

MINNESOTA STREETCAR MUSEUM



Streetcar CURRENTS



June—2011

Minneapolis & Excelsior, Minnesota

There's always something to do

- **This will be a busy year. Please help out with our special events.**
- **Classic car rally on May 29th needs more people to help with the event. If you're available call Dave Irey at 952-943-8357.**
- **Mark your calendars now for August 6 & 7. That's when we'll hold our Museum's 40th anniversary celebration.**
- **We need help with track and overhead wire work. If you're interested, call Bill Arends at 612-866-0251. No experience necessary.**



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Masthead Photo: Twin City Lines PCC No. 322 was built in 1946 by the St. Louis Car Company. It was sold in 1953 and served on the Newark Subway line and, later still, on Cleveland's Shaker Heights line. After an 8-year restoration it returned to service in 2000 in almost like-new condition, a credit to MSM's shop crew led by George Isaacs. (Mike Helde Photo)

Major Projects Done

“Cottage City Stop. Next stop Cottage City.” You’ve probably heard the Conductor or Motorman announce this as the streetcar approached the William Berry Bridge. You also may have wondered why there is an announcement but never a stop. Or may have thought “We’re approaching the bridge where they toot the whistle. Why do they call it a stop?” The reason is “back in the day” when TCRT operated the streetcars this was a stop. A stop for people who rode the streetcar all the way from Minneapolis to their cottages near Lake Calhoun. In 1882–83 an area south of Lake Calhoun and northwest of Lake Harriet was platted with small lots, 25 feet wide, to attract people who wanted to build summer lake cottages. So TCRT established the *Cottage City Stop*.

For nearly forty years of operation, the Como-Harriet Streetcar Line has acknowledged this stop although there was no visible evidence of a streetcar stop. But that has changed. Thanks to **Davis Gustafson**, son of volunteer **Bruce Gustafson**, an Eagle Scout project has been completed that has turned this into a real streetcar stop. Bruce will be reporting more on the specifics of this project in another article.

Another completed project is the interior of our station at Lake Harriet. After the sanding and refinishing of the floor had been completed by Don Christie Floor Sanding, the furniture was moved back into the station and the shelves restocked with merchandise by Stationmaster **Eric Neumann**, assisted by **Rod Eaton**, **Jim Otto**, and a few others. The final touch to the station was completed by **Mike Buck**, who put together a very nice display in the display case on the station’s south wall to commemorate our 40 years of streetcar operations at Lake Harriet.

Along with our new platform and updated Depot, our gardens have been tilled and flowers planted just waiting for the warm sunny days to show their beauty. Thanks to **Mike Buck** for trimming back the shrubs in the garden area and the brush along the tracks. Also thanks to **Leslie Knapp** for selecting the flowers for the garden and for digging in and getting her fingernails dirty.

Now that we’ve had a couple of weeks of operation we’re ready for our first big weekend of the season, Memorial Day Weekend. A lot of time has been devoted to planning, training and re-certifying by many volunteers to make sure we are ready for this. The weekend includes our 4th annual Classic Car Show on Sunday, May 29th, followed by Early Bird Service starting at 9:00 a.m. on Monday, May 30th to provide Memorial Day shuttle service to Lakewood Cemetery. From Friday through Monday of the Memorial Day weekend there are eight shifts to be filled at our Como-Harriet Line and five shifts at our Excelsior Line. Filling this many shifts requires a lot of volunteers. Thanks to everyone who has signed up to fill these shifts during this very busy weekend. ☺

Bill Arends—General Supt.



Here's the new Cottage City platform. (Bill Arends 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 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
 June—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 June 20, 2011.

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

155 Chaparral Dr.
 Apple Valley, MN 55124-9774

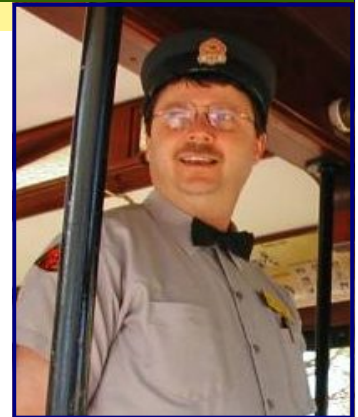
You can send input or enquiries by e-mail to: jvaitkunas@msn.com



From the Front Platform — Thoughts on Our Museum

Dave French — Chair, MSM Board of Directors

Hi everyone! MSM members **Earl** and **Bettye Anderson** have generously donated a copy of *Electric Railways of Minnesota* by MSM member Russell L. Olson. This large 560-page book is the “bible” of electric railway history in our state, with extensive coverage of *all* the systems, big and small, that used electric traction. It was published in 1976 and Russ tells me that only a little over 3,000 copies were printed. This copy is in great condition and still has the original full-color dust jacket. The Andersons requested that



we sell the book and dedicate the proceeds to our General Fund, and we decided to offer it to the membership rather than selling it on eBay. We will sell it you for \$100.00, and I will donate the shipping if you can't pick it up in person. Because many of our members get the *Streetcar Currents* via US Mail, I will withhold sale of the book until June 6 so that everyone has a fair chance at it. You can contact me at (651) 728-2837 or send me an e-mail to drfcd152@aol.com but not before June 6. Thanks Earl and Bettye for your generosity. And by the way, Earl and Bettye are still active volunteers at our CHSL line so if you get a chance be sure to talk to them. I believe Earl is our last Operator who ran TCRT streetcars “for real” as he hired on as a Motorman after World War II. I always enjoy hearing him relate his experiences “back in the day.”

Most of you may not be aware that I check eBay every week for items that may be of use to the MSM collection. I have about 25 different searches I use to hopefully find any collectibles related to Minnesota trolleys, and North Dakota too. I typically send an e-mail to Russ and Aaron with links to the auctions which I think may be of interest. Of course, MSM already has a large collection and usually only about 20% of the items I send them is something we need. Most of the items I find are slides, photos, and postcards. It occurs to me that some of you might be looking on eBay for Minnesota streetcar items and I certainly don't want to bid against our own membership. If you are eyeing an eBay item I invite you to send me an e-mail to drfcd152@aol.com and I can let you know if the item is something I will be bidding on for the Museum.

As reported by **Chris Heck** on page four, we have a tremendous class of new Operators for 2011. Chris is our Museum's Superintendent of Training and he reports that we have 18-19 trainees at CHSL and 11-12 trainees at ESL. This is a tremendous opportunity for MSM to add to our ranks of active volunteers and a large challenge as well. I salute all of the trainers who are working with this class and a special thanks to Chris for keeping all of this training organized. You may not be an “official” trainer at MSM but all of our crew members have an important role to play. As these new people move on to revenue training you will probably be working with one or more of them this summer. Your friendliness, patience, and willingness to answer questions and provide guidance and advice will go a long way toward making a “rookie” into a successful crew member, this year and into the future. Think back to your first year and all the help you received from the “veterans.” When **Carl Barthelemy** and I trained in 1998 we were the only two new guys at CHSL that year. There was a large group from ESL that started at CHSL and then completed their training in Excelsior. I remember how nice everyone was to me during that first year and

(Continued on bottom of next page)



MSM Historian's Update — We make Minnesota's Electric Railway History Come Alive!

Aaron Isaacs — *MSM Historian and Photo Archivist*

On May 9th Jim Vaitkunas, Bill Graham and I drove to Overland Park, Kansas to pick up the collection of longtime member **Jim Kreuzberger**, who passed away this year. There were over 40 boxes of books, photos, models and records. Kreuzberger was born in Duluth in 1914 and was a lifelong trolley and railfan. For many decades he had researched the history of the Duluth Street Railway. His collection included a trove of Duluth streetcar photos that are new to the MSM collection. There are also six boxes of DSR corporate records and track diagrams.



Jim Kreuzberger in 1933 in front of Duluth Central High School, wearing his Duluth Street Railway Conductor's uniform.

Kreuzberger travelled widely photographing trains and trolleys across North America. Because the MSM collection policy limits acquisitions to Minnesota streetcars and interurbans, it has always been our practice to donate non-Minnesota photos to other appropriate rail museums and historical societies. That task has been completed.

We want to thank Doris Kreuzberger, Jim's widow, for generously donating the collection. We told her from the start that the non-Minnesota items would be offered for sale to benefit the museum and she was fully supportive of that. To date, **Bruce Gustafson** has sold \$1,400 worth of items at a local train show. ☺



Photo of Jim taken in 1996 at the controls of Waterloo, Cedar Falls & Northern Rwy. streetcar No. 381 on the Midwest Electric Railway at Mt. Pleasant, Iowa.



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

Jim Vaitkunas — *MSM Secretary and Superintendent of Operations*

Welcome New Members. We offer a big **WELCOME** to the MSM family to the following new members: **Don Nielson, Steve Simon, Stuart Cohen, Ashley Todd, Don Sundell, Don Fralick, Hoff Heiberg,** and **Jeff Anderson.** ☺

Cottage City Stop Grand Opening (Again) — by Bruce Gustafson

After a hiatus of several decades, an abandonment and at least two major track rehabilitation programs, the Cottage City stop is once again an operating location on the ex-Twin Cities Lines track where passengers can board or alight. The "new" stop is a result of an Eagle Scout project lead by Davis Gustafson, from BSA Troop 123 of Edina and a volunteer at MSM. The project involved approximately 160-hours of planning, preparation and construction from a number of volunteers, including a couple of MSM members who were standing too close to the construction site and were summarily recruited.

The project team included the following scouts and others: Zach Feige; Bruce Gustafson; Eric Gustafson; Karen Hoops; David Malone; Jim Malone; Pat Malone; Bill Meller; Jane Meller; Cyndi Olson; Michael Pederson; Red Pederson; Eric Schwarzkopf; Michael Sidell; Phil Sidell; Bill Arends: and, Dave Tengden.

For those unfamiliar with the conditions to obtain eagle rank, which is the culmination of a scout's career, the summarized requirements include: a scout to be active; demonstrate the Scout Oath and Law in his daily life; earn 21 merit badges; serve for at least 6 months in a leadership position; and, give leadership to others in a service project.

A special thanks is extended to Keith Anderson, Bill Arends, Rod Eaton, and Aaron Isaacs, without whose patience and guidance the project would not have been possible.

(From the Front Platform Continued from page 2)

that made me determined to come back in 1999 and every year since. I'm sure we can count on all of you to continue the MSM tradition of welcoming and helping our new volunteers.

I am typing this at the George Isaacs Car barn. I was going to help with some training this evening but had to cancel it because of the rain. Let's all hope for better (i.e. warmer and less rainy) weather ahead so we can fill our cars with passengers and continue our mission of entertaining and educating the public about electric railway history. I'll see you on the car! ☺

What's Happening?

May 29	Classic automobile & truck rally at CHSL 12:30 PM to 3:30 PM
May 30	Memorial Day "early bird" service at CHSL starts at 9 AM
June 4	Streetcar cleaning at CHSL starts at 9 AM
June 14	Story Time Trolley at ESL starts at 6:30 PM
June 16	Pajama Party trolley at CHSL starts at 6:30 PM

**Training Update — News about our Museum's Training Program**

Chris Heck — MSM Superintendent of Safety & Training

This spring has been a whirlwind for the MSM Training Department with a largely new staff, an abundance of new operators, and very rainy weather that made scheduling on-the-car training difficult. Due largely to some press coverage in local newspapers, we have one of the largest classes of new operators in many years! Some of these people are existing volunteers who are "upgrading" their credentials to begin operating our historic streetcars, while others are new to the museum altogether.

Training began in late April with a training orientation session held at both our Como-Harriet and Excelsior lines. Later, the trainees studied in groups of 2-4 with our volunteer trainers to learn how to safely and efficiently operate our fleet. With knowledge of the car's equipment and an air brake finesse in hand, our operators then moved on to understudy with a revenue crew and the guiding supervision of the shift foreman. Finally, after all this practice, our new operators demonstrated their skills by undergoing written and operating exams.

By the time you read this, our trainees are in varying stages of certification: some are still practicing during private training sessions; others have moved on to revenue training; and, some have even graduated the program altogether. When you have a chance to work with one of our new operators, please make it a point to welcome them to the organization and thank them for their interest in volunteering. All of us were new here once (some earlier than others!) and we all relied on the kind advice and guidance of our peers to become proficient in operating. I know that our trainees will certainly appreciate you passing on this spirit to them.

So, without further ado, please welcome our new volunteers: **Peter Albrecht, Jeff Anderson, Alan Beck, Jude Chevance, Jessica Clabo, Christine Clayburg, Stuart Cohen, Don Fralick, Ben Franske, Hoff Heiberg, Doug Hill, Alexandra Howes, Kari Kamrin, Mike LaQuey, Don Nielsen, Jeff Odegard, David Pierson, Dick Rach, Jen Schnabel, Trudy Schnorr, Brad Shapiro, Steve Simon, Jesse Starbuck, Don Sundell, Ed Tunney, and Holly Wetzl.** Additionally, please thank the following MSM volunteers for "upgrading" their credentials to operator: **Mark Brothen, Jonathan Knisely, Eric Neumann, and Dick Zawacki.**

I would be remiss if I forgot to thank all of the volunteers who have helped run the training program with me this year. Extra gratitude is due to the training committee, consisting of **Bill Arends, Rod Eaton, Dave French, and Jim Vaitkunas.** Thank you, as well, to the following volunteer trainers who have worked one-on-one with our new trainees: **Keith Anderson, Todd Bender, Mike Buck, Bill Graham, Scott Heiderich, Mike Helde, Dave Higgins, Bob Johnson, Karl Jones, Chip Kempainen, Bruce Kobs, Marv Krafvre, John Prestholdt, and Greg Taylor.**

Finally, I'd like to add that we conduct training all summer long. If you are a current member of the museum who doesn't operate, or have a friend who might want to join our ranks, please contact me at heci-movich@mac.com to set up training. Or, for current operators, we can also do refresher classes on the standard cars or qualify operators on PCC 322. It's all quite painless and we customize training to your schedule. ☺



This photo shows Chris Heck outlining our Operator training program to the new trainees at our Excelsior Streetcar Line on April 30th. TCRT "gate car" No. 1239 is being used as the classroom. (Jim Vaitkunas photo)