

MINNESOTA STREETCAR MUSEUM



Streetcar CURRENTS



Nov-Dec — 2016

Minneapolis & Excelsior, Minnesota



Bill the Motorman Says:

- Please consider a generous donation to this year's annual appeal. We need your support.
- Our operating season may be over but that doesn't mean that we hibernate. This is the time of the year when work in the shop pick's up, and we can use your help.

Streetcar CURRENTS

Winter Publication Schedule

The Streetcar CURRENTS is now in its winter publication schedule. See the notice on page 3 for more info.

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Masthead. A beauty to behold and a joy forever. Whoever coined that phrase probably never thought about applying it to a streetcar. But even under dark and threatening skies, No. 10 is radiant in its traction orange and dark red roof. Taken on 11/29/2016, this photo shows No. 10 taking a short rest after its first powered run in 78 years. See page six for a short report and more first run photos. (Jim Vaitkunas photo)

Looking Forward Into the Rearview Mirror

Bruce Gustafson—General Supt.

The year 2016 has been remarkable. In all of the key metrics 2016 has been very successful—ridership; safety; and, maintenance.

Operations. While the final statistics are not in (I will encourage you to come to our annual member's meeting on March 11, 2017 to see the full results) 2016 has been a strong year for ridership. CHSL ridership is up this year compared to 2015 and ESL is about where it was this time last year. The holiday events at ESL and CHSL have also been very successful. What has also been particularly impressive this year is the hard work and creativity of both the CHSL and ESL volunteers in successfully redesigning the Halloween events thanks to the leadership of **Rod Eaton, Jim & Karen Kertzman** and **Todd Bender**.

Safety. We had no significant incidents or accidents this year. We also have a new Safety Director in **John Dillery** and we've made several modifications to our operations and training to emphasize safety.

Maintenance/Construction. We have: an expanded CHSL car barn thanks to **Aaron Isaacs**; a new track switch at CHSL thanks to **Scott Heiderich** and **Dennis Stephens**; CHSL's depot has a new roof and paint thanks to **Pat Kriske**; work on TCRT No. 1300's trucks is being managed by **Dick Zawacki, Dennis Stephens** and **Jim Wilmore** while the car's underbody is being worked on by **Karl Jones** and the CHSL shop crew; and, Winona 10 ran for the first time in 78 years thanks to **Howie Melco**, and the ESL shop crew. Truly AMAZING! 2016 forms a strong jumping off point for 2017.

Operations. In addition to leveraging the new ideas created in 2016 for our special events, we are evaluating potential changes to our regularly scheduled operations based on lessons learned. We will continue the very successful redesigned training program developed by **Dave Higgins**, which emphasizes the basics and produces more consistent training. The year 2017 will culminate with the Museum hosting the ATRRM convention late in early October.

Safety. We will continue striving to keep in mind at all times that SAFETY is the most important part of our job.

Maintenance/Construction. An expanded car barn and access via a new switch and track will allow maintenance equipment to be moved into the newly constructed "speeder shed" on the east side of the G.K. Isaacs car barn. Moving the maintenance equipment will free-up space in the ready barn for a fourth streetcar to be stored at CHSL. Rebuilding No. 1300 and introducing Winona No. 10 to regular operations will provide operational flexibility, stability, and excitement.

So while the 2017 operating season is still a long ways away, there is a lot to be thankful for and to be excited about.

Thank you for all you do. ☺



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:

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Streetcar **CURRENTS** November-December 2016

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 January 20, 2017.

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

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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

This has been one of the busiest months in the history of the museum. Here's what we accomplished, in no particular order.

CRT No. 1300's trucks. We received a grant of \$115,800 from the Minnesota Historical Society. That provided the match to activate a \$40,000 grant from the 20th Century Electric Railway Foundation. Longtime member **Frank Sandberg** donated \$10,000 to the project.



We've hired **Rob Mangels**, a truck rebuilding expert who lives in the Twin Cities, to do the overhaul. Thanks to **Scott Heiderich** for putting us in touch with Rob. The trucks will be disassembled at our car barn, where our volunteers can learn about their inner workings and put in the sweat equity to reduce the project cost. Work is scheduled to begin November 22.

No. 1300 was jacked up on November 15th and the trucks were rolled out from under it. Thanks to **Karl Jones**, **Pete Connors**, **Jim Willmore**, **Tom Schramm** and **Mark Digre** for making that happen.

Speeder shed track and switch. The custom built No. 3 track switch from Harmer Steel was off-loaded onto hand cars and later towed to the carbarn. Railroad Specialties installed it on November 16th. Thanks to **Scott Heiderich** for coordinating that work.

Meanwhile, **Dick Zawacki** arranged for the purchase of 155 feet of 25 pound rail from the estate of the late Jim Mahacek, who had a 2-foot gauge backyard railroad in Northfield, Minnesota. The rail was retrieved by the volunteer crew of **Dick Zawacki**, **Dennis Stephens**, **Tom Schramm**, **Jim Willmore**, **Pete Connors**, and **Bill Graham**.

ESL message board. A new two-sided, free standing message board has been erected at ESL's Water Street stop, next to the ticket booth. Thanks to **Karl Jones**, **Todd Bender** and **Jim Kertzman** for installing it.

Speeder shed shelving at CHSL. Where do we put all our stuff? On the numerous new shelves that hang from the walls of the speeder shed. Thanks to **Dennis Stephens** and **Pete Connors** for putting them up. On some of those shelves are a group of new spare trolley poles, fabricated by a design by **Dennis Stephens**. The shelves really helps to reduce the clutter in CHSL's ready barn.

Linden Hills Station. As previously reported, repairs are done and the station is painted along with the ramp railings and the stairs. We kept the cream color of the exterior walls, but changed the trim and the foundation to streetcar Forest Green. Thanks to **Pat Kriske** for hiring the contractor and overseeing the work.

Halloween events updated. At Excelsior and Lake Harriet, the Halloween ghost trolley events were completely overhauled. You'll read more about them elsewhere in this issue. Many thanks to **Rod Eaton**, **Karen** and **Jim Kertzman** and many others for their great success.

Air compressors donated. The air compressor in the Isaacs carbarn and shop is old and hasn't been healthy for quite awhile. At ESL the shop's compressor was also old and had low capacity. **Tom Schramm** has remedied both problems. He has arranged for the donation of a pair of air compressors from Minnesota Home Outlet in Burnsville. They retail at over \$500 apiece. As Tom says, it doesn't hurt to ask.

(Continued on next page)



CHSL's ghost trolley featured scenes along the right-of-way. Here are a couple of them (Rod Eaton photos)



How about this girl's Halloween costume. Very cool!

Linden Hills station is looking great with the new roof, other repairs and a fresh paint job. (A. Isaacs photo)



(From the Front Platform Continued from page 2)

Clearing out Ken's place. On November 17th, a crew traveled to **Ken Albrecht's** farm in North Mankato to retrieve the parts for Winona No. 10 that were stored there. They also picked up numerous plans and drawings that will reside in the new Russ Olson library. Ken has been in declining health. Making the trip were **Dick Zawacki**, **Art Abrahams**, **Scott Heiderich**, **David McCollom** and a day or two later **Jim Willmore**.

Regarding Winona No. 10. The ESL restoration crew led by **Howie Melco** successfully test run the car under its own power. It ran and rode well. More work needs to be done, like installing the floor and seats, but certainly a major accomplishment and a credit to the entire Winona No. 10 restoration team.

Computer loaded. No heavy lifting was required, but **Ben Franske** and **Aaron Isaacs** have loaded all of the museum's vintage streetcar videos and over 5000 scanned photos onto the computer in the library, along with the database of all 12,500 photos in the MSM photo archive collection.

What's coming up? Next spring will see a concrete floor in the Excelsior car barn and new concrete platforms at CHSL's Lake Calhoun stop and ESL's Water Street stop. 🕒

Streetcar **CURRENTS** Winter Publication Schedule

The Streetcar **CURRENTS**, is now in its winter publication schedule. You'll be receiving the Streetcar **CURRENTS** every other month until the May 2017 issue is published. Publication dates for these issues will be on or about: February 1st; and, April 1st. If you don't receive your issue on or shortly after those dates please contact me at: jvaitkunas@msn.com

ESL's Ghost Trolley Was a Huge Success

By Todd Bender

On a warm October night, the ESL Ghost Trolley started a new chapter. Earlier this summer, MSM learned that the Excelsior Lake Minnetonka Historical Society (ELMHS) would not be participating in the annual BOOseum and Ghost Trolley event. While we hope this change is temporary, MSM pushed ahead.

Our volunteers had an empty page to work with so we decided to replace scenes along our right-of-way with Halloween activities at the car barn. TCRT No. 1239 was used to shuttle costumed passengers between Water Street and the car barn, where riders spent as much time as they like participating in the car barn activities.

Activities awaiting passengers were Halloween games with prizes, a Harry Potter themed Duluth No. 78 with Mrs. M, graveyard photos with Count Paul, ghost stories with CTA Fred, ghost trolley Mesaba No. 10, a Scavenger Hunt and fire pit. While several passengers asked what happened to the scenes and BOOseum, we received overwhelming positive feedback with the new format. Several families personally thanked volunteers for providing a family friendly Halloween event.

The Halloween games were extremely popular, with prizes running low after the first night. A quick restocking run before Saturday's festivities remedied the situation. We anticipated Saturday would be a quieter night with the forecasted rain, but the skies dried up and the people came out. The only major change was relocating ghost stories with CTA Fred (a/k/a **Fred beamish**) to the warm barn, which provided a quieter and moodier venue.

Everyone's hard work paid off, with nearly equal crowds showing up both nights for a total of 1,654 riders (new record) and \$4,181 revenue (\$4,050 tickets, \$79 donations, \$52 merchandise). Managing our ghost trolley was **Karen Kertzman**, who worked tirelessly in the weeks preceding Ghost Trolley to recruit volunteers, create the games, decorate the car barn, and execute the overall plan. **Jim Kertzman** practically lived at the carbarn, decorating Mesaba No. 10, Duluth No. 78, TCRT No. 1239, the car barn, and ticket booth. **Elaine Love**, **Tim** and **Nancy Crain**, **Ron Neitzel**, and **Tom Dulebohn** also chipped in with decorating and logistics help. Mrs. M. (**Joy Meyer**) and her daughter **Laura** transformed No. 78 into a Harry Potter themed classroom complete with a turtle on Friday and chicken on Saturday. **Erik Haas** and his friend **Ben** provided comic entertainment on the ride to and from the car barn. **Kathy Endres** from ELMHS provided much needed advice and loaned several props from the BOOseum.

We had no idea what to expect running the event on our own with a new format, but the entire weekend was extremely successful—the best compared to the last three years' ghost trolleys. We could not have pulled it off without the help of our volunteers. Thank you all for making this a great event. We hope to see you again next year! And speaking of next year, if anyone has any suggestions for improving our Ghost Trolley event, please share your ideas with **Karen Kertzman** or me, **Todd Bender**. We can't do this without your help! ☺



Preparations for the ghost trolley took a lot of time and effort. This photo shows **Elaine Love**, **Todd Bender** & **Karen Kertzman** taking a short break from their work. (Bill Graham photo)



Mesaba No. 10 doesn't get much exposure, but it was featured inside the ESL carbarn. (Tim Crain photo)



Jim Kertzman is shown here doing a good job of decorating Duluth No. 78. (*Bill Graham photo*)



Tim Decker (L) was one of the many volunteers who helped out. **Todd Bender** is shown on the right. (*Tim Crain photo*)



Underneath all the costume trappings is **Nancy** and **Tim Crain**. The pumpkin head thing is simply a prop.



Even the ESL motor car was decorated in the ghost trolley spirit. (*Tim Crain photo*)



This young lad had the unenviable task of scaring our visitors when he raised from the dead. (*Tim Crain photo*)



Todd Bender is shown selling tokens for the post-Thanksgiving Santa Trolley, which helped with the passenger flow. (*Joy Meyer photo*)

What's Happening?

- Dec 3 & 4 ----- CHSL's **Holly Trolley** featuring **SANTA CLAUS**—12:30 PM to 3:30 PM
 December 3 ----- **WINTERNAT** trolley at CHSL—6:00 PM to 8:30 PM
 December 14 ----- Annual MSM Christmas party—7 PM to 9 PM at the Isaacs carbarn at CHSL
 March 11----- MSM Annual member's meeting, 10 AM—Metro Transit's Green Line O&M facility, St. Paul
 March-April----- CHSL & ESL new operator recruiting and training
 May 2----- Begin of ESL's Thursday afternoon operations
 May 6----- Begin of ESL's & CHSL's weekend operations

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

Jim Vaitkunas — *MSM Corporate Secretary & Assistant Ops Chief*

MSM's Annual Meeting. Our annual meeting of the Museum's members will be held on Saturday, March 11, 2017 starting at 10 AM. Location for the 2017 meeting will be Metro Transit's Operations and Maintenance shop for the green light rail line. The O&M facility is located at 340 Broadway Street in St. Paul. This is 1 1/2 block west of the St. Paul Union Depot stop on the Green Line, which happens to be the last stop for eastbound trains. At the conclusion of the annual meeting tours of the O&M facility will be conducted.

Annual fund. We sent out the flyer to all members soliciting donation to our Museum's 2016-2017 annual fund. Focus for this year's annual fund is rebuilding of the trucks under TCRT gate car No. 1239. Please consider a generous donation to our annual fund. Your support is really needed and most appreciated. 🍀

This just in! Winona No. 10 operates Under its Own Power for the First Time in 78 Years!

A major milestone has been reached in the restoration of single truck streetcar No. 10 which ran in Winona, Minnesota from 1914 to 1938. On Tuesday, November 29, 2016 No. 10 was powered up and ran under it's own power for the first time in 78 years! What an accomplishment for the hard working and talented volunteers of our Museum, led by **Howie Melco** and **Ken Albrecht**. After some trouble shooting, No. 10 ran well in both directions and made several round trips on the ESL main line. There's still a lot of work to do such as installing the floor and then the seats, installing a larger capacity air reservoir, etc. The punch list is extensive but we hope the car can perform in revenue service next year at ESL for everyone to enjoy. (All photos by Jim Vaitkunas)



No. 10 right after its first powered run



Cool line-up at the Water Street platform



At the Old Excelsior Boulevard end of ESL



A resplendant No. 10—What a beauty!