

STREETCAR

CURRENTS

January-February 2022



MINNESOTA STREETCAR MUSEUM

From the Front Platform—Thoughts on Our Museum

Aaron Isaacs —Board Chair

As we end the year 2021, I'd like to give some recognition to the volunteers who do the essential administrative and support tasks for our museum. We concentrate so much on streetcar operations, maintenance and restorations that these folks' efforts sometimes are overlooked or taken for granted. Yet we can't run the museum without them. Many wear multiple hats.

Keith Anderson is the chief engineer, overseeing physical plant.

Miles Anderson is the CHSL track foreman.

Bill Arends is the merchandise manager and Linden Hills stationmaster. He also picks up the mail, forwards all inquiries that appear in the museum email box and assists with operator training.

Rose Arends is the assistant merchandise manager and handles all point of sale training. She sends out the dozens of thank you letters to financial donors.

Pat Cosgrove is the volunteer coordinator, matching new volunteers to jobs. He's also the CHSL charter agent.

Patrick Desbonnet has taken on the coordination of the Vinternatt special event.

John Dillery is the safety coordinator

Tom Dulebon is the ESL car cleaning foreman.

Karl Jones is in charge of building security systems and is very active in our shop.

Rod Eaton is still the impresario of special events, although he's trying to phase out gradually. He's the organizer of the Kid's Clubs, publishes the newsletters that go to our youth members. He heads the online communications group that does the weekly web posts and uploads videos to YouTube.

Ben Franske is the info tech manager and webmaster, responsible for everything related to computer systems and electronic communications. He also handles electrical power system issues.

Dave French searches EBay for photos and artifacts to add to our collection.

Barb Gacek is the member services manager, handling all membership issues and producing the mail list for Twin City Lines magazine.

Leah Harp assists with the kids clubs and is our liaison to the autism community.

Chris Heck is the museum treasurer, CHSL overhead wire foreman and lead PCC trainer.

Louis Hoffman is the CHSL car cleaning foreman and assists Rod Eaton with the kids clubs.

Mona Isaacs is the bookkeeper.

Karen Kertzman is the ESL charter agent, store manager, creator of car barn displays, special events manager and Monday Facebook poster. She's also liaison to the City of Excelsior and the local Excelsior community.

Brian Long, currently living in Oklahoma, produces the weekly Friday history posts on Facebook.

Bill Pekarna assisted **Dave Higgins** with Operator training for 2021 and this year will move up to be our head trainer, with Dave stepping down for a well-deserved rest. **Linda Ridlehuber** has agreed to join the training team.

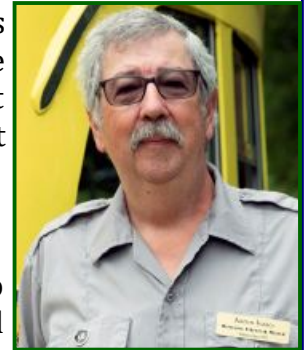
Ben and **Mary Porter** maintain the Linden Hills depot garden.

Jim Vaitkunas has applied his Army training to produce the bylaws and

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TCRT No. 1239 Truck Rebuild Progress Report

By Dick Zawacki—MSM Chief Mechanical Officer

The original goal of this project was to correct several major problems with the trucks under No. 1239. They were originally unpowered trucks under a Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) 4300 series “L” car. After being motorized with two motors they were used to restore Duluth No. 265. In 2000 they were installed under TCRT 1239 when Duluth No. 265 got new Brill 27E-1 trucks. Soon after the car went into service in 2004 a piece of the flange on one wheel broke off. MSM then had to have new wheels put on two of the four axles (the other wheels were also very old cast iron prone to having their flanges break). When the axle and wheel sets were returned from the shop, the wheel gauge on them was not in specification. In addition, the motors were very old and worn out and the low gearing was not suited to our service. In 2021, we decided to replace the trucks and old motors with replicas of Baldwin #5 trucks (the trucks originally under 1239 in TCRT days). All this work will eliminate the problems with the old trucks. As an adjunct to the truck project, the car’s look is being backdated to the look it had in the 1920’s era.



With that background, here’s a recap of the progress on the project to date.

- Four GE-241B motors were purchased from the Halton County Radial Railway Museum near Toronto, Canada. Two motors were rebuilt by local shop L&S Electric and are at the CHSL car barn, awaiting to be installed in 1239’s new front truck. The remaining two motors are currently being rebuilt at L&S Electric.
- New truck parts including equalizers, coil springs, leaf springs, and related parts have been fabricated and received at CHSL.
- MSM rented a shop truck from the Illinois Rail Museum (IRM) to use on the project. The shop truck was delivered in November 2021 and swapped with TCRT 1239’s front truck. This allows the car to be moved when needed to support the project as well as accommodate operations during our regular season.
- The original front truck has been completely disassembled. A few parts, including the wheels and journal boxes, are being kept for re-use on the new trucks
- A replica of a Baker heater, including the smokestack, was installed in the car.
- New Edison-style interior lights are installed in the car.
- Interior colors have been corrected to the 1920’s look.
- Windows have been repaired and repainted.
- Several seats have been repaired and recaned. ☺

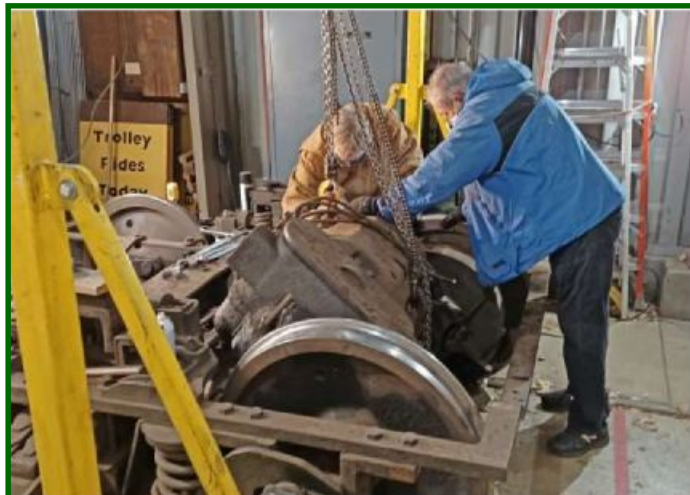


Shortly after No. 1239 was moved from ESL to CHSL, a test run was made to the north end of CHSL on December 8, 2018. The car could not run in regular service because the two motorized axles were not the correct track gauge. (All photos except as noted by Dennis Stephens)



When the shop truck from IRM arrived, it replaced 1239’s front truck. This allowed work to begin on dismantling the old truck. Here we see **Karl Jones** (L) and **Ben Franske** positioning the shop truck under the front end of No. 1239.

TCRT No. 1239 Truck Is Taken Apart



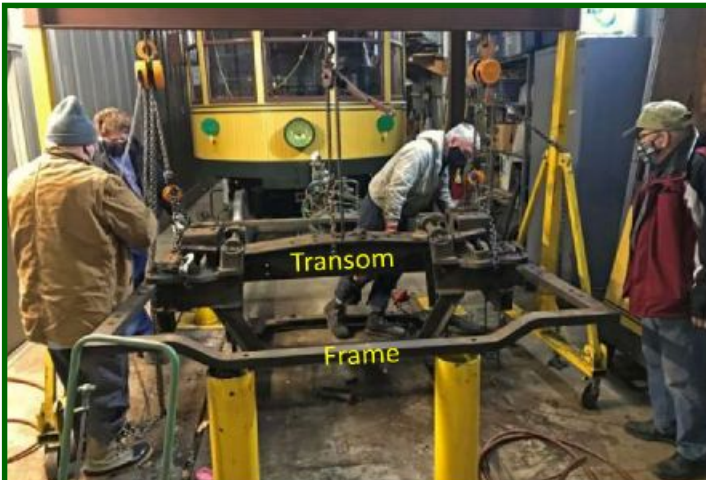
Tom Schramm and **Jim Willmore** are seen here removing the big GE-57 motor from 1239's front truck. This motor was one of four that originally powered the locomotive that shifted coal hoppers at TCRT's Main Steam Station at St. Anthony Falls in Minneapolis.



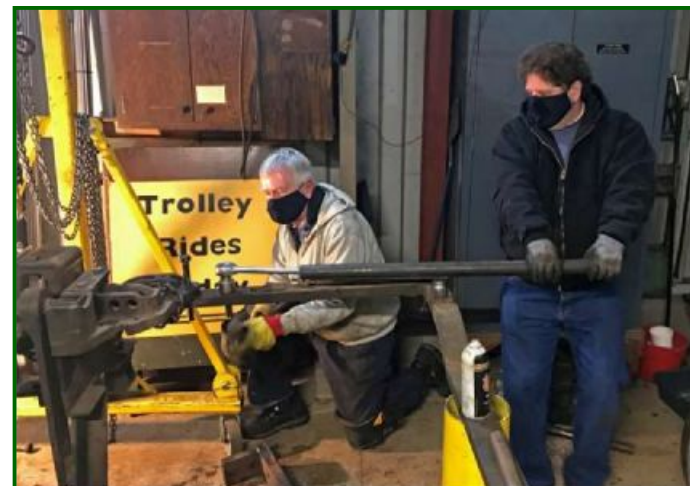
Disassembly begins. On this day, the CHSL shop crew taking the old CTA truck apart includes (L to R) **Karl Jones, Tom Schramm, Jim Willmore, Pat Cosgrove & Rob Mangels**. They have lifted the frame up so the axle and wheels can be rolled out.



Here we see the axle and wheels being removed from under the truck frame. The end of the axle is called the journal and the boxy thing that's on the floor is the journal box.



Stripping parts off the truck frame continues. Shop volunteers in the photo includes (L to R): **Tom Schramm, Pat Cosgrove, Karl Jones** and **John Prestholdt**.



Karl Jones (L) and **Pat Cosgrove** try to loosen pedestal bolts in the truck frame. Note the use of a pipe extension to multiply torque.



Break Time! Here are some of the CHSL shop crew (L to R): **Pat Cosgrove, Dennis Stephens, John Prestholdt, Jim Willmore, Miles Anderson, Mike Miller** and **Mark Digre**. (Aaron Isaacs photo)

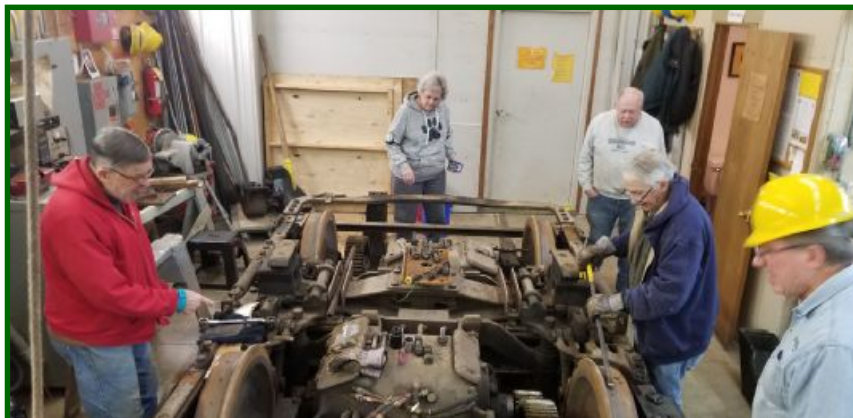
Excelsior Shop Update



The ESL shop guys are working on one of the Baldwin trucks that are under Mesaba No. 10. Here we see **Jerry Draeger** (L) using a car mover to move the truck. **Scott Heiderich** is supervising and **Steve Mages** is working in the background. (Karen Kertzman photo)



A group of ESL shop and operating volunteers braved the cold in early January to welcome the new year of 2022. They're standing in front of Duluth No. 265.



(Above) Here's the crew that are working on the Mesaba No. 10 truck: (L to R) **Scott Heiderich**; **Karen Kertzman** who has been photo documenting the activity at ESL; **Dick Zawacki**, MSM's Chief Mechanical Officer; **Scott Wardrope**; and, **Jerry Draeger**.

(Left) **Scott Wardrope** is working in the carbarn shop pit jacking up the axle so the wheel bearings can be removed for inspection and cleaning. (Karen Kertzman photos)



Here's a terrific photo of our three historic Minnesota streetcars at ESL. Duluth No. 265 is on the left, then Duluth 78, and finally Mississippi Valley Public Service Co (Winona, MN lines) No. 10. We hope to have the damaged motor for No. 10 repaired sometime in 2022 and hopefully No. 10 can operate in limited service in late 2022. (Photo by Todd Bender)



Sales and Revenue for 2021

By Bill Arends—MSM Merchandise Manager

Numbers, numbers, numbers. So many numbers. Actually there are only ten numbers. 1, 2, 3,4.....It's the order in which they are arranged and how they are arrived at that give them meaning. This report recaps the revenue generated through revenue service and online sales for MSM for 2021.

Even though revenue service did not begin until July and many of our Special Events were cancelled, including all of our very popular winter events the PJ Party and Story Time trolley, our total revenue from operations was nearly \$59,000 for an operating season that began on July 2nd. Our online store generated over \$2,700. Yes, we do have an online store. Total revenue for the year - \$61,500.

The majority of our revenue comes from Fares, Charters and Passes. Revenue from rides is \$45,000. Nearly \$16,000 comes from merchandise revenue, almost thirty percent! The largest merchandise category is toys at \$3,860. Other significant categories are: books \$2,590; artifacts \$765; Christmas ornaments \$750; jewelry \$660; and, candy and other edibles \$650. Nearly \$900 of book sales are from the sale of prior-owned books that were donated to MSM. Artifact revenue comes from the sale of number boards from TCRT streetcars, signs no longer being used, insulators, and other duplicate items from the museum's collection. All items with no cost. The large amount of toy sales and children's book sales (\$600) helps identify our base ridership.

Way too much information? Maybe. But running a successful business means knowing where the revenue is coming from. Our primary business is education, preserving a little slice of Minnesota's electric transit history and, of course, providing an enjoyable and fun ride on a historic streetcar.

See you in the Linden Hills station at the POS system machine. +



(Left) Here are a couple of photos of the merchandise display areas inside the Linden Hills station at the Como-Harriet Streetcar Line. MSM's merchandise sales are an important part of MSM's business operations because it directly supports our museum's education and preservation efforts. (Two photos by Bill Arends)

(Right) Out at the Excelsior Streetcar Line, we have *Karen's Korner* which displays and sells merchandise. Located inside the ESL ready carbarn, *Karen's Korner* has similar items as in the Linden Hills station. **Karen Kertzman** manages the merchandise operations at ESL and has done an outstanding job in stocking popular items and making the whole *Karen's Korner* area eye appealing.

The wall behind the sales counter continues to the left and has a number of historic photographs of the TCRT streetcars in Excelsior and a few photos of the TCRT express boats that plied set routes on Lake Minnetonka from 1906 to 1926.

(Photo by Karen Kertzman)



March 24-----MSM Annual member's meeting, 7:00 PM via Zoom teleconference
 March-April-----CHSL & ESL new operator recruiting and training
 May 7-----Beginning of ESL's & CHSL's weekend operations (tentative)



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 Thursday March 24, 2022 starting at 7:00 PM. As we have done the last two annual meetings, this meeting will be done by Zoom teleconference because of the uncertainties of COVID-19 and its variants, both current and future. You will receive a formal notice of the meeting and election of two Directors soon.

Annual Appeal. It's been a while since we acknowledged donations to our 2021-2022 annual appeal

received since last November. To rectify that, here are our members and friends who donated. Bruce Allyn, Keith Anderson, Shirley Baxter, David Brostrom, John Cartwright, Steve Collin, Larry Coulter, Jerry & Joyce Draeger, Dennis Fischer, Dutton Foster, Barb Gacek, Bill Gardner, William Graham, Bruce & Cyndi Gustafson, John Heintz, Dave Hogan, Aaron & Mona Isaacs, Russ Isbrandt, Andrew Jacob, Karl Jones, John Hallberg Jones, Darel Leipold, Thom as Lowry, Rita Martinez, Gordon Moore, Eric Neumann & Joe Plante, Dan & Mary Jo Odegaard, Jerry & Muriel Olsen, Russell Olson, Dr. Bennett Porter, John Prestholdt, Edward Rapoport, Linda Ridlehuber, Judge James Rogers, Lisa Rottach, Jill Seinola, Linea Sodergren, Dennis & Ruth Stephens, Greg Taylor, Barbara Thoman, Greg Thomas, Warren & Paula Weck, The Head Family Foundation and two anonymous donations.

Many, many thanks to each and every one of you for your generous donations that will allow our museum to continue the work to preserve and interpret Minnesota's electric railway history. ☺

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
 January-February—2022**

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, 2022.

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

(From the Front Platform *Continued from page 1*)

written policies that underpin everything we do. He edits the *Streetcar Currents* newsletter, handles our insurance business, is technical advisor to the overhead wire crew and ShiftPlanning assistant manager. Jim's the one who lets us know when a shift needs crew members, and he sends out those mass e-mail notices (*V-grams*) to our members whenever it's needed.

As for me, I'm the Board Chair, historian, *Twin City Lines* editor, librarian/archivist and fund raiser.

Help wanted. **Steve McCulloch** has just stepped down as the CHSL grounds Foreman. If you're interested in the job, give Volunteer Coordinator **Pat Cosgrove** a call at 952-953-6559.

We also need more coordinators for individual special events to take the load off **Rod Eaton**.

To all of you, thank you for the unsung, but crucial work that you do. ☺

Streetcar CURRENTS Winter Publication Schedule

The **Streetcar CURRENTS**, is now in its winter publication schedule. You've been receiving the **Streetcar CURRENTS** every other month since September 2021. Publication date for the next issue (March-April 2022) 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