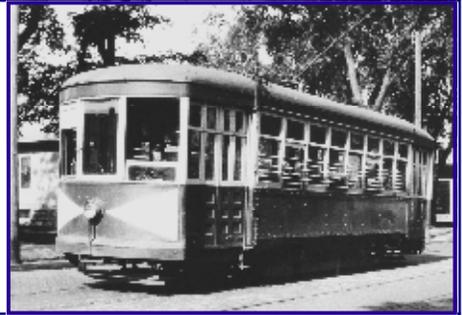


MINNESOTA STREETCAR MUSEUM



Streetcar CURRENTS



Mar-Apr 2012

Minneapolis & Excelsior, Minnesota

Its Spring—Time to get ready for the 2012 Season

- *It's not too late to make a donation to our 2011-2012 annual appeal*
- *Consider becoming more involved in your Museum's operations and administration*
- *Get Your uniform out and get it ready for the coming season*
- *Renew your membership as soon as you get the reminder notice—save your Museum some money*
- *Recertification instructions will be published on or about April 10th*



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Masthead. Here's Winona No. 10 sometime in the early 1930s. Basic body color is orange with white or light cream window band and a red stripe just above and below the windows. The car is headed towards us but the doors nearest the camera have been permanently closed and sealed since ca. 1916. While the cars were delivered capable of two-man operation, they were always one-man cars. (MSM Photo Archive)

The First Signs of Spring

Bill Arends—General Supt.

For many, one of the first signs of spring is seeing a robin in their yard. Or maybe the sight of a tulip, crocus or poppy peeking out of the ground. And for others, such as me, it's seeing the big yellow streetcar outside the Isaacs carbarn ready to go. On Saturday, March 17th, I saw my first sign of spring.

But the sight of TCRT No. 1300 parked outside the carbarn in operating condition came with a lot of hard work. After an electrical short in one of the ceiling lights caused a small fire while running during the Holly Trolley, it was necessary to take the streetcar out of service and replace all the wiring in the ceiling. A project much easier to write about than to accomplish. It required removing all the ceiling moldings and ceiling panels to gain access to the electrical wires. It also required removing other moldings in the front and back of the streetcar, as well as the pole that holds the rear farebox. Considering this had not been done since long before 1300 was removed from service in 1954, nothing came apart easily. But thanks to a hard working crew of **Jim Willmore, Walt Strobel, John Prestholdt, Ben Franske, Matt Leibel, Dennis Stephens** and **Bob Smith**, under the direction of **Karl Jones**, the old cloth-wrapped wiring has been replaced, the light fixtures all cleaned and repaired, and the ceiling reinstalled and repainted. A few more minor touches and No. 1300 will be ready for another season. (See photo on page 3—Ed.)



Before moving on to 2012, one last look back at 2011. At the annual meeting on March 17th, a member asked me about ridership numbers. During the past 5 years at our Como-Harriet Line, we have seen the ridership remain relatively flat, with 2007 being lowest with 29,722 passengers and 2009 the highest with 34,012 riders. Last year we carried 33,438 passengers, which was an increase of about 4% over 2010. Most of this increase is the result of special events. Our Ghost Trolleys carried 1,519 *frightened* passengers. The PJ Trolleys and Trick r' Trolley had 511 passengers. The Murder Mystery trolleys drew in 152 passengers. On the two days we held Farmer Ken's Pumpkin Patch we carried 1,169 passengers. And the Holly Trolley had 750 passengers.

At our Excelsior Streetcar line we carried a total of 6,223 passengers in 2011 compared to 7,398 in 2010. The decrease can be attributed to the loss of the Thursday Farmers' Market next to our Water Street stop. The ridership on Thursdays dropped a total of 1,157, which is 98% of the total reduction in ridership from 2010 to 2011. The Halloween Trolley with 1,715 passengers and the Christmas Trolley with 1,311 have been very successful, accounting for over 40% of our ridership on our Excelsior line.

(Continued on bottom of page 2)

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
 March-April—2012

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 April 20, 2012.

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

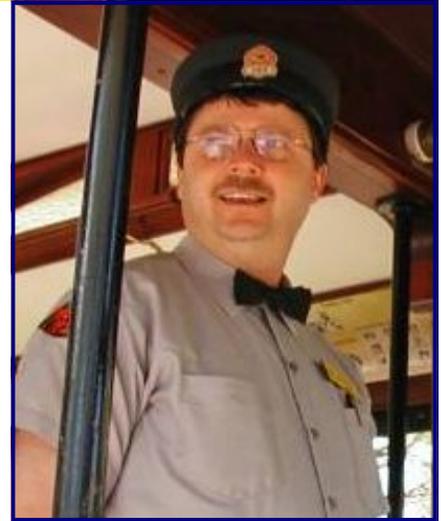
Good afternoon everyone and welcome aboard car 1300! For your safety please remain in your seats while the car is moving and keep your arms and heads inside the car as there are some tree branches pretty close to the track...

Whoops! I was looking forward to that first shift in 2012. I know many of you are too. And while we are thinking about it, let us all resolve to make safety the first and foremost rule in the shop, on the track, and on the streetcar. The railroads have always had a rule stating that when in doubt as to the correct procedure, the safe course must be taken. Let's continue to maintain MSM's enviable safety record for another 40 years!

I want to thank everyone who attended our annual meeting. We currently have just over 300 members and I think having about 40 in attendance is pretty good as annual meetings are typically not a big draw in most organizations. For those of you who could not attend you missed a fascinating presentation by Aaron Isaacs showing dozens of photos of the smaller electric railways of Minnesota, many of which have not yet appeared in Twin City Lines, so I hope you will consider attending next year. I was especially grateful for hearing many good suggestions from our members. I made brief notes about all of them. Someone suggested that we consider staging a "Toga Trolley." I wrote that down but did not record any details or the originator of that idea, probably because I was distracted picturing the late John Belushi in the movie "Animal House." If you made that suggestion, please contact me with some details! I will be discussing some of the other ideas received with the Board, museum officers, and in future issues of our Museum's newsletter, the *Streetcar Currents*.

Since February 13th I have been living in Crookston, Minnesota working a temporary job. Crookston is about 300 miles northwest of the Twin Cities. I have no idea how long I will be up here but I probably will not be able to spend as many hours at MSM as I would like. I will do my best to keep up with MSM business via e-mail and phone (drfcd152@aol.com or 651-728-2837). I am behind on writing my thank you letters for your many

generous donations to the Annual Appeal but I am working on them and you will be getting your letter soon. I look forward to seeing many of you at recertification! 🌱



(The First Signs of Spring Continued from page 1)

So as our regular ridership has remained flat, it also has remained steady. But it's our special events that continue to contribute more and more. If anyone has any ideas for additional events, we're always interested in adding something new. Please contact me or **Rod Eaton** with your ideas.

In closing I'm pleased to recognize two of our long term volunteers. This year **Bill Graham** and **Phil Epstein** move into the category of 40-year volunteers. They will be joining the elite group made up of **Dave Norman**, **Jim Harrison**, **Russ Olson**, **Scott Heiderich**, **Keith Lindberg** and **John Nordale** who already have the gold name badge. Men, thank you for your years of commitment to our museum. 🌱



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

John Prestholdt — MSM Shop Foreman

With all our recent warm weather I am frequently asked when we will start operating our streetcars, and: "Will we be running next weekend?" Well, we need to recertify Operators, and recertification is not a shop function, but we do need to get the cars ready for that, as well as new operator training. The annual maintenance has taken a little longer than originally planned because we were forced to re-wire the ceiling lights in No. 1300, but we are getting this process completed. We have completed most of the work on No. 1300 (maybe a special picture supplement later) and we are now getting to work

on the other wooden car, Duluth No. 265.

Along with our car maintenance we have been looking into adding a bathroom to the maintenance barn. This is not a small project since almost all of our floor space is in use. To add this bathroom we will need to get our main shop electrical panels moved and redesign the power circuits in the shop. Yes, I did mean multiple panels and some crowded circuits that need professional help. The Board of Directors has approved the expenses (roughly \$7,000) and we hope the project will be completed shortly.

Now for a smooth and trouble-free operating season. 🌱



The ceiling lights are back in service in No. 1300. The top ceiling panels have been repainted and now the crew is starting to paint the side ceiling panels. Shown in the photo are (left to right) **Bob Smith, Karl Jones** and **Walt Strobel**.



Major electrical work needs to be done before we can build the bathroom in the Isaacs carbarn. Here's a photo of the new main shop panel. To the left you can see electrical panels and disconnects mentioned above that'll have to be removed to make way for the bathroom.



The photographer caught the Winona No. 10 restoration crew on break on 3/27/12 in Excelsior. From left to right: **Scott Ingram, Dick Zawacki, Steve Mages, Ken Albrecht, Jim Peschong, Marsh Ginthner, Marv Krafve** and **Jim Willmore**. **George Ittner** was in the area but eluded the photographer.



Here's a shot of one of the ends of Winona No. 10. The front part of the platform is bolted to the platform supports and the metal front bumper is screwed into that piece. You can't see them but the mortise holes are in for the platform's corner and window posts. (Photos by Jim Vaitkunas)

What's Happening?

April	Operator recertification and new Operator training schedule will be announced in early April
May 3	Start of Thursday afternoon operations at Excelsior Streetcar Line
May 5	Start of weekend operations at Como-Harriet Streetcar Line and at Excelsior Streetcar Line
May 25	Start of daily operations at the Como-Harriet Streetcar Line
May 27	Classic car rally at CHSL starts at 1 PM
May 28	Memorial Day operations at ESL & CHSL. CHSL early bird service starts at 9:30AM

**MSM News & Views — News of our Museum's Administration and Membership**Jim Vaitkunas — *MSM Corporate Secretary and Superintendent of Operations*

Donations Received. Our annual appeal kicked-off in mid-November and we've had a terrific response from our members and friends. Here are the members and friends who have responded generously to our 2010-2011 MSM Annual Appeal since the last report in the January-February issue of the **Streetcar CURRENTS**.

General Fund: Bruce Kobs, Bill Herzog, Bettye & Earl Anderson, Jim Otto, Brian Krysinski, John Stewart, Jim & Sue Willmore, and Charles Welling.

Carbarn Improvement Fund: Mona & Aaron Isaacs.

Winona No. 10 Restoration Fund: Janet & George Ittner and Greg Taylor.

Our donations usually slow down around February 1st as you can see. But we still had an excellent response from you for this annual appeal. Many thanks to all donors for your generosity.

New Members. We had several new members join the MSM family in the last couple of months. We'd like to welcome: Ross Hammond and Rod Peterson. Recently elected Museum Director, Ben Franske also upgraded his membership to the lifetime level.

Membership Renewals. We don't really have the time to do an analysis of how much it costs the Museum to send out second and third notices for membership renewals. But it does cost us extra, both in terms of time and postage. We don't want to lose you as a member, so we send to you renewal notices and reminders. But it would really help us out if you sent in your renewal as soon as it's received. Also, joining for the two-year period saves us time and postage as well. Think about when it's time to renew your membership.

Did You know? That our Museum's website contains a wealth of information on how it is administered and governed. Go to TrolleyRide.org, click on the "More About our Museum" button on the left side of our home page and then on the "Organizational Documents" link. All the Board of Director meeting minutes, annual member meeting minutes and presentations and financial reports going back to 2005 are in this section of the website. Also, all of the Museum's planning and policy documents are in this section. All the original IRS forms that we submitted to obtain our Museum's 501c3 status are on the website. Most of it is pretty dull reading and the numbers might seem daunting. Short biographical summaries of all our streetcars are also on our website. Remember that all of our Museum's vital information is available to you.

Also on our website are other important documents such as our rule book and other operations documents and rosters. Back issues of our Museum's newsletter, the *Streetcar Currents* and of the photo supplements are on the website going all the way back to 2003 when the newsletter started to be published as a PDF document as well as in printed mode. Check it out sometime. 

Ray Norton RIP

Ray Norton was a good citizen, a railfan and an unparalleled model builder. He introduced me (Bill Graham) to narrow gauge railroads when I was a young teenager in the early 1950's. His captivating model of a Rio Grande passenger train, built from scratch, inspired me to build my own model trains. Years later when I worked for Hennepin County's railroad authority, Ray allowed me to borrow and display his seven-car Hiawatha passenger train now displayed at the Twin City Model Railroad Club in St. Paul. It probably is the finest railroad replica ever produced in Minnesota. Ray helped with the rescue and preservation of TCRT No. 1300 and was among the founders of our Lake Harriet exhibit site. He was a fountain of artifacts, photos and lore on Minnesota railroads and a contributor to our various restoration projects. He operated our streetcars at Lake Harriet for many years and regularly volunteered at the model railroad club. Ray always had a smile and a warm word for young visitors that helped them feel welcome on board our trains and trolleys. Ray was 91, and we will miss him. **Bill Graham**

Ray and I go back to the late 1940s, when he had a hobby shop in downtown Minneapolis. If memory serves, he was in the old Minneapolis daily times building. He was pretty much all O-scale. I remember he had an interesting way about him. I enjoyed visiting with him and was also lucky to see him when he volunteered for our streetcar museum. **Bob Johnson**