **Phil Settergren; Jim Otto; Bill Arends; Keith Lindberg; Neil Howes and Bob Smith**. Out of the photo are **Dennis Stephens, Russ Isbrandt and Mark Digre**. If you’re concerned that you might not be kept busy volunteering in our shop—don’t be! There’s all kinds of things that need doing: sanding and painting streetcar floors; painting window sash; turning new brass trolley wheels on the lathe; lubricating the fingers on our K-type controllers; checking grease and oil levels on the streetcar; refurbishing the seats with new rattan covering; and, the list goes on and on. If you can spare a few hours each month, see or call our Shop Foreman, **John Prestholdt**: jprestholdt@comcast.net 952-922-7413.

(Three photos by Jim Vaitkunas)





Excelsior Streetcar Line Update

Bruce Kobs — Superintendent

Thank you to all operators and foreman who ran at Excelsior in 2010. Our ridership increased by 468 to 7,624 and revenue increased \$2,241.00 for a total of \$14,384.00. Ridership for the North Pole Trolley was 1,008, Halloween Boomuseum 1,480 and Apple Day 345. Thursdays fed by the Farmer's Market shoppers continues to be our busiest weekday ridership.

New this year, thanks to the efforts of **Rod Eaton** and **Bob Wetherall**, was Story Time Trolley. Collaborating with Excelsior Bay Bookstore, Story Time Trolley ran at 6:30 PM the second Tuesday of June, July and August with an added run Halloween day adding 323 riders this year. The riders received a cookie and drink before boarding the car to listen to an author read two of their books.

The awesome decorating committee of **Teresa Babler** and **Todd Bender** transformed streetcars No. 78 and No. 1239 into the Boo Trolley and Santa's North Pole house. Thanks to **Bob Johnson**, lighting

expert **Bill Preiss**, **Scott Heiderich** and all who cleared ice and snow from the tracks, thawed frozen air valves, and who learned to operate a streetcar in winter weather during our North Pole Trolley.

Buildings and grounds maintenance was headed by **Marsh Ginthner**, with **Scott Heiderich** and **Mike Miller** who kept the weeds sprayed and mowed and trimmed brush along the right-of-way. Drainage ditches were opened-up, siding reattached to the building and the building painted to improve the ESL site. **Marv Krafve** kept our operator and foreman operations schedules fully staffed, the Tuesday work crew of **Ken Albrecht**, **Tom Fairbairn** and **Jim Wilmore** made the necessary repairs to streetcar No. 78 and No. 1239, **Clyde Stephens** kept the wheel journals and motor bearings lubricated and our statistician and bookkeeper **Chip Kemppainen's**, attention to detail handled our monthly reports. Thank you again to all. ☺

Winona No. 10 Restoration Progress



(Above Left) The roof on Winona No. 10 is just about finished. Shown in this photo are **Tom McGruder** (left) and **Jim Peschong**. The black circles on the roof are the openings where ventilators will be mounted. The roof covering will be the standard painted canvas.

(Above Right) Winona No. 10 was a "composite" car, which means that there's both wood and steel involved in its construction. This photo shows the Winona No. 10 crew working on milling and finishing some wood pieces for the roof. From left to right you see **Jim Peschong**, **Mark Brothen** and **Scott Ingram**. They are working in Ken Albrecht's very well equipped wood working shop in the basement of his home in North Mankato, Minnesota.

(Left) This photo shows **Scott Ingram** removing layers of old paint and smoothing some rough spots on the steel side of Winona No. 10. In this photo you can clearly see the difference in color of the new steel at the bottom of the steel sides. The new steel on the bottom was expertly welded onto the good original sides by our in-house master welder, **Howie Melco**. When the sides are painted you won't see the seam between the two pieces of steel. (Three photos by Ken Albrecht)

(From the Front Platform Continued from page 2)

worked for TCRT on the cars or buses, I would be glad to look up their card for you. I need their full name (a middle name is critical to distinguish the hundreds of Andersons and Johnsons!) and their job, if you know it. We don't have access to cards from the office, shops, track, and other departments at this time. E-mail me at drfcd152@aol.com or call me at 651-728-2837 and I'll get on it! ☺

What's Happening?

February 26	MSM Board of Director's meeting, Linden Hills Park recreation building, starts at 9:00 AM
March 17	MSM Annual Member's meeting, Firefighter's Hall & Museum, Minneapolis. 7:00 PM start-time.
April	Operator recertification and new Operator training schedule will be announced in early April
May 5	Start of operations at Excelsior Streetcar Line
May 7	Start of weekend operations at Como-Harriet Streetcar Line

Como-Harriet Streetcar Line is Forty Years Old! Let's celebrate!

Did you know that on August 19th, 1971 the first revenue run of our Museum's "mother car," TCRT standard car No. 1300 occurred on less than a quarter mile of track? At that time, our Museum, then known as the Minnesota Transportation Museum, consisted of one piece of rolling stock, No. 1300. On that first day of operation we had a simple one-stall metal building (see photo on the masthead of this issue), which was just big enough to house No. 1300. There was barely room to do any maintenance on No. 1300 inside this "one car garage," so a lot of the maintenance was done outside when the weather was good. There was no trolley wire in the air yet, no passing siding, no Linden Hills station and about 900 feet of single track. There was a gravel platform at West 42nd Street. Fare was 25-cents—larger donations were gratefully accepted.

Back 40-years ago, the hearty and dedicated bunch of pioneers just kept at the somewhat overwhelming task of making improvements on a pay as you go basis, which has been our Museum's policy from the beginning. This group of men and women over the next 40 years worked hard to extend the track in stages, hang the electric overhead, save and restore five historic Minnesota streetcars and provide generations of passengers with a living history experience of riding an electrically powered streetcar.

You can help us commemorate forty years of streetcar operations at our Como-Harriet Streetcar Line. We plan to hold a series of special commemorative events during the summer months, culminating in a special event on a Saturday or Sunday close to August 19th. **Rod Eaton** will head up a small committee of our members and others who will plan and organize the events. If you would like to help Rod with this special commemorative undertaking, please send an email or call Rod as follows: rpeaton@comcast.net, 763-576-0608.

Thanks! This should be a lot of fun. ☺



TCRT No. 1300 loads passengers at the platform just north of West 42nd Street, where our Linden Hills station is located. This is a very early photo as it appears the ballast stone around the ties and platform area looks new and clean. Maybe it was taken a week or two after the first run on August 19th?

Note the lack of trolley wire. Powered overhead was still a few years in the future. The power supply for No. 1300 was a contraption affectionately called the "goat," which is shown in the photo at the rear of No. 1300. The goat originally was a four-cylinder gasoline engine hooked up to a modified DC trolley bus motor. The motor thus became a generator of sorts and did the job nicely, thank you.

(Photo from MSM Archive)

MSM Annual Meeting to be held on March 17, 2010

Please mark your calendars now to attend **your** Museum's annual meeting on Thursday, March 17th, starting at 7:00 PM. This year we will again meet at a very special place: the Firefighter's Hall and Museum, 664 22nd Avenue, N.E., Minneapolis, MN 55418. The formal business meeting will be very similar to past years' annual meetings: state of the Museum report from our Board Chair, Dave French; reports from our Treasurer and other Museum officers; and, the annual election will also be held.

After the formal business meeting will be a special program on the streetcars of the twin ports of Duluth, Minnesota and Superior, Wisconsin, presented by Aarin Isaacs. As you know the twin ports streetcar system was managed by the same company that managed Twin City Rapid Transit Company. It should be an interesting and informative presentation.