

MINNESOTA STREETCAR MUSEUM



Streetcar CURRENTS



September 2015

Minneapolis & Excelsior, Minnesota



Bill the Motorman Says:

- *Make plans to join us for a streetcar ride over the Memorial Day weekend.*
- *We need your help with various MSM projects. Contact **Jim Berry**, MSM's Volunteer Coordinator for more information: 952-922-2257.*
- *Mark your calendars now for our family picnic on 9/27. See first hand the progress we made on the carbarn addition.*



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Masthead. *It's a warm and sunny day in June 2006, and Duluth No. 265 is shown departing the Linden Hills station on its northbound run while TCRT PCC No. 322 is headed away from the photographer and approaching the West 42nd Street crossing. BTW, No. 265 will be 100 years old in a few months. (Jim Vaitkunas Photo)*

Holy Cow! What a Year!

Bill Arends—General Supt.

If I may borrow a phrase from Halsey Hall: HOLY COW! I can't believe we're in the last stretch of another season. It seems like only yesterday we were recruiting new volunteers to operate our streetcars. We met in the Isaacs carbarn, in a cold streetcar, talking to, encouraging and trying to woo people to become operators. Holy Cow! We were successful.

Let's compare our success of 2014 to 2015. In 2014 we had a total of three new operators who completed training. Fast forward to 2015, of these three trainees, one operated 13 hours in 2014 and no hours in 2015. One operated 26 hours in 2014 and has again operated 26 hours in 2015. A nice contribution. But, **Jerry Petersen**, operated 102.25 hours in 2014 and has already operated 84.50 hours in 2015. So, thank you Jerry, 2014 was a very good recruiting season.

So what happened in 2015? I can only say WOW! We've had, from my unaudited numbers, 26 people who have completed training and have operated at least one shift. Some many, many more than one shift. As of the writing of this article the following new Operators have operated 20 or more hours since getting certified. Thank you to **Art Abrahams, Carmelle Abron, Tom Dulebohn, Jeff Ersbo, Curt Henry, Rich Holz, Karen Kertzman, David McCollum, Ben Porter, Gary Reins, Tyler Schow** and **John Thompson**. Thank you all for keeping many shifts out of the dreaded "Red Zone." And thank you **Ben Porter** for 80 volunteer hours and **John Thompson** for volunteering for 63 hours.

As long as we're comparing numbers, let's compare ridership statistics to last year. Oh, how we all get into number comparisons and want to read on. Last year was a very good year. At this time last year our passenger count at our CHSL was 23,649. This year it is 21,435, over a 9% drop in ridership. May started off badly with 3 Sundays cut short by rain. Another week in August was severely hurt by rain with Sunday and Saturday shutting down by 5:30 PM and Tuesday and Wednesday afternoon being a total wash-out. Oh the vagaries of the weather.

And then there's the negative side of numbers. I guess zero isn't a negative, except when it's a number associated with operating hours... This year 15 returning Operators re-certified but have not yet operated even one shift. Another nine people have operated less than five hours. But then, 11 percent of our Operators and Foremen have operated 55 hours or more. Thank you **Warren Ahlgren, Patrick Desbonnet, Rod Eaton, Bill Graham, Ron Neitzel, Jim Kertzman, Jerry Petersen, Ben Porter, Dick Rach, Joel Schuweiler, John Thompson** and **Bill Way**. You've kept us out of a lot of Red Zones. If you're an Operator or Foreman who re-certified or trained this year and are in the former group, there's still September and October to help keep us out of that Red Zone.

Even if I don't see you at the controls, I hope to I see you on the line. 🌱



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 interurban 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 are:

P.O. Box 16509
 Minneapolis, MN 55416-0509
 952-922-1096

Streetcar CURRENTS
 September 2015

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 edition of the **Streetcar CURRENTS** is September 20, 2015.

Please send items to the 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

Aaron Isaacs — MSM Board Chair

Car barn construction progress. Since the last issue of the *Currents*, the car barn addition has progressed considerably: the building is now fully enclosed; the roof is finished; the wall insulation and steel exterior sheathing are on; the exterior overhead door has been installed; the two interior walls separating the speeder shed, shop annex and office/library are framed; interior sheet-rocking is half done; the two new doorways between the addition and the existing car barn have been opened up; and, by the time you read this, most of the wiring will be done. (See photos on next page—Ed.) The underground cistern to collect roof runoff goes in before Labor Day, along with rain gutters and a retaining wall to shore-up the slope at the northeast corner of the building.




Quite a few MSM members have volunteered to help the workmen at the site. There's plenty of loading, unloading and carrying to do. Trucks can't unload easily at the car barn because of the low trolley wire clearance and limited maneuvering space. Instead, the trucks have delivered materials at 42nd Street and Queen Avenue and we'd haul them up to the car barn on a speeder flat. Having volunteers available has speeded the work and saved lots of money. Since the last *Currents*, thanks to **Bill Arends, Jim Berry, David Gepner, Dave Higgins, Russ Isbrandt, Karl Jones, Rick Krenske, Jim Otto, Tom Schramm, Steve Simon** and **Sam VanTassell**. Thanks also to **Dennis Stephens** and **Jim Willmore** for their input on the building design.

Members should know that this project would not have been possible without **Glen Sandness**, our volunteer construction manager. A general contractor for 35 years, Glen designed the structural details of the wood-framed building, hired and supervised the contractors, procured the materials and has spent many hours actually working on the construction crew. Because of his efforts, the project is coming in under budget.

The project has yielded an unexpected dividend. The large single piece of rubber membrane for the roof had to be trimmed to size, yielding a 70 by 2 foot leftover strip. **Rick Krenske**, who was on the roofing crew that day, had the brilliant idea to install it over the juncture between the shop and ready barn roofs, which has been leaking badly for several years. It only took half an hour to install, and so far appears to have stopped the leaks. It also saved us paying a roofing company for the repairs.

Bookkeeper changing of the guard. **Don Nielsen** has done yeoman service as MSM's Bookkeeper since 2010. It's a big job, takes a lot of time and Don has given us notice that he needs to step down. He has done an excellent job, and really shaped our financial reporting. This year he implemented two important changes: tracking capital investment projects (for example, Winona No. 10 and the car barn addition) separately from regular operations; and, introducing life-cycle cost depreciation, which we hadn't been doing. Thank you, Don for leaving our books in excellent condition. Don's replacement is **Tim Crain**, one of the 2015 class of new Operators at Excelsior. He will work with Don to transition into the bookkeeper job over the next few months.

Reformatted web site. I forgot to mention in a previous issue of the *Currents* that our Webmaster **John DeWitt** and **Rod Eaton** have reformatted the MSM website. It's the same information, but it's now organized in a more logical and user-friendly way. Perhaps the most significant change has been a separate button on the home page for streetcar charters. Charters have become an important revenue source and previously they were buried down a couple of pages. 

Isaacs Car barn Addition Progress

Continuing with our coverage of the work on the George Isaacs carbarn addition, here are some more photos showing the progress.

1—Basic exterior framing is now done. Insulation and the metal exterior will be going on the outside next. (Photo taken on 8/1/15.)

2—The rubber roof is now on and the vents for the interior shop heaters have been routed through the roof.

3—Our volunteers helped with a lot of the work. **Bill Arends** is on the right helping the paid workers with the roof's finishing touches.

4—Metal siding on the east wall is finished. (Photo taken on 8/25/15.)

5—The interior framing is done and drywall being hung. On the right, one of the doors into the shop bay has just been "holed-through."

6—The addition is now finished on the exterior. Inside finishing work is now on-going. (Photo taken on 8/31/15.)



Jim Vaitkunas photo



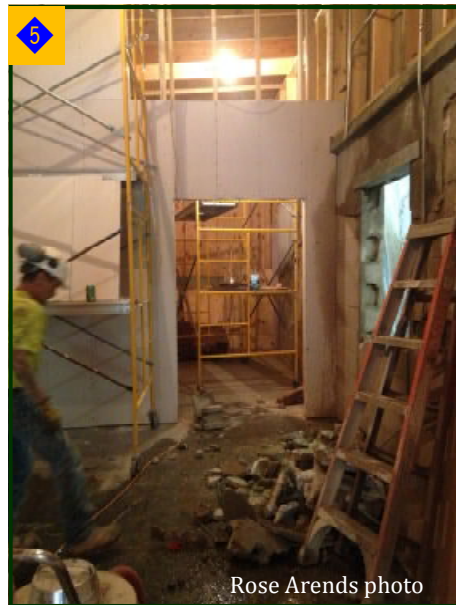
Jim Vaitkunas photo



Rose Arends photo



Aaron Isaacs photo



Rose Arends photo



Aaron Isaacs photo

What's Happening?

- September 4 Last day of weeknight service at CHSL
- September 6 Last day of Sunday service at ESL
- September 7 Labor Day holiday service at CHSL (12:30 PM to 8:30 PM) and ESL (1 PM to 4 PM)
- September 19 Excelsior Apple Day festival at ESL. Special operating times: 9 AM to 4 PM
- September 27 MSM Family picnic at the Como-Harriet Streetcar Line starts at 1 PM



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

Jim Vaitkunas — MSM Corporate Secretary & Assistant Ops Chief

New Member. Late summer is traditionally a slow period for gaining new members. However, we are fortunate that we have gained a member who recently joined our Museum. We offer a hearty welcome to **David Ault**.

Letter from Lakewood Cemetery. General Superintendent, Bill Arends recently received the following nice letter.

“Dear Bill,

We at Lakewood Cemetery would like to extend our deepest thanks to you for being part of our Memorial Day celebration this year.

As always, the streetcar rides were enjoyed by our visitors. Thanks you for extending your hours of operation that day so visitors could enjoy rides to and from Lakewood for the entire day.

What a wonderful day it was. Thank you for your contribution—we look forward to partnering with you again next year.

Sincerely, Ronald A. Gjerde, Jr., President, Lakewood Cemetery Association.”

MSM's ACTIVITIES ARE NUMEROUS AND VARIED

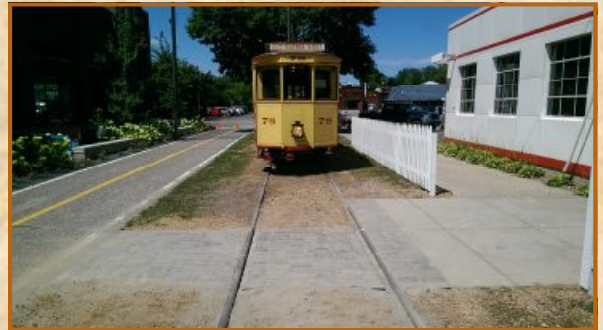
There are all kinds of special events going on throughout the year and especially during the summer months. Here are just a few examples of what went on at the Minnesota Streetcar Museum during the last few weeks.



(Above) This year's streetcar camp had a great group of youngsters learning about railroads and streetcars. Here we see **Craig Canada** instructing the young ladies in this group about how the streetcar collects the electricity with a trolley wheel and pole. The girls have workbooks that we provided them.

(Above right) Model train day at CHSL was a success. Modeler and MSM volunteer **Mike Helde** set up his big layout in the still unfinished carbarn addition.

(Right) The project to install the streetcar pavers at the ESL Water Street platform by **Todd Bender** and **Bob Bolles** is now complete. Nice work, guys!



MSM's ANNUAL FAMILY PICNIC SET FOR SEPTEMBER 27TH

Your Museum will be holding its annual family picnic on Sunday, September 27th. Start time is 1 PM. Location is the George Isaacs carbarn at Lake Harriet. There will be streetcar service to the carbarn in conjunction with our normal Sunday operations. If you plan to attend the picnic, please RSVP to **Scott Heiderich** at s-klines@comcast.net or 651-645-3333 any day 8am to 7pm, with names and numbers in your group. RSVPs should be received not later than Friday, September 25th. If your last name begins with A to L, please bring a dessert to share, and if from M to Z, please bring a salad or other side to share.