



Streetcar CURRENTS



Mar-Apr 2008

Minneapolis & Excelsior, Minnesota

2008 will be a BIG year for MSM

- **Mark those recertification dates on your calendar now**
- **We'll be celebrating the 100th birthday of TCRT No. 1300**
- **We'll have water installed in the Isaacs Car barn (hopefully)**
- **Please send in your volunteer surveys as soon as you receive yours**
- **Talk to your friends about Operator training**
- **Donate generously to our Annual Appeal if you have not yet done so**

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Masthead Photo: Here's the birthday girl! Built by the craftsmen at TCRT's Snelling Shops, No. 1300 was finished in April 1908. It was part of an order for 19 faster cars to be used on the St. Paul—Minneapolis "interurban" line along University Avenue. You'll be reading more about No. 1300 all this year. (Ray Peacock photo)

2008 Season is Upon Us

The start of our 2008 season isn't too far away. Many of our museum members are very busy getting everything in order for a terrific year. Plans are being made, dates are being set and our cars at both lines are being readied.

First, we're pleased to announce that **Kirsten Jacob** has volunteered to be our Charter Agent. She'll coordinate charters for Como-Harriet and Excelsior, filling the position managed so well by **Tom Beaumont**. Kirsten will work with her father, **Jerry Olsen**, and **Marv Krafve**, who continue as Charter Crew Callers. Additionally, Kirsten plans to return to operations herself, occasionally joining Jerry on Como-Harriet charter crews. With her son, **Andy**, who works many summer shifts with his grandfather, that gives the museum three generations of active volunteers.

Another volunteer we're pleased to welcome back to active status is **Mike Buck**. For many years, our Lake Harriet visitors have enjoyed Mike's historical interpretive displays in the station. This year, they'll find all new displays, thanks again to Mike's talents and effort. With archival assistance from **Aaron Isaacs**, Mike will have the new displays installed before the first revenue run in May. Mike also plans to operate our streetcars this summer.

Dave Irely is putting his interest in vintage autos to work for the Minnesota Streetcar Museum. On Sunday, June 1, we'll be hosting our first ever Classic Cars and Streetcars event. Dave has been contacting dozens of car clubs around the Twin Cities and inviting them to bring their pre-1955 cars down to the lake for the afternoon. Dave hopes to line Queen Avenue with streetcar era autos for people to admire. This car show is a terrific way to begin our summer-long celebration of TCRT 1300's 100th Birthday. If any of you would like to become involved in planning, coordinating and promoting other birthday events, please give me a call. There's lots to do and we can certainly use your help.

Speaking of TCRT 1300, **Charles Barthold** is working on producing at least one new t-shirt commemorating No. 1300's first 100 years. The shirt joins the 3-dimensional metal 1300 ornament which arrived in our gift collection late last year.

With so much energy focused on spring, at least one of us has begun thinking about next winter. **Dave Higgins** has volunteered to take the reins as Holly Trolley Event Coordinator. Holly Trolley was popular enough last year to continue and expand the event this year. We'll be adding one day—the Friday following Thanksgiving—giving children five days to "Ride With Santa." Dave and his wife **Mary Ann** have been key in decorating our car and Linden Hills station in the past. And last year Dave had the opportunity to put on the wig and beard and become the Jolly Old Elf for an afternoon. Apparently he enjoyed the experience.

There's much more going on. **Dave French** and **Clyde Hawkins** will begin recertification of Foremen and Operators soon, as well as training a new class of Operators (see page 6). And there's a new policy that more clearly defines the ending time for weekend second shifts. You'll find detailed information on this, and other operations changes, in the next issue of The **CURRENTS** due out around April 25th.

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 is:

P.O. Box 14467, University Station
 Minneapolis, MN 55414-0467
 952-922-1096

Streetcar *CURRENTS*
March-April 2008

Jim Vaitkunas—Editor
 Bill Graham—Distribution

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 April 20, 2008.

Please send items to editor Jim Vaitkunas at the following address:

155 Chaparral Dr.
 Apple Valley, MN 55124-9774

You can send input or enquiries by e-mail to: jvaitkunas@msn.com

MSM's Board of Directors. I'm sure many of you have been on a board or committee that struggled to find someone to take the leadership position. I accepted this position for three reasons. First, the Board agreed that it is easier to fill leadership positions if people know they are taking it for a set term rather than for an indefinite period. I will be Chair until March 2010 and then the Board will appoint a successor, or I may choose to serve longer if the Board agrees. Second, the position is much less intimidating knowing that I have so many great people to work with who are knowledgeable about how to run a museum. MSM is run like a team. I won't make decisions all by myself but will rely on the counsel of others to guide the Board. Third, I love MSM and want to serve the museum so it can continue to grow and prosper. *Continued on bottom of next page* ◊

From the Front Platform
Changing of the Guard

Please join me in welcoming **Dave French** as the new Chair of the Museum's Board of Directors. After three-plus years as your Board Chair, and over six years as the General Superintendent of the MTM Traction Division, I felt it was time to take a break and focus on other Museum work. Thanks to the many, many people who worked with me during the last very busy nine years of the Museum.

It has been an interesting ride, so to speak, and a lot has happened during my tenure as GS and Chair. Starting in the late 1990s we rescued Winona No. 10 from an uncertain fate and then began restoring TCRT No. 1239. In 2000 we celebrated the complete restoration of PCC No. 322, probably one of the most complete PCC restorations undertaken by an all-volunteer group. In 2004 the restoration of No. 1239 was finished. During these early years we also assumed responsibility managing the Excelsior Streetcar Line and luckily two super guys stepped up to manage ESL—**Bob Johnson** and **Bruce Kobs**. In 2001 we asked for Federal ISTEA funds to rebuild the Lake Harriet railway and our request was approved. It was kind of quiet for the next few years but during all that time a team of Museum leaders worked hard raising funds for the track rebuilding project. Then in June 2006 the track project started and we shut down Como-Harriet for almost three months during the height of the season. Coincidental with the track project was the reorganization of the Minnesota Transportation Museum resulting in the creation of a brand new organization—the Minnesota Streetcar Museum. That presented a whole different set of challenges as all of a sudden our Museum had to comply with state and federal laws and regulations that, up until then, we didn't have to worry about. There were also other projects, both major and minor, that kept us busy for these last nine years. Through it all, a dedicated group of volunteers did all those things necessary to keep our Museum moving forward as well as to operate two demonstration railways 15 miles apart! Whew! I want to, again, thank all who worked with all the myriad projects and crises during these last nine years.

Our New Chief

Hello everyone! I'm Dave French and I was recently selected to be Chairman of



MSM News & Views*Louis Hoffman — Senior Superintendent*

Welcome new Members. We welcome seven new members to the MSM family: **Glenn Olson, David Christianson, Pat Delmore, Richard Donlon, Dennis Opferman, Ray Newton and Steven Hurvitz.** We also welcome **Greg and Linda Taylor** to life membership and thank them for their generous gift to the Museum.

Annual Appeal report. To date, we've received \$24,481 toward the Car barn Security Fund and \$4,306 towards the General Fund from 53 members and friends (a total of \$19,787) as part of the 2007-2008 Annual Appeal. Here are donations received since the last *Streetcar Currents*: General Fund donations from the **Blandin Foundation** matching a donation from **Ken and Jan Albrecht** and from **Bruce Kobs, Bill Olsen,**

and **Prime Timers of the Maternity of Mary Order** and Car barn Security Fund donations from **Earl and Bettye Anderson, John Dillery, the Pohlada Family Foundation, Eric Tratner, and Warren Weck, III.**

The security improvements for the carbarns won't happen unless we can pay for the labor and materials to do the work. It's especially costly at the Isaacs Car barn because of the high cost of bringing city water into the building because of the grade. We'd be a lot closer to our financial goal if we heard from the 250 or so members who haven't made a gift. Even \$10.00 per person would get us a long way towards the goal of protecting our priceless collection from the twin terrors of fire and vandalism.

Estate Planning—It's Never Too Early*Louis Hoffman — Senior Supt.*

Many of us avoid thinking - let alone doing anything - about estate planning. After all, making a will and divvying up our worldly assets are a most vivid reminder of our mortality. And that's something that most folks would rather avoid. Yet, estate planning isn't something just for "old folks" or to be put off until the deathbed. Aside from possible benefits to the Museum, it's a good thing to do for your next-of-kin. As I remember from my Estates and Trusts class many years ago in law school, there's nothing like a battle over money and things to tear a family apart! And, as we learned last August, death can come very suddenly and quite unexpectedly.

So if you want to make a financial bequest - cash, insurance proceeds, securities, etc. - to the Museum or if you'd like to donate artifacts, books, papers, photographs, or anything else traction related to the Museum, it needs to be specifically and in great detail noted as a bequest to The Minnesota Streetcar Museum in your will. So that means revising your will if you have one or making one if you don't.

There are two other related issues.
First, some of us who wrote wills awhile ago may have made provisions for gifts to the Minnesota

Transportation Museum. After the restructuring, if you actually want your bequest to go to The Minnesota Streetcar Museum, you need to change your will to reflect that MSM is now a separate legal entity. This is so even if you specifically stated that your bequest was to the Traction Division or Fund.

Second, many of us have Museum property in our basements. Depending on what it is, you may want to make arrangements to return it to Museum property. In some cases, the Museum doesn't have the proper facilities or the space for such items. In such a case, you should label the containers in which these items are stored as being property of The Minnesota Streetcar Museum while the Board of Directors wrestles with this issue.

If any legal issues related to estate planning or storage of Museum property in private residences arise, please contact us and we'll work with you to obtain answers to your legal questions from an attorney. And if any of our members are attorneys who have knowledge of estates and wills and would like to volunteer to assist members in making provisions for the Museum, please let us know.

(Continued from page 2)

We owe Jim Vaitkunas much gratitude for guiding MSM through our first three years. Believe me, it hasn't been easy or fun but Jim has steadfastly worked to give MSM stability during our formative years. Jim does many things for MSM that most members are not aware of. The next time you see him, be sure to give him a well-deserved pat on the back and a thank-you for all he's done and continues to do for our Museum.

Next month I want to talk about my dreams for MSM and what all of us can do this year to help move the museum forward. Please feel free to contact me at dfrench@mmcd.org or 612-369-3525 with *your* dreams and ideas. I'd love to hear them!

Merchandise News

Charles Barthold—Merchandise Manager

What Sold in 2007

Although fares remain MSM's primary income source, merchandise sales contribute strongly to the bottom line. Sales totaled \$34,027 in 2007, providing 22 percent of museum revenues for the year. The sales figure for 2007 was higher than normal because of one-time sales of *Twin Cities by Trolley*, which was published in May 2007. Over 500 copies were sold, and 2008 sales will be much lower.

We sold 105 copies of the *Como-Harriet Story*, as well as 21 Twin City Lines rule books. The trolley video sold 13 copies. One was returned as damaged, leaving 12 in inventory at the end of the year.

The Como-Harriet poster sold over 100 compared to 64 in 2006. The Change at Excelsior poster sold 16 in 2007 versus 25 in 2006. Two of the Big Island brochures were sold in 2007, against 13 in 2006.

In 2006 174 MSM patches were sold, along with 93 TCL. These numbers went down in 2007 as most of our volunteers now had the proper patches on their uniforms. 2007 sales: 40 MSM and 44 TCL.

In the apparel department, children's t-shirts again led the way. The new "T is for Trolley" became the new sales leader with 87 shirts being sold (44 XS, 30 S, 11 M, & 2 L).

The yellow streetcar shirt maintained a strong showing in the child XS size, selling 20 vs. 33 in 2006. Adult XL also matched last year's sales at 8. All other sizes saw decreases in sales because of the competition with the new shirts. Forty-eight yellow streetcar shirts were sold in 2007 vs. 102 in 2006.

The Ghost trolley shirts are being phased out with their price being reduced to \$10. We don't have any Child S or Adult M, L or XL. We sold 20 at the reduced price, the same as last year.

The new PCC shirt was a strong seller with 52 being sold. We sold out of the M and XXL sizes.

We sold 21 of the MSM baseball hats, the same number as last year (12 khaki/black and 9 all black).

Eighty-six of the floaty pens were sold. The red 322

being the slight favorite with 17 being sold. (We had a web sale in February 2008 that bought the last 25 of the green marble 322 floaty pens.)

Now that we use real vintage streetcar tokens, some people are interested in purchasing them as souvenirs. We sold 39 streetcar tokens with St. Paul having the edge of one token. We also sold 39 of the new pencils.

The MSM pin sold 15 compared with 22 last year when it was new. The TCL pin sold 28. The higher priced MSM mug sold 6 compared to last year's 7. We sold out of the 12 PCC mugs that were ordered.

Last year silver charm bracelets led the way over the gold ones 12 to 9. This year gold led the way 13 to 10. We also sold the last of the pewter trolley bells and spoons.

The small wooden trolley sales were down despite adding the additional colors. We sold 79 to 2006's 95. Yellow (20) and green (18) led the way. The larger Scoot sold 20 to last year's 34. Also in the wood department, 28 whistles are tooting away. Forty-seven sold last year.

Pencil sharpeners continued to be popular. 95 were sold to 2006's 121. We sold 53 (56 in 2006) of the cable car before running out, and 42 (65 in 2006) trolley sharpeners.

One Hundred forty-four boxes of Chugga Chews, along with a ton of candy, munched its way out the door.

The large majority of merchandise sales take place at the Linden Hills station. However, we're working to develop internet sales via our web site. Of the 1361 items sold both at the depot and online, 4 percent were purchased online. There were two overseas sales, income we wouldn't have seen without the website. At present all such sales must be made via mail order, but in the future we're hoping to have electronic ordering. The website also offers items such as *Twin City Lines* back issues and historic photo reproduction that are not available at the depot.

(History & Archives Continued from page 5)

the old conduit might work. While there, I was asked if we had photos of the University Avenue pavement. They're interested in recycling whatever granite blocks lie under the asphalt. I emailed them several views.

St. Paul's Department of Public Works called, looking for info on any utility tunnels TCRT may have owned. In fact there was one that ran the length of

Wabasha Street within downtown St. Paul, and we have a detailed drawing of it.

Kathy Kullberg wrote an article on the Minneapolis streetcar study for the Wedge community newspaper. At her request, I provided five photos of the TCRT streetcars on Hennepin Avenue between Franklin Avenue and Lake Street. All appeared with the article, credited to MSM.

Historian and Archives Update

Aaron Isaacs—Historian

Met Council maps now have streetcars. Historic Twin Cities streetcar routes and facilities have been added to the Metropolitan Council's geographic information system (GIS) database. In GIS parlance, this is a new "layer" of data. The map is the same one that appears in *Twin Cities by Trolley*. It was created by Metro Transit planner and GIS specialist **Jason Podany**, with assistance by **Aaron Isaacs**. When Isaacs was still working for Metro Transit, Podany approached him about creating the historic streetcar layer. *Twin Cities by Trolley* was in production at the time and needed a new system map, so they decided to kill two birds with one stone. The map that appears in the book is actually the property of Metro Transit. Since then, the necessary computer coding has occurred to load the map into the regional GIS.

MSM buys Duluth negative collection. **Dave French**, who monitors EBay for Minnesota streetcar artifacts, alerted us to the sale of a collection of over 500 Duluth transit negatives. They belonged to the late David Carlson of Duluth. There was concern that MSM would be outbid, and the collection would be broken up and sold piecemeal for a much higher price. Dave French contacted the seller, who is Carlson's widow, to ask her to accept our initial bid and terminate the sale. Turns out that each year she brought her family to the State Fair, then over to Lake Harriet for a streetcar ride, and she agreed to our offer.

While some of the images are already in the MSM collection, there are many which aren't. They are grouped into right of way views, detail damage shots of streetcars that had been involved in accidents, and a large group of trolley bus, bus and bus driver photos. Look for them in future issues of *Twin City Lines*.

With this acquisition, the MSM archive has expanded by over 900 photos in the past year. Our thanks to **Dave French** for purchasing a number of them on EBay and donating them to MSM.

Metro Transit donates photos. Metro Transit's Graphics Department was clearing out old files from the 1970s and 80s and donated a number of black and white photos and color slides to MSM. They show buses, personnel and marketing materials from that era. Admittedly, this falls outside MSM's normal collection policy. However, as a Metro Transit retiree, I couldn't let this material be discarded.

MSM tops Minnesota Reflections. Unexpectedly, MSM's streetcar photos are the most popular on the Minnesota Reflections website. Look

at these numbers for pages accessed (one page per photo).

January 2008 – 81,745 (ranked 1st)

December 2007 – 77,471 (ranked 1st)

November 2007 – 38,746 (ranked 2nd)

October 2007 – 8,859

September 2007 – 6,655

August 2007 – 2,254

MSM Archive Comes in Handy. Lately the MSM archive has helped outside parties answer some difficult questions. Recently I was contacted by my former assistant at Metro Transit, who was working on a presentation for Black History Month. She wanted to know about early African-American transit employees. I searched our 2000+ photos of motormen and could find no Black faces.

However, some years ago I had helped Metro Transit prepare a farewell booklet on the old Snelling Garage. In that booklet was a photo of William Massey, who was a Black motorman. His son still drives for Metro Transit, and William Massey is still alive. He was hired in 1947, one of a group of Black World War II veterans. Because of the TCRT/MTC employee records that were donated to MSM last year, I was able to provide information on him and others like him.

I also found photos of two of his contemporaries in old copies of the TCRT company newsletter *The Windshield*, published in the 50s after the streetcars quit. Those photos appeared in a four-page paper which was prepared for Black History Week.

The Interlachen Country Club in Edina is celebrating its centennial in 2009, and has commissioned a history booklet. Writer Christine Dean called MSM because the country club was served by the Interlachen stop on the Hopkins-Lake Minnetonka line. In the file we had a photo of the stop, a TCRT right of way map showing the stop, and the club appears in the old TCRT promotional brochures, including *Twin Cities Today*. At my request, Dean checked the Interlachen membership lists and discovered that TCRT President Calvin Goodrich was a founding member of the club, and probably made sure there was streetcar service. His successor Horace Lowry was also a club member.

I visited the Central Corridor light rail office and loaned them a detailed TCRT map of the underground electrical conduit that still runs under University Avenue from Rice Street to the Minneapolis city limits. The staff is looking for a place to run fiber optics and

(Continued on bottom of page 4)

What's Happening?

April	New Operator training and recertification training. (See box below and the flyer)
May 1	Start of Thursday afternoon operations at ESL
May 3	Start of Weekend operations at ESL and CHSL
May 16	Start of Weekday service at CHSL
May 26	Memorial Day—special early bird service starts at 9:00 AM
June 1	Special vintage auto rally at CHSL to commemorate No. 1300's 100th birthday

Recertification Schedule.

Regardless of the line you normally operate on, this year all operating personnel, except for second-year Operators, have the option of recertifying at either line on the following dates

April 5 – CHSL carbarn – Foremen **only** – 10:00-11:00 AM

April 5 – CHSL carbarn – Operators **only** – 11:00 AM-12:00N, followed by optional running

April 19 – ESL carbarn – Foremen **only** – 10:00—11:00 AM

April 19 – ESL carbarn – Operators **only** – 11:00 AM-12:00N, followed by optional running

April 26 – CHSL carbarn – Operators **only** – 1:00-2:00 PM, followed by optional running

May 3 – ESL carbarn – Operators **only** – 10:00-11:00 AM, followed by optional running

May 7 – ESL carbarn – Makeup session for Foremen & Operators—6:30 to 7:30 PM, followed by optional running

2008 Operator & Foreman Recertification

If you're an Operator and normally receive your copy of the *Streetcar CURRENTS* by e-mail, then you should have already received the complete flyer on Operator recertification. If you didn't get it, please let **Jim Vaitkunas** know ASAP. If you get your Currents by snail-mail, the flyer is enclosed with this *CURRENTS* issue.

To briefly recap—this year recertification will be done on the streetcar in the carbarn in a classroom format. **You will not be required to run the car unless you are a second-year Operator, or if you did not operate at MSM in 2007.** If you trained in 2007, or if you took one or more years off from the

streetcar, you must attend the classroom **and** run the streetcar to be recertified. All other Operators will be given the chance to run the car under the watchful guidance of our crack trainers, but it is voluntary. We know many of you are anxious to run the car again, but if you are an experienced Operator and are confident in your abilities, please forgo the optional operating session and allow us to spend more time with people who really need the extra practice.

If you have questions, contact **Dave French** (612-369-3525 or drfcd152@aol.com) or **Clyde Hawkins** (763-544-5963 or chawkin1@fairview.org)

Shop Update*John Prestholdt—Shop Foreman*

The Tuesday and Saturday maintenance crews are finishing our smaller projects on DSR No. 265 and are getting our three CHSL streetcars ready for this year's operation. A few of things you will notice on No. 265 are that we have had one rear curved seat redone, we have created a new retaining clip for the rear brake handle (not a spring), and changed the 8 vent windows. We have put on all new brake shoes and re-lapped (sanded down) all the brake valves (2 each on No. 265 and No. 1300). There are a couple of other things we would like to do and should be able to do these before we start daily operation in mid May.

If you are interested in helping in our restoration and maintenance please come to the Isaacs Carbarn on either Tuesday during the day or on Saturday morning, or contact me about another evening that might be better for you.



Here's the new rear seat on No. 265. In the upper right of the photo you can just see the new brass "clip" that will now be used to retain the rear brake handle in the stowed (non-operating) position while No. 265 is being operated from the front.

(John Prestholdt photo)