

STREETCAR

CURRENTS

June 2025



MINNESOTA STREETCAR MUSEUM

Transitions

Bruce Gustafson—General Supt.

June is both an exciting time and also a time for reflection. Post Memorial Day the Museum's full summer operating schedule begins and we look forward to our special events, some of which are tried and true and some of which are new or will be changed to make them more relevant to our customers. An example of an event we continue to fine tune is Doors Open Minneapolis, which resulted in over 1,000 fares over the two-day weekend. The core of the event is the docent-led tours of CHSL's George K. Isaacs car barn giving our visitors a glimpse into the behind-the-scenes work of the museum. Special thanks to [Aaron Isaacs](#) who led the program and the docent group consisting of [Auggie Lassig](#), [Bill Arends](#), [Griffin Lawrence](#), [Tom Schramm](#) and [Dennis Stephens](#)



The other exciting transition this time of year is the addition of new operating volunteers who have completed, or are in the process of completing, their training, and those volunteers wish to expand their operating skills by training to operate TCRT PCC No. 322. Training Superintendent [Bill Pekarna](#) again leads 2025's Operator training sessions which began in mid-April with 17 candidates, 14 at CHSL and three at ESL. Of the 14 CHSL candidates, four have graduated: [Scott Benson](#), [Sammy Kinzel](#), [Cooper Hancock](#) and [Margie Thompson](#) with nine still in training. At ESL [Karen Kertzman](#) leads the training, [Steve Thomas](#) and [Sarah Dibble](#) have graduated with one still training. Assisting with the training which included more than 50 sessions and 100+ contact hours were [Katie Barron](#), [Scott Benson](#), [Jerry Betz](#), [Pat Cosgrove](#), [Anja Curiskis](#), [Marion Garcia](#), [Andy Jacob](#), [Jim Kertzman](#), [Ted Rich](#) and [Linda Ridlehuber](#). Thanks to all our hard-working trainers.

[Fred Beamish](#) again leads our training/recertification for PCC No. 322. Helping Fred is [Katie Barron](#). The team has recertified much of last year's roster and has qualified three new PCC operators: [Marcus Corbin](#), [Tony Lebda](#) and [Serge Zenisek](#)

Congratulations to several of our volunteers who have stepped up and accepted the role as Shift Foreman. The Foreman is the leader of the operational shift who is responsible to ensure a successful execution of the shift operating plan so that everyone involved, our guests, our volunteers, our neighbors and the general public, have a safe and enjoyable experience. When you see them, please extend congratulations to our new Foreman: at CHSL [Marion Garcia](#), [Tom May](#) and [Ed Rappoport](#); at ESL [Dave Buckman](#) and [Eric Werner](#).

The reflective aspect of this transition phase of our season is to acknowledge that some of our veteran Operators are no longer able, for a variety of reasons, to volunteer. Without naming those operators individually, I would like to thank them for their years of service and dedication and their contributions to making the museum an enjoyable place to work and providing our guests with a quality product each and every day.

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Finally, I would like to thank all of our new and returning volunteers for their time and effort to create a good visitor experience for our museum. Pay raises are being processed as this goes to print. 😊 **Have fun. Be safe.** 🍀



From the Front Platform—Thoughts on Our Museum

Aaron Isaacs — MSM Board Chair

Doors Open Minneapolis Recap. On May 17-18 we participated in Doors Open Minneapolis for the third straight year, one of about 100 venues opening up their behind-the-scenes facilities to the public. It's a big operation, requiring an extra 10am-12:30pm streetcar shift both days, a shop cleanup beforehand and four shifts of 3-4 car barn guides each. All told 25 volunteers filled 33 scheduled shifts. Working multiple shifts were **Keith Anderson, Bill Arends, Rose Arends, Pat Cosgrove, Aaron Isaacs, Augie Lassig** and **Dennis Stephens**. I'm pleased to say the event came off smoothly.



What did we get for all that work? Lots of visitors. They checked in with the pair of volunteers from Doors Open operator *Rethos* who were stationed at the Linden Hills station. They counted 406 who toured the car barn Saturday, and 599 on Sunday, a total of 1005. That's 100 more than either of the previous years.

There was no charge for the tours. Visitors had the option of walking up to the car barn, but most chose to buy a streetcar ride and get off at the barn. The trip sheets show a total of 1004 riders, 320 on Saturday and 684 on Sunday. Fare revenue for the weekend was up 19 percent from 2024. It was also a good weekend for merchandise sales, \$1017 up 57 percent from 2024. Thanks to **Bill Arends** for the revenue stats..

My thanks to all who participated. I heard multiple compliments on our professionalism, the cleanliness of the shop and lots of thanks for preserving streetcar history.

Depot Canopy Roof—Not Quite Yet. The roof board installation has turned out to be more complicated than we expected, but it's finally underway. Work was delayed by rain and the long Memorial Day weekend. All the steel rafters have to be drilled to receive a narrow board screwed on top of them. The actual roof boards that fill the voids between the rafters come next. Once that's done, the roofing contractor will install the cedar shakes that replicate the historic roof.

Dick Stoner's Models and Photos. MSM member **Dick Stoner**, who passed away last year, was a terrific O-scale model builder. This year I helped his wife Barbara dispose of his collection of rail photos and paper ephemera. It was important that these items find a good home, so packages were sent to the Missabe Railroad Historical Society, Soo Line Historical Society, Chicago & North Western Historical Society, Burlington Route Historical Society, Great Northern Historical Society, Northern Pacific Historical Society and the Shore Line Interurban Historical Society. We received 58 of Dick's Minnesota streetcar photos. In addition, we purchased five of his O-scale trolley and interurban models:

- Mesaba Railway #10 in the original dark green color scheme
- Mesaba Railway combine #12 in the green scheme
- Mesaba Railway #13 in the later maroon color scheme.
- Minneapolis Anoka & Cuyuna Range #1 and #3 in the red, white and blue World War II scheme.

The Mesaba models are on display in the Excelsior Streetcar Line's car barn. The MA&CR cars are in the Russell Olson Library in the George K. Isaacs car barn at Como-Harriet. 🌱



Aaron Isaacs



Karen Kertzman

CHSL Photo Ops

Our 2025 season started on May 3d. Here's the first crew at CHSL for the 2025 season: (L to R) **Dick Rach**, **Joe Betzler**, **Marcus Corbin** and **Andy Jacob**. (Photo by Mike Buck)



We have a tremendous turnout for Doors Open Minneapolis this year. Here's one group boarding No. 1300 for the return trip to the Linen Hills station. (Photo by Aaron Isaacs)



On Memorial Day, the early-bird shift and first crew were **Katie Barron** in World War II nurses' uniform **Dan Odegaard**, **Ed Rapaport**, **Alan Kohl**, **Marion Garcia**, **Scott Benson**, **Mike Buck**, **Margie Thompson**, **Griffin Lawrence**, and **Corgan Archuleta**. In the first row, reenactors were **Michael Olson** in the 1st Minnesota Volunteer Infantry regiment Civil War Uniform, **Anthony Lebda** as a WWII Marine and **Bob Leininger** as a WWI Marine. (Photo by Nick Mainguy)



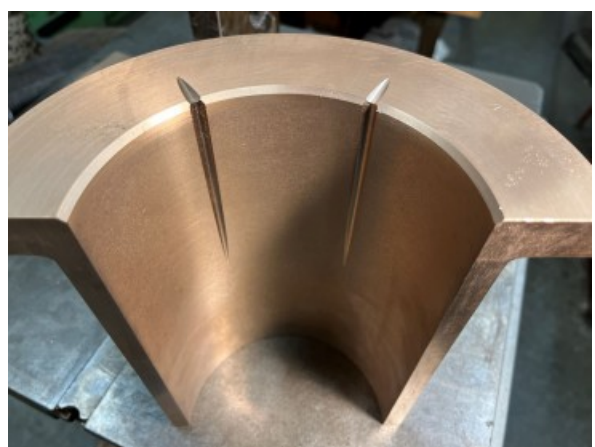
Another one of those behind the scenes work that our passengers never see but that are most important for our image and their comfort. In this photo, new volunteer and recent graduate from our Operator training program, **Scott Benson** is performing some necessary repair work on one of the benches at the Linden Hills station. A local admirer looks on with faithful Towser. (Photo by Aaron Isaacs)



From the CHSL Shop
The first prototype bronze castings for the TCRT 1239 truck rebuilding project came from Windy Hill Foundry in August 2023. **Rob Mangels** milled the mating surfaces in his shop in January 2024. Lathe work at CHSL began with process and tooling development in March 2024. It's taken just over two years to complete 8 bearing sets (16 half shells).

The motor axle support bearing sets are shown on the left. The photo on the right shows the last operation, milling oil distribution grooves to feed the flange (thrust) face.

(Photos by Dennis Stephens)



June 14 & 15----- Excelsior's Art on The Lake event. ESL's streetcars will run full schedules both days.
 June 15----- Father's Day—Dads ride for free with their family at ESL and CHSL
 June 14----- Story Time Trolley at ESL—5 PM and 6 PM
 June 17----- PJ Party trolley at CHSL—6 PM and 7 PM
 July 4----- Special Independence Day Operations—two-shifts at ESL and CHSL
 July 6----- TCRT Motorettes recognition day. Celebrate TCRT's women Operators hired during World War II.

MORE PHOTO OPS

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 e-mail address are:

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Streetcar **CURRENTS** June—2025

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, 2025.

Please send items for the Currents to:
Jim.vaitkunas@trolleyride.org



We had a great turnout for the May car cleaning session at CHSL. The crew consisted of: (L to R) **Louis Hoffman, Scott Benson, Tom May, Artie Anderson, Max, Tim Layeux** and **Bea Funk**.

(Photo by Jim Vaitkunas)



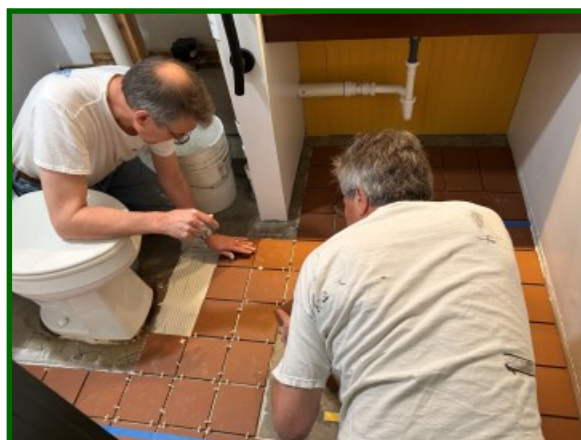
May 3d opening day at ESL had first crew of the season: (L to R) **Gregg Thomas, Mary Amsden** and **Charles Karver** waiting to greet the first riders of the 2025 ESL season.

(Photo by Karen Kertzman)



Tom Heimer, Scott Wardrope, and **Howie Melco** are seen here repairing a rail bond at ESL.

(Photo by Jerry Draeger)



Dave Buckman and **Carl Floren** laying the tile to put the finishing touch on the new ESL car barn-restroom.

(Photo by Jerry Draeger)