

STREETCAR

CURRENTS

August 2019



MINNESOTA STREETCAR MUSEUM



From the Front Platform—Thoughts on Our Museum

Aaron Isaacs — MSM Board Chair

Dealing with the unexpected. A good measure of an organization's viability is how well it handles unexpected bumps in the road. We've had some lately and I'm pleased with how we've responded. The big one was the No. 1300 and Winona No. 10 motor failures, but members stepped up big time to fund the repairs, and the shop crew rewired No. 1300 to run on two motors. Good thing, because the motor repairs are taking longer than expected.

The second challenge happened on June 2nd when No. 1300 split the switch next to 42nd Street. The front truck took the main line while the rear truck turned into the siding. The car ended up at such an extreme angle that TCRT No. "gate car" No. 1239 had to assist breaking it free. Thankfully the only damage was a little scrape where the rear end knocked over a wood platform railing.

Why did this happen? One of the two springs inside the ex-San Francisco single point spring switch had broken and it failed to reset completely. We lost the Sunday second shift and the Monday shift, but the rest of the week was saved. **Bill Arends** and I built a temporary platform of railroad ties, scrap lumber and a big piece of particle board donated from the construction site across from the Linden Hills Station. We would have been back in business Tuesday but the shift was rained out. Operations the rest of the week went smoothly.

Meanwhile **Dennis Stephens** found a local manufacturer to make a duplicate spring plus spares. It was a pleasant surprise when they turned the order around in a couple of days. The switch was repaired the morning of Saturday June 8th and regular service into the siding resumed that day. Thanks also to **Tom Schramm** and **Pete Connors** for disassembling and removing the temporary platform and to **John Prestholdt** and **Mike Miller** for fixing the railing.

One more event—it has happened before and it will again, but it's always unexpected. A tree leaned over against the CHSL overhead wire near the archery range. Thankfully we were able to run in spite of it. **Steve McCulloch** contacted the Park Board, and they sent a crew to remove it.

Fargo & Moorhead Street Railway No. 28 on the move. I guess you could call this another unexpected (or sooner than expected) challenge. The body of Fargo & Moorhead St. Rwy. single-truck Birney No. 28 (American Car Co, 1923) has been stored in Ken Albrecht's shed in North Mankato since 2003. We learned over the winter that the building will no longer be available and the car had to move. Thanks to **Dick Zawacki** for coordinating the move, assisted by **Ken Blake**, **Mark Brothen**, **Carl Flornen**, **Scott Heiderich**, **Mike Kimitch**, **Steve Mages** and **Howie Melco**. In addition, we should recognize **Don Darling** (Ken Albrecht's caretaker) and his son, Don, Jr., who were of tremendous help.

That's not the end of the No. 28 move story. Although it's currently inside the carbarn at Excelsior, it overcrowds the carbarn. It makes it impossible to do special events and restricts access to the store area for retail. Therefore, we're looking for another temporary storage site until Winona No. 10 can finally be moved to Lake Harriet, which is probably a year or two away. **Dick Zawacki**, **Jim Kertzman** and **Dave McCollum** are working on it. ☺



Inside This Issue

Move of Fargo No. 28 in 2019	2
Move of Fargo 28 in 2003	3
Coming Events	4
MSM News & Views	4
Obituary—Barney Olsen	4

Fargo & Moorhead St. Rwy No. 28 — 2019

On Tuesday, June 25, 2019, the ESL crew completed the move of Fargo & Moorhead St. Rwy. No. 28 from **Ken Albrecht's** farm in North Mankato to the ESL car barn. Two weeks prior to the 25th, the car was moved out of the shed where it was stored in preparation for transportation to ESL.

Number 28 is now mounted on a shop truck that was fabricated by the ESL crew using wheels that were originally part of the shop truck that supported Duluth No. 78 during its restoration. Although we had hoped to make the move later this summer, we did it now to accommodate a request from Ken's family to clear the shed in preparation for renting it to one of Ken's neighbors. The car is temporarily stored on track 1 between the cold and warm side of the ESL barn. Plans are to clear track 3 in the cold barn and move Mesaba Rwy. No. 10 to track 2 before the cold weather season starts. Then No. 28 will be moved to the back of track 3 with Duluth 78 in front of it while Duluth No. 265, the speeder and tower car will be on track 1.

A huge THANK YOU goes out to the crew that put in many hours both executing the move and behind the scenes to support the move. Members of the crew that made all of this happen are: **Ken Blake, Mark Brothen, Carl Floren, Scott Heiderich, Scott Ingram, Jim Kertzman, Karen Kertzman, Mike Kimitch, Steve Mages, Dave McCollum, Howie Melco, and Scott Wardrope.** ☺

(This report and all photos on this page by Dick Zawacki)



(Top Photos) No. 28 is lifted off the ground and lowered onto the flat-bed trailer in the foreground.

(Left) No. 28 is now at Excelsior and is gently being lowered onto the shop truck.

(Right two photos) No. 28 is in front of the Excelsior car barn. Shortly it'll be pushed into the ESL car barn on track #1.

As far as we know, the Fargo system never had a logo. The few 1930s photos of Fargo's Birneys show the car number centered on the sides with a yellow body and red window sash. Note the yellow bleeding thru the silver paint applied later by someone after the F&M St. Rwy. streetcars ceased operations in 1937.



Fargo & Moorhead St. Rwy. No. 28 — 2003

The first any of us heard about Fargo & Moorhead St. Rwy. No. 28's existence was when **Dave French** sent an e-mail on July 19, 2003 alerting several Como-Harriet people that No. 28 was up for bids on eBay! At the time what was then the Traction Division of the Minnesota Transportation Museum was not in good financial shape. After some discussion and debate, Traction Division leaders agreed that we try to get No. 28 and pledged financial support if we won the bid. On July 27, 2003 we successfully got the car with a bid of \$910. The bidding was not done on behalf of MTM but was strictly a personal action because of the dire financial situation of MTM in 2003. The group of about a dozen CHSL volunteers chipped-in to cover the bid and the move of No. 28 which occurred in late October, 2003. The below photos tell that tale.



There are precious few photos of the Fargo & Moorhead St. Rwy. in any archive. This photo of an unidentified car on an unidentified street circa 1920s in Moorhead is an example.



This is what we got for \$910. No. 28 was saved by a farmer who lived in rural western Minnesota about 5 miles from the North Dakota border. (All photos by Bill Graham except for the one on the left)



Friday October 17, 2003 was "prep No. 28 day" for the move of No. 28. this photos shows the crew: **Scott Heiderich, Ken Albrecht, Jim Willmore, Mark Digre, Jim Vaitkunas, Bill Arends** and **Clark Hoffman**. On this day's crew but not shown are **Phil Settergren** and **Bill Graham**.



Bright & early Saturday morning (October 18, 2003) the truck arrives and loading and tie down begins. Note the body of No. 28 is way, way up in the air. The trailer bed was 40 inches off the ground so the bottom of the cross beams supporting No. 28 were about 45 inches off the ground.



No. 28 arrived at Ken Albrecht's farm around 4:30 PM. For the next 2 hours, the crew used blocking to jack-up No. 28 so the trailer could pull out from under it. The crew then had to lower the car closer to the ground so it wouldn't tip over in a stiff wind.



It's getting late but No. 28 is now safely on the ground. Time to call it a successful day! From left to right: **Jim Vaitkunas, Jim Willmore, Ken Albrecht** and **Bill Arends** with **Bill Graham** taking the photo. A crew about a week later moved the car into Ken's shed seen in the background.

What's Happening?

August 2, 3 & 4 -----Murder Mystery at CHSL starts at 9 PM. **Spotlight on MURDER**
 August 8 -----Story Time Trolley at ESL. Runs at 5 PM and 6 PM.
 August 8 -----Streetcar camp for Kids at CHSL starts at 9 AM
 August 10 -----Owl service at CHSL. Owl car operates from 9 PM to 12-midnight.
 August 15 -----PJ Party Trolley at CHSL. Runs at 6 PM and 7 PM.
 August 22 -----Sleepy Time Trolley at ESL. Runs at 5 PM and 6 PM.
 August 22 -----Streetcar Camp II for older kids starts at 9 AM.
 September 2 -----LABOR DAY CHSL operating hours 12:30 PM to 7:30 PM. ESL operating hours 1 to 4 PM.

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

Jim Vaitkunas — MSM Corporate Secretary & Assistant Ops Chief

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
August—2019**

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 August 20, 2019.

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

Welcome to our **Newest Members**. We are please to welcome the following new members to the MSM family: Zach Osmundson, Raine Way, Paul Nelson, Colette MacIver, Steve Edwards and Brian Hughes.

Big **Boy Event Sales**. To support the visit by Union Pacific Railroad's BIG BOY locomotive No. 4014 to the St. Paul Union Depot (SPUD), SPUD held a rail craft show and merchandise sale in the SPUD main concourse on July 18th. MSM had a table in the station and sold a lot of books and other items. Here's the report on the sales from our Merchandise Manager, **Bill Arends**.

A total of \$330 of one-of-a-kind, not available anywhere else, merchandise was sold. The large contributors to this amount were the donated motorman hats (\$180), a framed picture of motorman dated 1921 (\$20) and a framed picture of the PCC (\$8). These 6 items accounted for 63% of the revenue received.

We sold a total of 13 books, one at \$20, one at \$10 and the rest \$5 or less. We also sold 18 historic photos at \$1 each.

Total cash sales \$247. Credit card sales, thanks to Bruce Gustafson: \$83.

I think most importantly was the exposure we got. Many of the people who stopped by knew nothing about us. Maybe we'll pick up a few riders from this.

The amount of cash in the bag after the seed money was taken out balanced to the penny (Oh! We had no pennies.) to what was recorded on the sheet. Great job.

Thanks to all who contributed their time and effort to make this go smoothly: **Bill Arends, Rose Arends, Eric Werner, Louis Hoffman** and **Steve McCulloch**.

MSM's **Facebook Page and Postings**. Volunteer **Brian Long** continues to post interesting and informative historic photos on our Museum's Facebook page. The postings have proved to be very popular with over 1,800 people now our friends. If you are on Facebook, type Minnesota Streetcar Museum in the search bar and hit the "like" icon. You'll then receive all our postings. When you get them, share with your friends to spread the word about our fine Museum. Sharing our postings has resulted in some new riders and actually some new members who are interested in helping us preserve Minnesota's transportation history. 🍷

Byron (Barney) Olsen

We regret to report that longtime MSM member Byron Olsen, known to friends and family as Barney, has passed away. Barney was a lawyer for the Great Northern and then Burlington Northern railroads. He left to become VP and general counsel of the Soo Line Railroad, where he was responsible for their landmark acquisition of the Milwaukee Road, winning out over a much higher bid and saving countless jobs. He ultimately retired from the Felhaber Law Firm and was free to fully indulge his lifelong passions for streetcars, trains and automobiles.

Barney was a principal member of the group that formed the Minnesota Transportation Museum in the early 1960s. At the time MTM consisted of one artifact—TCRT streetcar No. 1300. Barney used his legal skills and experience to handle all the legal matters associated with the incorporation of MTM and in other legal matters that came up at the time. During the 1960s and 1970s Barney held key leadership positions in MTM including President and Executive Vice President. By 1980 Barney reduced his involvement with MTM but maintained his membership and interest in MTM. When our Museum separated from MTM in 2005, Barney immediately joined MSM and continued to show interest in MSM.