



# Streetcar CURRENTS



December 2005

Minneapolis & Excelsior, Minnesota

## Many Thanks to Many People!

- *Our Halloween ghost trolley was a huge success made possible by the hard work of many people*
- *Our track project now is virtually completed with just a few "clean-up" things to take care of*
- *Our shop crew is hard at work replacing the siding on No. 1300 and working on the rear track brakes for No. 322*
- *Jim Willmore and the Tuesday crew have shipped the Melbourne trucks to Dallas and will soon ship the Brill 21E truck to New Zealand*
- *Holly trolley will run for four weekends in November and December*

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**Masthead Photo:** Ghost trolley in the mist—this year's ghost trolley was a rousing success! This spooky scene shows No. 265 departing for the unknown in 2004.

Wendy Dunham photo

## KUDOS TO A LOT OF PEOPLE

Well, the 2005 Ghost Trolley is over. We had four warm nights, no rain, a good turnout, and no mishaps (well, almost none). Everyone who volunteered and helped make the event the big success it was deserves our thanks.

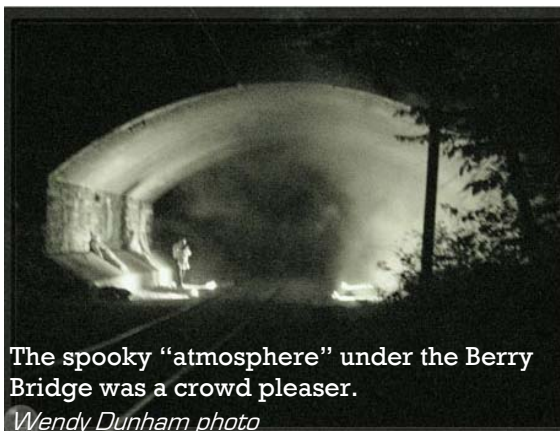
What makes Holly Trolley unique among the many area Halloween attractions is, of course, our streetcars. So thanks to those of you who operated them each night, worked the platform area, and flagged the crossing. And thanks, too, to those who sold tokens and trinkets in the tent, kept the cider hot and the candy bowl filled. **Bill Arends**, I noticed, spent three nights selling glowing bracelets. We sold about 1,000 of them, netting around \$300.

**Dave French** turned in another award-winning performance and set the theme and tone for our riders. Haunting performances were also turned in by a group of ghostly passengers boarding at the north end--trainee **Marcia Sanoden** and her friends **Joyce Stone**, **Emily Peabody**, and **Doug Hill**. **Karl Jones** was once again bloodcurdling as The Count, and **Michael Helde** was a cutup as the Texas Chainsaw guy. **John Prestholdt**, frightening in his own right, handled our cash for the entire event and did a terrific job.

**Scott Heiderich** and "Electric" **Mike Miller** spent Friday afternoon setting up and lighting up the tent, then assisted in getting the generator and other gear setup under the bridge for our first night of operation. **David Gepner** spent two nights running the fog and lighting at the bridge; **Rick Krenske** and **John Kennedy** each did one night's bridge duty. John, as he has in past years, decorated both cars and made them look their ghostly best. **Dave Norman** put in two lonely nights at the maintenance building turning Car No. 13's "head lamp" on and off.

We'll review this year's ghost trolley and start planning improvements to next year's GT later this winter. If you have any thoughts, ideas or suggestions, please drop me an e-mail at [rpeaton@comcast.net](mailto:rpeaton@comcast.net), or call me at 763.576.0608.

A lot of effort goes into an event like Ghost Trolley, and it requires the work of a lot of our members. But the results are worth it. With general ridership remaining more or less constant year-to-year, special events like Ghost Trolley provide needed additional revenue for acquisitions, restorations, and ongoing maintenance.



The spooky "atmosphere" under the Berry Bridge was a crowd pleaser.

Wendy Dunham photo

On November 26th we'll begin four weekends of Holly Trolley. This is the first time we've attempted to operate this late into the year, and winter weather may put a snowy end to our plans. But if it proves popular with our riders, Holly Trolley could become another annual money making event for the Minnesota Streetcar Museum. If you haven't already, please volunteer to work on a Saturday or Sunday afternoon. Happy holidays!

**Rod Eaton** — GENERAL SUPERINTENDENT

## From the Front Platform *Jim Vaithunas*—CHAIR OF THE BOARD

### Minnegazette Continues!

In the first of what we hope will be a long string of cooperative ventures with our MTM friends, the MTM Board has agreed to publish the *Minnegazette* as a joint publication of the two museums. Instead of launching a new **Aaron Isaacs**-edited magazine, as was planned, MSM is able to continue to offer the new history-only *Minnegazette* as a continued benefit of your MSM membership – all for only \$30.00 per year for individual members and \$45.00 per year for household members. And remember, this includes unlimited free rides on both streetcar lines and discounted charters!

### MSM Annual Meeting

Now that we are a separate Museum and non-profit corporation we must hold annual meetings to comply with federal and state laws and regulations. Our planning has begun in this regard with a Nominating Committee talking to people about serving on the Board of Directors. If you are approached by someone from the Nominating Committee please accept their call to be a Board member. We'll have more details about the Board election process in a letter to be sent to all MSM members in early 2006. The date of our annual meeting is still to be determined but it should be sometime in early- to mid-March of 2006.

## MSM News Update *Louis Hoffman*—SENIOR SUPERINTENDENT

**More new members and donors recognized.** Welcome to new members **Martin Carlson** and **Mary Knoblauch**, **Dennis Fischer**, **Kevin Penne**, and **Gerald Robertson**. MSM memberships now total 182 with income of \$11,965.00 plus \$2,388.30 in donation to "The Founder's Fund" totaling membership income of \$14,353.30. Thanks also to the following members for their donations: **Dave French** and **Bill Herzog** for donations to the TEA-21/Carbarn Fire Suppression System Fund. Bill's donation was matched by IBM.

**Annual Appeal Roundup.** This Annual Appeal's proceeds will help fund the installation of a fire suppression system at the Excelsior Carbarn, water service to the Linden Hills Carbarn (unless a dry system is used), and fire suppression systems for the Excelsior and Linden Hills Carbarns and the ongoing restoration of Winona No. 10. Total donations are \$8,110.00. Your tax-deductible donations to the Annual Appeal may be sent to: The Minnesota Streetcar Museum, Annual Appeal, P. O. Box 14467, University Station, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55414-0467.

**Fundraising plans afoot.** ARM conventions often involve lots of time on buses as attendees go on field trips (*see special report beginning on page 3—Ed.*).

**Louis Hoffman** and **Aaron Isaacs** made good use of that time to brainstorm a list of projects for which the Museum could seek grants. If you have projects to suggest or, better yet, if you'd like to help with fundraising (whether you're experienced or not), please contact Louis at 612-729-0442 or [hamhoff@msn.com](mailto:hamhoff@msn.com) or Aaron at 612-929-7066 or [AaronMona@aol.com](mailto:AaronMona@aol.com). Look for the list after Board approval in future issues of *Streetcar Currents*.

**Halloween Ghost Trolleys at Como-Harriet and Excelsior big successes!** The Como-Harriet Halloween Ghost Trolley was a grand success, carrying 2,407 passengers, collecting 2,301 tokens, and grossing \$6,667.50 in unusually mild weather. In eight years of the

HGT, it was the third-best year (2,642 in 2003 and 2,517 in 2000). Here are the statistics by night:

	Psgs.	Tokens	Revenue
<b>Friday</b>	644	592	\$1,604.35
<b>Saturday</b>	803	780	2,219.25
<b>Sunday</b>	707	696	2,111.80
<b>Monday</b>	253	233	732.10

Here's an interesting statistic: since 1998, the Como-Harriet HGT has carried 17,127 passengers, running two nights in 1998, three in 1999, and four since 2000!

Many thanks to all who made it possible—the volunteer motormen, conductors, flaggers, platform attendants, ticket and souvenir sellers, starters, the Engineering and Mechanical Department forces who made the property and the streetcars ready, including decorations, and especially the actors who made the trolley into the Halloween Ghost Trolley. Although many deserve to be listed by name, a special tip of the motorman's cap (if he has a head!) to **Dave French**, who has portrayed the TCRT President, The Grave Digger, Dr. I. N. Sain, the Perfect Volunteer, the Headless Passenger, the 42<sup>nd</sup> Street Flagman, and the Superintendent of Track Maintenance to those 17,000-plus passengers.

At Excelsior, lines were long because No. 78 was pinch-hitting for still-idled No. 1239. But from the wonderful story on KARE-11 news at 10:00 p.m. on Halloween night, it sure looked like a good time was had by all. Thanks to KARE-11 photojournalist **Jim Douglas**, husband of Excelsior-Lake Minnetonka Historical Society volunteer **Suellen Douglas**, for documenting the Excelsior HGT and highlighting our partnership with ELMHS.

### COMO-HARRIET NOTES

**Linden Hills Neighborhood Council funds historic marker program.** The Linden Hills

*(Continued on page 3)*

**(MSM News Update** *Continued from page 2)*

Neighborhood Council gave MSM a \$700 grant to fund the design, construction, and installation of historic markers along the line interpreting the various historic locations and structures. This will further the Museum's educational efforts and perhaps let us launch the "Classroom on Wheels" that's been discussed for several years. With this grant in hand, we hope to have the signs up by spring. Thanks to **Aaron Isaacs** for the idea, writing the grant application, making the presentation, and for the work yet to come. We'll need volunteers to set posts and install the signs. If you can help, let us know. If you'd like to make a donation to this worthwhile project, please mark your check "Historic Marker Program" and send it to MSM, P. O. Box 14467, University Station, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55414.0467.

**Mechanical Department Update.** No. 1300 was taken out of service after the Halloween Ghost Trolley to enable Mechanical Department forces to start work on the pole-side wainscot, which will be replaced this winter. Stop by the carbarn to lend a hand so No. 1300 is ready to return to service next spring.

**Transportation Department Update.** Ridership through October 31, including the Halloween Ghost Trolley, was 14,983 passengers (including 577 passengers on 14 charters) and 11,513 tokens. Taking away the HGT figures (2,407 and 2,301), totals were 12,576 and 9,212. Here are the month-by-month numbers:

	<b>Psgrs.</b>	<b>Tokens</b>	<b>Charters</b>	<b>Psgrs.</b>
May	4,044	3,148	6	277
Aug.	3,315	2,603	1	75
Sept.	3,053	2,255	3	128
Oct.	3,994	3,507	4	97

The above total numbers are historically very low compared to past years because of our almost 3-month shut-down occurring at the height of our season.

**EXCELSIOR NOTES**

**Tip of the Motorman's Cap Department.** We recently received a nice note from the students and teachers at Excelsior Elementary School, who rode No. 78 on the Excelsior Streetcar Line this fall: "The 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students at Excelsior Elementary had a fabulous time on our recent field trip aboard the Excelsior Streetcar. We even tied our visit into our language arts curriculum by recording a few facts and opinions about our trip. Thank you!" Take a look at their work on your next visit to the Excelsior Carbarn. And thanks to the crew who made their trip so memorable!"

**Transportation Department Update.** 2005 was a good year in Excelsior. A total of 6,333 passengers rode, 5,385 as paying passengers and 948 as free passengers (children under age four). With CHSL closed for

most of the busy summer season, ESL contributed a steady source of income while none was coming in at Lake Harriet.

	<b>Paid</b>	<b>Free</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Regular</b>	3,634	913	4,547
<b>Charter</b>			507
<b>Halloween</b>	1,132	0	1,132
<b>Total</b>	5,385	948	6,333

**SPECIAL REPORT—ARM 2005 MEETING**

*Louis Hoffman* — SENIOR SUPERINTENDENT

**A**s reported last month, **Ken Albrecht, Louis Hoffman, Aaron Isaacs,** and **Jim Vaitkunas** represented MSM at the ARM fall conference from October 5 to 9 hosted by the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania in Strasburg, Pennsylvania, with Jim being the Museum's delegate to the October 9 annual meeting. Aaron attended as editor of ARM's *Railway Museum Quarterly* magazine.

**W**e traveled to the conference in style, aboard Amtrak's *Empire Builder* to Chicago, the *Capitol Limited* to Pittsburg and then the *Pennsylvanian* to Lancaster, Pennsylvania about 10 miles from our hotel in Strasburg.

**O**n the conferences' first evening, we enjoyed a reception aboard the Strasburg Rail Road's first class cars in the Strasburg station. Although a for-profit corporation (which carries more than 300,000 passengers annually!), the quality of its restoration work would make many museums green with envy.

**E**ach day's activities were organized into morning seminars followed by afternoon field trips, except for Saturday when we spent all day traveling to and visiting the east Broad Top Railroad in Orbisonia (Rockhill Furnace), Pennsylvania and the adjacent Rockhill Trolley Museum. Highlights of the trip included.

- An afternoon visit to Philadelphia where we visited Juniata Terminal Company, a locomotive rebuilder famous for its two Pennsy E-8s and snappy Tuscan red train. Our next stop was the Franklin Institute. We skipped its impressive rail exhibits for a journey back in time. We boarded a No. 10 car in the Market Street Subway, which serves the heavy-rail Frankford-Market (blue) line and the light rail subway-surface lines, our destination Girard Avenue where we enjoyed a ride on the Girard Avenue streetcar line recently returned to service with heavily rebuilt PCCs in the traditional green and cream Philadelphia Transportation Company colors. We returned to the famous ex-PRR 30th Street station via the Market-Frankford line (elevated and subway) and had dinner there prior to our bus trip back to Strasburg.
- Friday we visited the Strasburg Rail Road, the nation's

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## Streetcar *CURRENTS* December 2005

Streetcar *CURRENTS* IS A PERIODIC NEWSLETTER FOR THE MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF THE MINNESOTA STREETCAR MUSEUM.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING ITEMS FOR THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE *Streetcar CURRENTS* IS JANUARY 20, 2006.

PLEASE SEND ITEMS TO EDITOR JIM VAITKUNAS AT THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS:

155 CHAPARRAL DR.,

APPLE VALLEY, MN 55124-9774

YOU CAN SEND INPUT OR INQUIRIES BY

E-MAIL TO: [jvaitkunas@msn.com](mailto:jvaitkunas@msn.com)



MINNESOTA STREETCAR  
MUSEUM

COMO-HARRIET  
STREETCAR LINE

EXCELSIOR STREETCAR LINE

## WHAT'S HAPPENING?

Nov & Dec  
December 7  
February 12  
April  
April 7 & 8  
April 29  
May 6  
May 20

Holly trolley operations  
Annual holiday party, 7:00 PM—Linden Hills carbarn  
MSM Board Winter planning retreat  
New Operator Training—dates to be announced  
MSM hosts ARM spring meeting  
Start of the CHSL operating season  
Start of the ESL operating season  
Track rebuilding project dedication ceremony

## ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY

We'll be holding our annual Holiday party on Wednesday, December 7th, starting at 7:00 PM. Location is the Linden Hills carbarn. Please bring a treat to share (beverages will be provided) and some canned-goods to donate to several local food shelves.

### (ARM 2005 Special Report *Continued from page 3*)

oldest common carrier railroad, founded in 1832, and took a ride to Paradise (the end of the line) through the Pennsylvania Dutch country

- Also on Friday we visited the adjacent Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, enclosed in an enormous trainshed and housing the Pennsylvania Railroad's historical locomotive and rolling stock collection
- Saturday we were on the bus again for the Twin Cities of Orbisonia and Rockhill Furnace, the latter home of the famous East Broad Top Railroad, a three-foot gauge coal hauler, and the Rockhill Trolley Museum, which operates on a long-abandoned EBT branch. Across from the EBT station is the Rockhill Trolley Museum, operating a nice assortment of Pennsylvania and Pennsylvania-built trolleys. We rode a Red Arrow Lines Brill "Bullet," an open Rio de Janeiro car, single and double-truck semi-convertibles from Porto, Portugal, and the Museum's finest car (in my view), York, Pennsylvania curved-sider No. 163. We also got to ride a variety of work equipment.

The annual meeting featured reports on ARM's initiatives during the past year (check out ARM's website at [www.railwaymuseum.org](http://www.railwaymuseum.org)). **Louis Hoffman**, an ARM Director from 1992 to 1997, was elected to a three-year term on the Board and will be working on convention planning issues, revising the By-laws, implementation of ARM's strategic plan, and publications. **Don Evans** of the West Coast Railway Heritage Park in Squamish, British Columbia was re-elected to the Board and **Mark Ray** of the Tennessee

Valley Railroad Museum was elected to the third slot. **Molly Butterworth**, Curator of the Museum of Transportation in Saint Louis, was elected President and **Steven Patrick**, Executive Director of the City of Bowie (Maryland) Museums was elected Vice-President.

Our trip back began on an on-time *Pennsylvanian* that arrived in Pittsburgh nineteen minutes early! Unfortunately, the *Capitol* was late about a half-hour, which extended our long layover in Pittsburgh even longer. We had a smooth on-time trip to Chicago which allowed us the pleasure of enjoying lunch at the famous *Berghoff* restaurant in downtown. The *Empire Builder* then carried us home.

ARM's spring 2006 conference will be in the Twin Cities, hosted by MSM on Friday and Saturday, April 7 and 8, 2006. It'll feature guest operations at Como-Harriet on Friday afternoon, night operations at Como-Harriet that evening, and night operations at Excelsior on Saturday. The ARM Board of Directors will meet on Friday and the seminars will be held during the day on Saturday.

The 2006 ARM annual conference will be in Sacramento hosted by the California State Railroad Museum. The 2007 spring conference will be at the Colorado Railroad Museum in Golden, Colorado. Future fall conferences will be at the Pennsylvania Trolley Museum in Washington (Pittsburgh) in 2007, the Canadian Railway Museum in Delson (Montreal), Quebec in 2008 (tentative), the West Coast Railway Heritage Park in Squamish (Vancouver), British Columbia in 2009, in the Baltimore-Washington, D. C. area (Baltimore Streetcar Museum, City of Bowie Museums, and National Capital Trolley Museum) in 2010. MSM is on tap for 2011 or 2012.