

MINNESOTA STREETCAR MUSEUM



Streetcar CURRENTS



September—2011

Minneapolis & Excelsior, Minnesota

Fall is Upon Us

- *Our schedules are reduced after Labor Day, so check out our website for the latest schedule information.*
- *Special Events are coming up in October, November and December.*
- *Please help us promote the special events by distributing the posters and flyers when you get them.*
- *Annual picnic is scheduled for Sunday, September 25th at 1 PM. Mark your calendars and plan to attend.*



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Masthead Photo: Duluth No. 78 gleams in the sun in front of the George Isaacs carbarn in 1990. Now residing on our Excelsior Streetcar Line, Duluth No. 78 ran on CHSL after restoration was completed in 1991. For several years, No. 78 ran on low passenger volume days and on special occasions. No. 78 was moved to Excelsior to provide service when that line was completed in 1991. It went on stand-by status when No. 1239 was finished and placed in service at ESL in 2004.
(George Isaacs photo)

Time Marches On!

Bill Arends—General Supt.

Oh-my-gosh, I thought as I sat down to write my column for this issue of the *Streetcar Currents*. Where has the summer gone? Are we really to the point of only weekend trolley service? Are the days really so short that we shut down at dusk instead of 8:30 PM? Are there really no more Wednesday afternoon shifts? Yes, it's true! Summer is waning, but there's still a lot ahead for us. There's September, October, the entire Halloween and Christmas seasons. But before I we go there, let's reflect on this season thus far.

Let's go back to the beginning of August—the anticipation of the 40th Anniversary Celebration. A celebration that would not have occurred without the planning, preparation and hard work of a lot of people. Thanks to **Rod Eaton** for his countless hours planning, coordinating and getting us set up for the event. Thanks to **Mike Buck** for coordinating and strategically arranging our fleet of 3 streetcars for the optimal photo op and for taking numerous pictures. Thanks to **Karl Jones** for being Foreman and keeping the streetcars running smoothly throughout the afternoon. Thanks to **Bruce Gustafson** and his son **Davis** for setting up and staffing the “flea market” in the car barn. Thanks to **Kathy Kullberg** for getting the treats of cake, ice cream, punch, etc. for all of us to enjoy. Thanks to **Jill Prestholdt** and **Janet Glocker** for standing out in the hot sun serving those treats. Thanks to our Board Chairman, **Dave French** for delivering a short informative and inspirational speech recognizing our founders who made all this possible. But most importantly, thanks to all the people listed in Dave's speech who had the vision, talents and dedication to create this streetcar line. Without them this event could never have happened.

Another event that occurred in August was our Streetcar Camp. At 9 AM six excited campers, ages eight to eleven, met the streetcar at the Linden Hills station eager to learn about streetcars from the early horse-drawn trolleys to the streamlined PCC cars. Head Camp Counselor **Rod Eaton**, assisted by **Bill Hubbard**, **Jim Berry**, **Ben Franske** and me, took them on a tour of the line and explained the signals, operations and targets. They also received instruction on the tracks and switches, in addition to electrical circuits, conductivity and resistance. After a session about the streetcar, including its dimensions and identifying the various parts of the streetcar, the campers were ready for a turn in the Motorman's seat. Each camper got to run the streetcar from both the front and the back, the obvious highlight of the day for the campers. At 1 PM the streetcar, with 6 very happy campers returned to the depot, where each was awarded a certificate of completion and a Minnesota Streetcar Museum patch. Thank you counselors for making this a fun successful event.

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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
Minneapolis, MN 55414-0467
952-922-1096

Streetcar **CURRENTS**
September—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 September 20, 2011.

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 — Thoughts on Our Museum

Dave French — Chair, MSM Board of Directors

Hi Everybody! I want to thank all of the people who worked so hard to make our 40th anniversary celebration on August 6th a big success. We all know that museums and events at museums don't just happen. This event was somewhat complex with the coordination of three streetcars out on the line, invited guests, speeches, refreshments, carbarn tours, a flea market, refreshments and more, all combined with our regular Saturday operations. And of course, you can't have an event of this size without unexpected challenges that were not planned for. Thanks to everyone who worked hard for months to plan and manage the party. Our 40th will be hard to top but I hope I'm still around to celebrate the 50th anniversary in 2021!

I was asked to be master of ceremonies for the celebration and I had to give a speech. We were fortunate to have several members present who were instrumental in getting the streetcar line started at Lake Harriet in 1971, and some of them had been laying the groundwork back to 1962. I decided that my speech would focus on these pioneers who founded the Minnesota Transportation Museum and the Como-Harriet Streetcar Line. The Como-Harriet line would later become MTM's Traction Division and later still, the Minnesota Streetcar Museum. Certainly they were a disparate group of different ages, educations, and occupations, but what did they have in common? I decided that all of them had a lot of "heart." Now we often hear of athletes or teams possessing "heart," but what, exactly, does it mean to have it? How do you describe it? I decided that the group that got 1300 running down that short stretch of track 40 years ago all had these six characteristics:

They had a **dream** of returning TCRT streetcar No. 1300 to running condition and finding someplace to lay track and string overhead trolley wire. We all know that dreams will forever remain in the fantasy stage unless these is a **vision** of how to make the **dream** a reality. Our pioneers hammered together that **vision**.

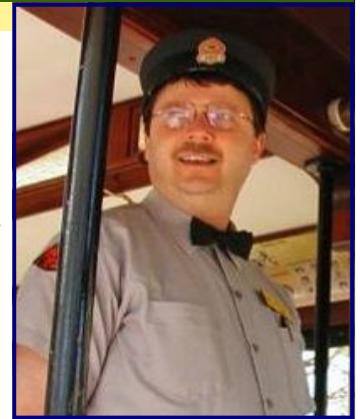
They had **enthusiasm**. They knew very well that they could not go it alone and they had to recruit others to donate time, material, and money. Just like today, donors have to be informed of the **dream** and the **vision** has to be described. This requires a contagious **enthusiasm** to convince them.

They had **imagination**. Certainly none of them had ever started a streetcar museum before. There were no books or classes to tell them how to do it. We can only imagine the innumerable and unexpected problems they came upon. It took **imagination** and lots of thinking outside the box to solve them.

They had **optimism**. All human enterprises will invariably attract the critics and naysayers. I'm sure there were people who said, or at least thought, that this streetcar line idea would never work, would never be a success, and would never last. Our pioneers had the **optimism** to keep the **dream** alive.

They had the **commitment** to keep at it over the long-term. They weren't satisfied with just one streetcar, or to just run the car with a gas powered generator, or with track only to 42nd St, or the original carbarn, or a platform with no depot. They had the **commitment** to keep expanding their **dream** and **vision**, and kept using their **enthusiasm**, **imagination**, and **optimism** over many years to make MSM what it is today.

(Continued on bottom of next page)



SIXTH ANNUAL FAMILY PICNIC SET FOR SEPTEMBER 25TH

Your Museum will be holding its annual picnic on Sunday, September 25th. Start time is 1 PM. Location is the George Isaacs carbarn at Lake Harriet. There will be frequent streetcar service to the carbarn since we'll be running two streetcars that afternoon, as we do most Sunday afternoons. If you plan to attend the picnic, picnic coordinator Dave French would like you to call him (651-728-2837) or send him an e-mail (drfcd152@aol.com) and tell him how many will be in your party (including yourself) and which hot dish/side dish/salad/dessert you'd like to bring. Our picnics are always well attended and a lot of fun. We hope that you'll mark your calendars right now and plan to attend.



August 6th—Photo Ops



(Above Left) Frank Sandberg is chatting with Aaron Isaacs while Russ Olson talks with Judy Sandberg. (Mike Buck photo)

(Above Right) Nice line-up of streetcars, eh? (Jim Vaitkunas photo)

(Right) Karl Jones did a great job in dispatching the streetcars. (Rod Eaton photo)

(Left) Kathy Kullberg and Rod Eaton get ready for the group photo. (Mike Buck photo)



(Time Marches On! Continued from page 1)

One summer event that mostly goes unnoticed but should not go unrecognized is the controlling of the grass and weeds along our right-of-way and in the garden area. It goes unnoticed because Mike Buck is out early in the morning with his weed whacker and the speeder keeping the area looking neat. Mike's countless hours doing this important and necessary job are greatly appreciated. The next time you're at the station look around at the gardens and admire Mike's contribution.

Finally, to all Foremen and Operators don't forget to contact your crew caller and sign up for the September and October shifts. Help make the scheduler's jobs easier by signing up early. ☺

(Oh! Pioneers! Continued from page 2)

These six characteristics all make up the "heart" of our pioneer members, not just individually but working together as a team. Let us all thank and salute these men and woman who made MSM a reality and are still with us today, and fondly remember those who have passed on. And in case you were thinking that the foregoing is merely an academic analysis of the MSM of 40 years ago, I look at the over 100 active volunteers we have today and I see the exact same six characteristics possessed by our pioneers, all of you have a lot of heart! ☺

What's Happening?

- September 2 Last day of regularly scheduled weeknight service at CHSL
- September 5 Labor Day ops at both ESL and CHSL.
- September 10 Excelsior's Apple Day festival. ESL operations start at 9 AM
- September 11 Last Sunday of regular scheduled operations at ESL
- September 25 MSM Annual family picnic

Those Early Years

To close out our 40th anniversary celebration coverage, Scott Heiderich did some reminiscing about the goings on in 1971, that first year of operation at Lake Harriet. Here's what Scott remembers.

Streetcar No. 1300 was moved to the Como-Harriet site on June 9th (1971) from the Minnesota Transfer Railway roundhouse in St. Paul. The west 42nd street crossing was installed July 17th to the 20th. MTM Annual Picnic was held in the park at Lake Harriet on July 25th. MTM membership at that time was 127 as of Sept. 19th as printed in the *Minnegazette*. Fourteen-hundred (1400) feet of track laid by the opening day. Over 13,000 passengers rode on the line from August 28th to Sept 20th, 1971. MTM held another picnic and cleanup day on October 31st at the carbarn: hot dogs, pop, beer (*No rule G at the time, apparently—Ed.*), potato salad, the works! ☺



When MTM consisted only of CHSL, here's the Board in 1978 (L to R): **Ken Snyder, Frank Sandberg, Dave Norman, Scott Heiderich, Steve Olson, Bill Graham, and Bob Macaie.**



That's **Bill Graham**, at the rear Platform of No. 1300 in 1990, talking with some interested passengers, one of whom is now one of our newest Operators, **Ben Franske**. (*Franske photo*)



Here's Aaron Isaacs posing by No. 265 in 1988. (*Franske photo*)



Louis Hoffman (left) is seen here discussing matters with the **Blair Dollery** and **Bill Cordes**. This photo was taken in 1991 or 1992.

MORE MERCHANDISE NOTES

GOOD PHOTOS NEEDED

Want to be part of an electrifying experience? I am currently looking for photographs of each of our cars to go on electric light wall switch plates--see examples on the left.

The picture should be fairly simple--only one car and no people. Please submit to storekeeper@msmuseum.org
Charles Barthold — *MSM Merchandise Manager*

