

MINNESOTA STREETCAR MUSEUM



Streetcar CURRENTS



June 2013

Minneapolis & Excelsior, Minnesota

The 2013 Season is Upon Us!

- *Have you taken a ride on our Excelsior Streetcar Line? If not, plan to spend a pleasant weekend afternoon in beautiful Excelsior.*
- *Tell your friends and neighbors about MSM. Encourage them to come to Lake Harriet or Excelsior and take a nice streetcar ride.*
- *Consider becoming more involved in your Museum's operations and administration.*
- *Renew your membership as soon as you get the reminder notice.*



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Masthead. TCRT No. 1239 is seen here at the Water Street Platform of our Museum's Excelsior Streetcar Line. Built in 1907, No. 1239 was one of the last cars built at TCRT's 31st Street Shops in South Minneapolis. In 1953 it was sold and used as a cabin until our Museum rescued and restored it to its "gate car" configuration. All three of MSM's Twin City "standard" streetcars started out looking like No. 1239. (Jim Vaitkunas photo)

A Family Affair

Bill Arends—General Supt.

We've all heard the old saying "What goes around comes around." I hope, for the Minnesota Streetcar Museum this is true. I think it may be.

I think most of you know **Bill Graham**. Bill is a loooooong time volunteer. Over 40 years of dedicated service to our museum. Recently Bill asked me if it would be OK if he moved the streetcars out of the car barn and used the speeder so he and his grandson, Liam (age 6) could clean up the trash that had accumulated along the right-of-way over the winter. No time will I turn down a request like that.

On a very beautiful day in early May (you may remember we had very few beautiful days in early May) Bill and Liam took the speeder down the line and picked up over two large bags of trash. Volunteering like this doesn't fall into our laps too often. And all it cost us was Liam raiding the refrigerator in the car barn for a cookie.

During our over 40 years of operating our demonstration streetcar lines there have been many family themes running through our operations. Probably the most obvious is the Isaacs Family. Thanks to one of our founding fathers, **George Isaacs** we are operating historic streetcars along an original right-of-way between Lake Harriet and Lake Calhoun. Carrying on this tradition is George's son **Aaron Isaacs** who, as the museum's Historian, Twin City Lines Editor, Foreman, Operator, Board Member, Grant writer, etc., has been active for nearly 40 years.

For many years **John** and **Kathy Prestholdt** were mainstays on the operating roster. Until Kathy's passing in 2006 John, as Foreman and Kathy, as an Operator on his crew, would fill half of many shifts at the CHSL. John continues to be an active Foreman and Operator at both of our lines as well as the Shop Foreman at CHSL and the Head Cashier.

John Cochran, a volunteer since 1991, along with his son, David and daughter Elizabeth, for a number of years frequently filled 3/4ths of one of the difficult to fill second shifts on weekends. Even though jobs, etc., have gotten in the way of the younger generation, John continues to be an active operator.

Bruce Gustafson, Foreman, Operator, Car Cleaning Foreman and Superintendent of Operations, has also made volunteering a family affair. His sons Davis and Eric have both completed projects for our Museum working toward becoming Eagle Scouts. They have also been members of the Car Cleaning Crew, as has Bruce's wife Cindi.

Another long time volunteer, **Jerry Olsen** is a Foreman, Operator, Crew Caller for charters and a very frequent Foreman on charters at CHSL. Along with Jerry, his wife, **Muriel**, is the Charter Agent scheduling and coordinating our charters for both



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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
 June—2013

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, 2013.

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

13326 Huntington Lane
 Apple Valley, MN 55124-9481

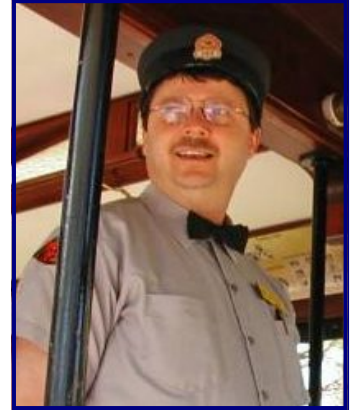
You can send input or enquiries by e-mail to: jvaitkunas@msn.com



From the Front Platform — Thoughts on Our Museum

Dave French — Chair, MSM Board of Directors

Hi everyone! You might recall that in the December, 2012 issue of the Currents I wrote about the problem of volunteers waiting till the last minute to sign up for shifts at our two streetcar lines, which results in our superintendents having to send out urgent e-mail appeals asking you to sign up to take a shift out of the dreaded “red zone.” A red-zone shift is one where we do not have the minimum number of volunteers to run the car as scheduled. I asked all of you to make a special effort to sign up earlier for shifts, and also to consider working one or more additional shifts per month in 2013.



Well, from what I've seen in MSM e-mail traffic this month this problem still persists. I've seen several e-mail appeals regarding red-zone shifts. Most have been filled but the second shift at ESL on Memorial Day was cancelled because we did not have a Foreman. On Memorial Day weekend I worked five shifts on three days at CHSL. The weather was less than ideal as it was cloudy, cold, and windy all three days. And yet when we arrived at the station for the first shift on Saturday there were well over 20 people waiting to ride the car. We had 353 riders that day, which is less than what we normally expect on a Memorial Day weekend Saturday but again, the weather was very unpleasant. Many passengers on all three days told me how much they appreciated that we were running, especially the families with little kids. Think of the alternative outcome for these riders: they show up to ride and a sign tells them sorry, we're not running today. How many would take a chance and come back again?

Last year just over 25% of our operating volunteers worked two or fewer shifts. Meanwhile, an even smaller proportion are working over 50% of the shifts. During my five shifts last weekend, most of the crew were senior volunteers who work a high proportion of the shifts. As I stated in my December column, we have done a great job of training new volunteers over the past few years, but we still cannot fill shifts in advance and shifts are still being cancelled for lack of crew members. So, once again, I challenge you. Can you work two or even one more shift each month? Can you plan ahead and sign up for shifts right now in June, July, and August? This is all I have to say this month, I don't want to distract from this very important issue!

Our Museum's next Board of Director's meeting is scheduled for Saturday, June 8th starting at 9:00 AM at the Excelsior Streetcar Line carbarn in Excelsior, Minnesota. Here is your chance to see the up-close progress on the Winona No. 10 restoration. **Ken Albrecht** will be there to give us a tour and answer questions. See you there! ☺

(A Family Affair Continued from page 1)

our railway lines. For over 5 years Jerry has been accompanied by his grandson, **Andy Jacob**, on many of his shifts. Well, his grandson has grown up and will soon be entering training to become an operator. Sometime this summer we'll probably see Jerry and Andy filling half the crew on a shift or a full charter shift.

We really are a family affair. Both providing enjoyable rides to the families who ride with us regularly and as a way for parents and grandparents to give their kids and grandkids an opportunity to become volunteers. Jerry and Andy are proof that what goes around comes around. ☺

Winona No. 10 Restoration is Coming Along

The hard working bunch of volunteers working on the Winona No. 10 restoration out at the Excelsior car barn have been making steady, measured progress since we last reported on No. 10. In the last couple of months work has focused on installing the folding doors and the operating mechanism for them. Winona No. 10 was a very simple streetcar. The Wisconsin Railway, Light and Power Company (the company operating the streetcar system in Winona in 1914, the year No. 10 was delivered) was a frugal company and to save money, both in purchasing and maintaining the new streetcar, they specified manually-operated doors. Luckily back in the late 1990s, shortly after the Museum obtained No. 10, we found a set of plans for the door operating mechanism for No. 10 in the St. Louis Car Company's archives now in the possession of Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri. These plans proved a godsend in restoring the door operating mechanism. The photos below show the current progress on rebuilding the doors on No. 10.



Front View. It looks like the next step on the front end work is putting the metal sheets on the front of No. 10. Note the front piece resting on the floor leaning against the right side of the car.

You can barely see it, but look closely right below the left side of the bumper—there's a silver colored rod going to the door-opening mechanism. The whole door operating mechanism is a wild array of rods, bell cranks and other metal pieces, the end result being when the operator opens the doors, the steps fold down at the same time. Pretty slick, eh?

Below. Here are some of the No. 10 restoration crew working on the doors. The doors will fit and operate very well despite the fact that, try as they might, the crew could not make the carbody exactly square. It's evident that there were several streetcar versus automobile accidents over the years No. 10 was in service on Winona's streets that resulted in both ends of No. 10 being very slightly out of square and plumb.



Left. Close-up of the entrance/exit doors which can be opened independent of each other. The door on the right is for boarding passengers while the door on the left is for alighting passengers. There is a single set of folding doors on the same side at the opposite end of the car that can open but do not have interior controls. These doors were permanently closed shortly after No. 10 went into service in 1914 as No. 10 never operated as a two-man streetcar.

No. 10 is a double-ended streetcar so a duplicate set of motor controls and door controls are located at the opposite end of the car. No. 10 will have "walk-over" seats so a new ritual will occur as the car reverses direction during a run—passengers will be asked to flip over their seat backs.

What's Happening?

- June 5 Como-Harriet Streetcar Lines begins Wednesday afternoon service (1-4 PM)
- June 11 Excelsior Streetcar Line Story Time Trolley (5-7 PM)
- June 20 Como-Harriet Streetcar Line PJ Trolley
- June 22 Como-Harriet Streetcar Line Moonlight Trolley Ride



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

Jim Vaitkunas — MSM Corporate Secretary

Donations Received. We are still receiving much needed donations to our Museum's annual appeal. Over the last two months, we've received donations from the following people.

General Fund: Don Nielsen; Gary Gustafson & Dawn Carlson; Mary Ann Corbey in memory of MTM/MSM pioneer and late husband, Gene Corbey; Douglas Beedon; and, Bill & Rose Arends.

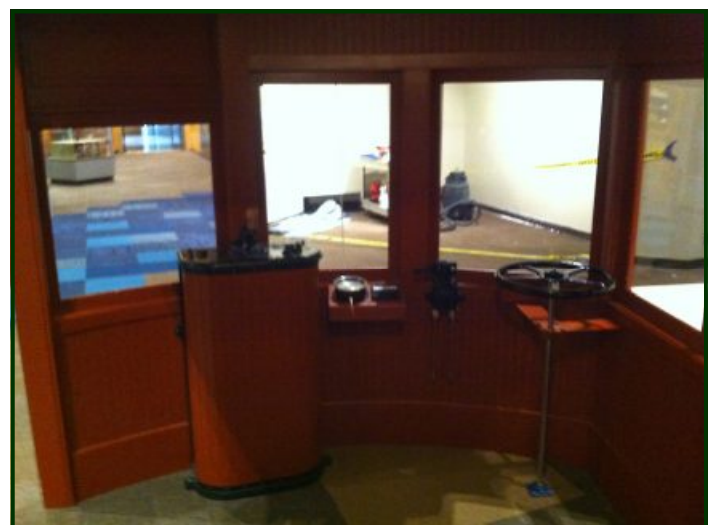
We extend our grateful thanks to all who have donated to our Museum.

New Members. We've had several new members join the MSM family since you received the last issue of this newsletter: Joel Shuweiler; Art Ruder; Craig Canada; Roger Fossen; Brandon Murphy; Chuck Weber; Jennifer Labadie; Jim Moe; Lenn Nelsen. Welcome all of you to our MSM family, folks! BTW, all of our new members, except for one, are in training to become streetcar Operators and some have already been certified. ☺

PHOTO OP



Above. Metro Transit's Green Line (a/k/a the Central Corridor) construction is coming along. Left photo shows the complicated track layout at 11th Avenue (Minneapolis Junction). Photo on right shows the track on Washington Avenue on the UofM campus. (Two Photos by John DeWitt)



Above. The Minnesota History Center museum in St. Paul opened a new exhibit on life in Minnesota entitled: **Then and Now**. One of the exhibits is a Twin City Lines streetcar replica reminiscent of a TCL lightweight that were built in the 1920s. Our Museum provided assistance to the Minnesota Historical Society by providing some artifacts that went into the streetcar exhibit. (Two Photos by Aaron Isaacs)