

STREETCAR

CURRENTS

January-February 2018

We Reflect on Our Accomplishments 2014-2017



MINNESOTA STREETCAR MUSEUM



In 2014, sewer work on Morse Avenue at ESL resulted in a new and improved crossing for our Excelsior Streetcar Line.



Work started on the Isaacs car barn addition in 2015. This photo shows the foundation being constructed. The addition was dedicated in 2016.



In May, 2017 a concrete floor was installed in the Excelsior car barn which greatly improved that building.



We hosted a very successful Heritage Rail Alliance fall conference in October, 2017. (Steve Heister photo)



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After over 14 years of work, Winona No. 10 made it's first powered run in November, 2017. That's project manager **Howie Melco** at the controls.



From the Front Platform—Thoughts on Our Museum

Aaron Isaacs — MSM Board Chair

The streetcar swap. At its last meeting, the MSM Board of Directors made a rather momentous decision, to swap streetcars between Excelsior and Lake Harriet. Specifically, Duluth No. 265 will move to Excelsior and TCRT No. 1239 will move to Lake Harriet.

Why are we doing this? It's an outgrowth of the decision to rebuild No. 1239's trucks, which badly needs to be done. The original plan was to jack-up No. 1239, take its trucks to Lake Harriet for rebuilding and leave the car body at Excelsior. The Lake Harriet shop is better equipped for truck rebuilding. However, that would leave ESL without a big streetcar for special events. We would also have to find a pair of shop trucks to put under No. 1239 so it could be moved around the Excelsior carbarn. From a mechanical repair standpoint, it just made sense to keep No. 1239 and its trucks together.

Once that realization sunk in, it revived an idea that some of us (me included) have wanted to do for a long time. That is to have both Twin City wood cars at Lake Harriet and both Duluth cars at Excelsior. CHSL has many more riders, and they are more likely to be seniors who remember actually riding the streetcars in the 1950s. I always have to explain that No. 265 isn't exactly what they remember, because it was rebuilt differently by Duluth Street Railway. The TCRT cars they rode didn't have a big coal stove on the front platform or a circular seat in the rear vestibule.

By bringing No. 1239 to Lake Harriet, we can show the public three distinct generations of TCRT cars from 1907 to 1920, and 1932 to 1954, plus PCC No. 322 which served the Twin Cities from 1947 to 1953. And we'll have two generations of Duluth cars at Excelsior. I'm working with Keith Anderson and Dennis Stephens to plan the move. We think it will happen in early March.

TCRT No. 1300 runs! It took an entire year, but streetcar No. 1300 is operational again. This was a big project, more complex than any of us could have realized when it started. Like every major repair, it involved a lot of reverse engineering and learning on the job. I want to thank our contractor **Rob Mangels**, his subcontractor L&S Electric and vendor Carolina Coil, and all the MSM members who volunteered. It's a lengthy list. **Dick Zawacki**, **Dennis Stephens** and **Jim Willmore** were the project leads. They were assisted by **Karl Jones**, **Ben Franske**, **Pete Connors**, **Tom Schramm**, **Mike Miller**, **Pat Kriske**, **Russ Isbrandt**, **Mark Digre**, **Keith Anderson**, **John Prestholdt**, **Jack Bacon** and **Aaron Isaacs**. We also must thank **Jim Truax** who made and donated some important truck components.

MSM Treasurer. In the last issue of the *Streetcar Currents* I had a notice that **Keith Anderson** is stepping down as MSM's Treasurer this Spring. Keith has done an excellent job since 2011, and he will continue to serve as our Museum's Chief Engineer. I would like to renew my call for a person who is willing to handle our Museum's financial affairs. If you want to know more about the position I encourage you to contact Keith and discuss the position's duties: (612) 250-5575 msmtreasurer@gmail.com. You can also contact me and I'll be happy to answer your questions. Thanks! ☺



Art Shanty

You might have heard that the annual Art Shanty event moved to Lake Harriet for the first time this year. An estimated 25,000 people showed up. Although our streetcars weren't running, we delivered our streetcar history message thanks to a collaboration with the Linden Hills Neighborhood Council. They built a display, appropriately painted TCRT yellow, that was located on the shore next to the Lake Harriet band shell. Attached to it was our old Linden Hills depot sign, large historic streetcar photos and interior car card advertisements, made from MSM digital files. Hanging on the display frame were a pair of conductor signal bells you could ring with pull cords. For those who don't know, the Linden Hills Neighborhood Council has been a good friend to MSM, supporting us over the years with grants for the sprinkler system, interpretive signs along the right of way and the carbarn expansion.

Photo Ops



In early January TCRT No. 1300 left CHSL's George K. Isaacs car barn under it's own power for the first time in over a year. What a huge milestone for our Museum and the guys on the shop crew! No. 1300 Made a successful test trip to the north end then was tucked back into the car-barn. Duluth No. 265 then went into the shop for some much needed maintenance over the pit. (Photos by John Prestholdt)



Art Shanties are whimsical structures that look like demented ice fishing houses and are placed on a different frozen lake each year. Think of decorated art cars or milk carton boats and you get some idea. They can look like anything the maker wants and they're usually very creative and often pretty humorous. (Photos by Aaron Isaacs)



Recently an email came into the museum's email box from a Girl Scout troop asking if they could set up on our Linden Hills station's platform for a bake sale because of all the people attending the Art Shanty event on Lake Harriet. I told them no because of all the ice and snow on the stairs and the ramp would make it unsafe. I suggested they set up behind the depot on the path. I cleared off the path, ran an extension cord out so they could sell hot chocolate and offered them our fire pit. When I went back about 4PM to put the extension cord away this group of happy scouts told me they had a very successful sale. And we may have a lead on some help setting up for *Vinternatt* next year.

And don't miss the exhibit the Linden Hills History group has set up behind the band shell complete with reproductions of car cards and a sign that say "Linden Hills Station" thanks to Aaron Isaacs.

(Photo and caption by Bill Arends)



What's Happening?

- March 3-----MSM Annual member's meeting, 10 AM in Excelsior
- March & April-----CHSL & ESL new operator recruiting and training
- May 1-----Beginning of ESL's Tuesday afternoon operations
- May 5-----Beginning 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. MSM's annual member's meeting will be held on Saturday, March 3, 2018 starting at 10 AM. Location will be the Excelsior Elementary School, 441 Oak St., Excelsior, MN 55331. The formal announcement was sent to all members in early January. All members are invited and encouraged to attend. Reports will be rendered by Museum officers. At the conclusion of the meeting a short video of one of the last TCRT streetcars to operate to Hopkins will be shown. Then, attendees will take rides on newly restored Winona No. 10 and tour the Excelsior carbarn.

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

Annual fund. We've had an excellent response to this year's annual appeal. We thank those who donated and are listed here.

TCRT 1239 truck fund. Doug Anderson, Ray Bensen, Jr., Richard Darling, Tom Dulebohn, Bruce Gustafson, Dave Hogan, Aaron Isaacs, Karl Jones, George Kotsonas, Charlie McCarthy, Ron Neitzel, Russ Olson, Onan Family Foundation, Ben Porter, John Prestholdt, Linda Ridlehuber, Connie Robertson, Eric Tratner, Thomas Traxler, Jincy & Jim Vaitkunas, Martin VanHorn, Terry Wagoner, Charles Weber,

General Fund. Bruce Allyn, Betty & Earle Anderson, Rose & Bill Arends, Dr. Douglas Beeden, Dr. Peter Bingham, Glen Bottoms, John Cartwright, Steve Collin, Mary Ann Corbey, Jeffrey Davenport/Nuveen Investments, John Dillery, Michael Dolan, Rolly Ehreberg, Ben Franske, Bill Graham, Gordon Geddes, Cheri Hanna, The Head Family Foundation, Scott & Kathy Heiderich (in memory of Jim Harrison), Russ Isbrandt, Stanley Kasal, Rick Krenske, Thomas Lowry, Charlie McCarthy, Bonnie Neunsinger, Joan & Dick Niemiec, Jerry Peterson, Joe Plante & Eric Neumann, Gerald Robertson, Hon. James Rogers, Andrew Selden, Linnae Sodergren, Barb Thoman & Chip Welling, Eric Tratner.

Marv Krafve Memorials. Peter & Diane Donnino, Kathy & Scott Heiderich, Lori & Tim Walker. In addition a substantial amount (close to \$2,000) was sent direct to Marv's family who, in turn, sent the donations to our Museum. Many thanks to all these who donated in Marv's memory. He'll be missed. ☺

Streetcar CURRENTS
January-February—2018

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 March 20, 2018.

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

13326 Huntington Lane
Apple Valley, MN 55124-9481

E-mail: jvaitkunas@msn.com

Bob Johnson

It is with sadness that we report the passing of Bob Johnson.

He was a good man who got involved with the streetcar steamboat *Minnehaha* restoration after he retired and put in many hours on the boat. When it was finished, he moved to the Excelsior Streetcar Line where he also put in a great many hours operating and then managing the line as ESL Superintendent. He was always smiling and pleasant, easy to work with, and creative at solving problems. Bob was an engineer with great human relations skills. (Bill Graham)

Bob was the best...A real steward in our community. He helped so much during the early years of Excelsior's *Christkindlsmarkt!* (Myrle Mackenzie)

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 2018 issue is published. Publication dates for these issues will be on or about: April 1st. If you don't receive your issue on or shortly after that date, please contact me at: jvaitkunas@msn.com