

# STREETCAR

## CURRENTS

July 2023



MINNESOTA STREETCAR MUSEUM

Aaron Isaacs—MSM Board Chair

### Living History at MSM

**June 4th Motorettes/19th Amendment event.** An all-female crew ran the Como-Harriet line on June 4 to celebrate the history of the World War II motorettes, as well as the anniversary of the 19th amendment that gave women the right to vote. Member **Anja Curiskis** dressed as a suffragette. The League of Women Voters set up an information table.

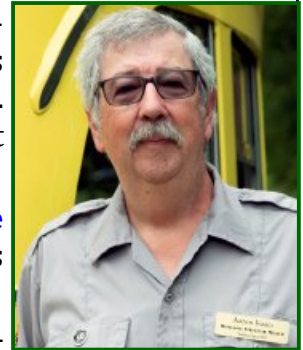
At the other end of the platform, historic reenactors and MSM volunteers **Katie Barron** and **Faith Vickers** appeared in their WWII-vintage military uniforms. This is their first appearance at the streetcar, but it won't be their last.

In case you're curious about their uniforms and how she got involved with reenactment, Katie provides this answer.

"Our uniforms are the US Marine Corps Women's Reserve summer service uniform and the Navy WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service) Officer Summer Service dress uniform. I brought a display of literature that a woman might see when she was looking to join up and what items she might see once she got into her chosen branch of service. I also brought the Cadet Nurse summer uniform to represent the Cadet Nurse program, which was a Public Health Service program that recruited women to become nurses to replace those who chose to join the Army or Navy Nurse Corps. The University of Minnesota was one of the largest schools to promote this program and there would have been many women who used the streetcars to get to class at the U of MN while enrolled as a Cadet Nurse.

I got into Living History because when I toured Fort Snelling, I realized that there wasn't a lot of female representation in Living History. That led me to think that women's involvement in these time periods/conflicts wasn't valued, I knew that had to be the general impression the public got from their visits to the Fort as well. I interviewed to be an interpreter at Fort Snelling, specifically focusing on female soldiering in the Civil War, but wasn't selected.

It was around this time I met my husband Tony, and he introduced me to WWII reenacting. It was then that I shifted my focus because with WWII reenacting I could volunteer my time and work independently to bring attention to a part of WWII that is almost never talked about, that is women's roles in the military. During my research I also found out that my own grandma was a WAC, which she never mentioned. I've found throughout the years that women's involvement in the military has been taken for granted or trivialized/sexualized and I am always actively working to bring these women the respect and honor they deserve by portraying them as accurately as possible. Faith joined me in this pursuit a little over a year ago now. She has even curated a rare Canadian Women's Army Corps impression (CWAC), a nod to her dad's Canadian heritage."



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Our goal is to make the past as real as possible. I'm hoping events like this will inspire others to dress up as passengers from a particular decade when the streetcars ran. ☺

**MSM Commemorates Women’s Right to Vote In The U.S.**

On August 20, 1920 the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified, granting women in the U.S, the right to vote. To commemorate that event, MSM’s women Operators comprised the operating crew for both shifts on Sunday June 4th. The four photos below memorializes this day.



On June 4th at change-of-shift time, both crews posed in front of No. 1300: (L to R) **Jennifer Gascoigne, Leah Harp, Mary Jo Odegaard, Karen Noll, Linda Ridlehuber, Elizabeth Hauck, Glenda Marsh, Mary Ann Goens-Bradley, Katie Barron, Anja Curiskis and Faith Vickers.** (Aaron Isaacs photo)



Historic reenactors and MSM volunteers **Katie Barron** and **Faith Vickers** appeared in their WWI-vintage military uniforms. A full description of their uniforms is contained in Aaron Isaacs' column on page one. (Aaron Isaacs photo)



(Upper left) **Anja Curiskis** is dressed as a suffragette. Anja says give women the right to vote! (Aaron Isaacs photo)

(Above) Here are our three reenactors standing in front of TCRT No. 1300: **Anja Curiskis, Faith Vickers** and **Katie Barron.** (Linda Ridlehuber photo)

(Left) We've had a good number of charters so far this year. Here's a smiling group of folks posing in front of No. 1300. The crew consisted of **Mike Buck** (sitting on the platform) and **Steve Simon** next to No. 1300. (Mike Buck photo)

**More Photos**



June 11th was Art On The Lake festival in Excelsior. And the people came out on a beautiful day to ride our streetcars. *(Mike Buck photo)*



A happy bunch of passengers at ESL enjoying a ride on Duluth No. 78. No. 78 was built in 1893, restored in the 1980s and is one of the oldest operating streetcars in the US. *(Mike Buck photo)*



Completing the gravel work around the new concrete apron in front of the ESL car barn doors. *(L to R) Tom Heimer, Michael Kimitch, Howie Melco and Carl Floren.* *(Karen Kertzman photo)*



Stuff happens! When an area-wide power outage during a shift left Duluth No. 265 stranded in the middle of Morse Avenue, the manual car mover was used to move it 20 feet—one or two inches at a time! *(L to R) Tim Gephart, Michael Buck, curious neighbor and Jim Kertzman.* *(Karen Kertzman photo)*



There's something about a streetcar operating at night that's magical! Here's TCRT No. 1300 at the Linden Hills station (left) and at the north end platform during CHSL's special monthly Owl Service event on June 3d. And, how about that full moon! *(Photos by Jerry Betz)*

- July 4- -----Holiday operations at ESL and CHSL
- July 6- -----At CHSL all female operating crew honoring TCRT's motorettes
- July 11- -----Story Time Trolley at ESL
- July 20- -----PJ Party trolley at CHSL is sold out
- July 22 & 23- -----Excelsior Crazy Days at Excelsior—ESL has extended schedule



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

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

**Address Changes!** Please let us know when you have a change to your mailing address or e-mail address. In the case of the mailing address, MSM had to pay the Postal Service \$12 for a batch of address changes that resulted in either return mail or a notice of address change. Help save our museum unnecessary expense by letting MSM know when your vital info has changed.

**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](http://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  
 July—2023**

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 July 20, 2023.

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](mailto:jvaitkunas@msn.com)

**Next MSM Board of Directors meeting.** The museum's Board of Directors will hold its next meeting on Thursday evening, July 13th, starting at 7:00 PM. The meeting will be held using the Zoom tele-conference application. If you are interested in attending the meeting, let Secretary Jim Vaitkunas know and I'll send you the logon information a couple of days prior to the meeting. My e-mail address is: [jvaitkunas@msn.com](mailto:jvaitkunas@msn.com)

**Goodbye Old Friend!**

We have been using a home-built tower wagon at CHSL for at least the last 45-plus years. As previously reported in this newsletter, our shop forces have built a new and improved one and the old tower wagon became surplus. We offered it to other streetcar museums and the National Capitol Trolley Museum in Maryland just north of the District of Columbia border said they wanted it. A truck came by a couple of weeks ago and hauled it off to its new home. Here are a few photos of the loading-out onto the trailer.



After the tower wagon was derailed and moved in the Park Board's maintenance area at Bde Maka Ska, a heavy-duty forklift was used to lift the tower wagon on to the transporting trailer.



The forklift is gently easing the tower wagon onto its side on the trailer.



The tower wagon is now tied-down and ready to roll east. The crew consisted of (L to R) **Aaron Isaacs**, the truck driver, **Dennis Stephens**, **Jim Willmore**, **Tom Schramm** and **Miles Anderson**. **Bill Arends** was also on the crew and he took all three photos.