

MINNESOTA STREETCAR MUSEUM



Streetcar CURRENTS



July—2011

Minneapolis & Excelsior, Minnesota

Our Museum Has its Own History

- *Let's all help celebrate our Museum's 40th Year of streetcar operations*
- **MARK THE DATE** — *The special events will be held on August 6th.*
- *If you want to help with our 40th anniversary events, please contact Rod Eaton*
- *There are at least five current Museum members who were members in August, 1971, our first year of streetcar operations at CHSL*



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Masthead Photo: Duluth St. Rwy. No. 78 was built in 1893 by the LaClede Car Company, St. Louis, Missouri. Retired by DSR in 1911, the car body was used as a back yard shed until saved by the Museum and restored. In semi-retirement now, No. 78 still occasionally polishes the rails of the Excelsior Streetcar Line. (Mike Helde Photo)

A Little Bit of History

Bill Arends—General Supt.

Two score years ago our founders brought forth on this right-of-way a new streetcar line, conceived of history and dedicated to the proposition that TCRT Streetcar 1300 will run again. Now we are engaged in a celebration honoring our founders who so conceived of this line and so dedicated their time and talents that our museum may long endure. We have come to appreciate this streetcar line as a long standing museum from those who volunteered their time and talents that many might ride. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But in another sense: I want to borrow from the display Mike Buck created in our display case in the Depot, with historical assistance from Aaron Isaacs, and write a little about our 40-year history.

In 1970 the first car barn under the Linden Hills Boulevard bridge was completed, along with 150 feet of track. In 1971 the track was extended all the way to 42nd Street. TCRT No. 1300 was moved to the site and ran for the first time on August 21st. If you're wondering if there was much interest, that question can be answered by the **13,000** riders who rode the streetcar on the weekend of September 20, 1971.

The early going was not as smooth as one might hope. There was no overhead trolley wire to power the streetcar. Instead No. 1300 towed a generator (actually it was an ex-electric trolley bus motor) powered by a gasoline engine. This apparatus was affectionately called "The Goat," and it supplied the power to the motors. The Goat was prone to overheating and needed much tender loving care. But it still continued to provide power through 1972 when the track was extended to the Glen area.

In 1973 the overhead trolley wire was installed to the William Berry Parkway bridge and our Museum's "mother car," TCRT No. 1300 would once again run under power provided in the more dignified manner in which she had run for the first 46 years of her life. Nineteen-seventy three was also a year of acquisitions. Duluth Street Railway (DSR) No. 265 was acquired as was DSR No. 78.

The siding at Lake Harriet was installed in 1975 and the line extended to the archery range curve. In 1977 the final line extension reached our current terminus at Lake Calhoun. Annual ridership averaged 51,000 passengers. At the age of 70 years TCRT No. 1300 was placed on the National Register of Historic places in 1978.

DSR No. 265 ran for the first time in 42 years in 1981, the year TCRT No. 1300 appears on the cover of the Minneapolis telephone directory. In 1981, the museum records its 500,000th visitor.

The year 1991 was a big year in our history with the completion of the Linden Hills station. This year also marked entry of DSR No. 78 into regular service. Also PCC car 322 was acquired and after an eight-year restoration entered service at the beginning of the new millennium.

In the year 1993, we carried the 1,000,000th passenger on our volunteer restored and maintained streetcars. We continue to restore and operate streetcars and provide a bit of transportation history. Come ride with us and learn even more. ☺

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 inter-urban 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
 Minneapolis, MN 55414-0467
 952-922-1096

Streetcar **CURRENTS**
July—2011

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 issue of the **Streetcar **CURRENTS**** is July 20, 2011.

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



From the Front Platform — Thoughts on Our Museum

Dave French — Chair, MSM Board of Directors

Hi everyone! **Dick Zawacki**, one of our new Operators this year, was the winner of *The Electric Railways of Minnesota* book donated by **Earl** and **Bettye Anderson**. Dick paid \$100 for the book which has been credited to our General Fund. I had one other request for the book and fortunately MSM picked up another copy which Aaron has offered to that member.

As MSM Board Chair you might think that I am constantly receiving letters, e-mails, and phone calls related to MSM business. Well, that's not exactly true. Our museum is capably managed and operated by our officers and Superintendents. I am copied on many e-mails but most of them are for my information only and do not require a response on my part. In June we did receive a note in the mail which I responded to and I want to share it with you. One of our members was considering whether to renew his membership. He wrote that he is a long-time member and he has donated quite a bit of money to MSM. Because of his age and the long distance from his home to our streetcar lines he is unable to be an active volunteer. He feels that it is unfair to require a minimum of twelve hours of volunteer service annually in order to have voting rights at the annual meeting. This is the first time this issue has been brought to my attention, at least since I've been Chair.

When MSM was founded in 2005, our by-laws included this voting requirement. The purpose of this requirement was to give the active volunteers a greater say in running the museum. We currently have about 320 members of whom over 130 are active volunteers. Approximately 54 of our members live far enough away to make it very difficult for them to be active. This member did renew his membership, but is still unhappy with the policy. I responded that I thank him for renewing and for taking a strong interest and enthusiasm for MSM. I explained the rationale for the policy and promised that I would solicit feedback from the membership and would discuss it with the Board of Directors at our next meeting. So what do **you** think? If you have an opinion, pro or con, about requiring volunteer hours in order for a member to be able to vote in museum affairs, would you share it with me? You can e-mail me at drfcd152@aol.com or call (651) 728-2837 or write me in care of MSM, P.O. Box 14467, Minneapolis, MN 55414. I

have already received one suggestion that we amend the policy so that members who were previously active volunteers but are now unable to do so because of age, illness, or retiring south be permitted to retain their voting rights. Your Board cannot operate in a vacuum and we rely on you, the membership, to give us feedback and ideas on MSM policies and operations. I look forward to hearing from **you!**

For those of us who live in Minnesota, we've all noticed that the weather since May 1st has been a bit on the cool and wet side. (*That's an understatement!—Ed.*) This is great weather for our lawns but both of our streetcar lines have had several canceled or shortened shifts due to rain, which has adversely affected our ridership. So what can we do about it? I challenge you to direct a few people who have never ridden our streetcars to ride this year. Perhaps a ten-ride ticket would be a perfect gift for a friend or family member. How many of your coworkers who you see five days a week have never ridden? When given the opportunity, do you "talk up" and

(Continued on bottom of next page)




MSM Historian's Update — We make Minnesota's Electric Railway History Come Alive!

 Aaron Isaacs — *MSM Historian and Photo Archivist*

The *Kreuzberger collection*. In the last issue I reported on our trip to Kansas City to retrieve the *James Kreuzberger* collection, 40 boxes in all. Since then, the photos from the collection have been catalogued, the traction books inventoried, and most of the railroad books and artifacts have been sold and the non-Minnesota photos have been donated to appropriate museums and historical societies.

Starting with the photos, over 550 have been added to the MSM collection. Of these, over 400 were new to the collection. Many others were better versions of photos we already had. The majority were of Duluth-Superior streetcars. They will be an invaluable resource for the upcoming book *Twin Ports by Trolley*.

There were also six boxes of Duluth Street Railway records in the collection. **John Diers** and I have reviewed them and they add good information for the book. When we're done with the records, they will be donated to the Northeast Minnesota History Center at the University of Minnesota-Duluth. There they will join the Center's extensive collection of DSR records. It's best to have all the records in one place, in climate controlled and professionally curated facility.

Jim shot hundreds of black and white photos and colors slides of trolleys and railroads around North America in the 1950s. MSM's collection policy prevents us from retaining non-Minnesota, non-streetcar materials, so I have donated photos and paper items (maps, schedules, etc.) to about 20 museums and historical societies where they will be appreciated and put to good use. He had a complete Pittsburgh Railways conductor uniform and that went to the Pennsylvania

Trolley Museum, which specializes in Pittsburgh and Pennsylvania electric railway history.

In the collection were several reels of 8mm movies. These included three of TCRT streetcars in the 1950s and an extremely rare reel of the Duluth Incline in 1937. The MSM Board encouraged me to get them converted to a DVD, and that has been done.

Jim owned 32 linear feet of railroad and streetcar books. The railroad books were turned over to Bruce Gustafson for sale and he sold the majority of them for \$900 at a train show. That more than paid for the cost of the trip to retrieve the collection. We also realized another \$700 from the sale of some of Jim's scale models and a few railroad artifacts.

There were 177 books on streetcars and interurbans. MSM's long-range plan is to have a library that will include traction books and resource materials from all over North America. A number of years ago **Bill Olsen** donated his extensive book collection. Several years later we acquired **Norm Podas'** book collection. Both reside in the Linden Hills depot basement. One third of the Kreuzberger books duplicate those we already have. The 57 duplicates are available for sale at the Linden Hills station. They're affordably priced, so get them while you can.

More collections donated. **Roy Harvey** recently donated a number of railroad books, and a large collection of railroad and traction video tapes. On June 25th, museum volunteers will take possession of the **Bill Cordes** collection, which includes about 60 boxes of slides and movies Bill took over the years. Dave French recently purchased and donated a collection of 24 streetcar books, mostly Canadian. ☺


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

 Jim Vaitkunas — *MSM Secretary and Superintendent of Operations*

Welcome to Our New Members. We have a good number of new members join MSM since our last report. Our newest members are: **Stephanie & Kurt Madsen, Alexandra Howes, Doug Hill, Jessica Clabo, Jude Chevance, Jan Schnabel, Catherine, Tom & Andrew Gump, Richard Teske, Trudy & Mark Schnorr**. We're glad you joined our Museum family. BTW, all except two are either in our Operator training course or have just completed their training and are now certified streetcar Operators. Congrats to all!

Address Changes. The recent Twin City Lines mailing resulted in several change of address cards from the post office for which we have to pay a fee. Please let us know if your address changes and save us \$\$\$. ☺

(From the Front Platform Continued from page 2)

promote our museum? If even half our members can each inspire four new people to ride this year, that would be at least 600 more riders! And we all know that when people have fun on the trolley, they might in turn encourage others to do the same. So we can't control the weather, but each of us can positively affect ridership in a small way. So how about it? We've got lots of great trolley riding left this summer, let's get more people on the car! And, I'll see you on the car. ☺

What's Happening?

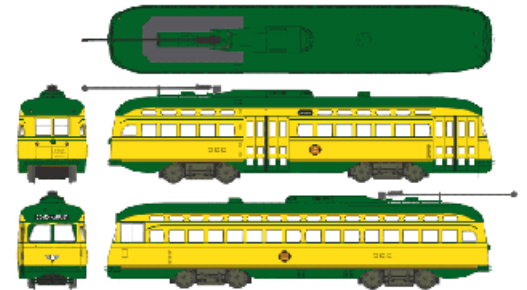
- July 8 & 9 CHSL's *Murder on the Downtown Express* one-act play starts at 7 PM
- July 12 ESL *Story Time Trolley* starts at 6:30 PM
- July 21 CHSL's *Pajama Party trolley* starts at 6:30 PM
- July 21, 22 & 23 Excelsior's *Crazy Days* festival. ESL runs extended service and hours all three days




PCC Cars for Sale—Cheap! Here's a new Item in our Museum Store

Charles Barthold — MSM Merchandise Manager

Want to own your own PCC? Currently in pre-production, our own PCC No. 322 will soon be available in HO scale. Bowser is manufacturing these specifically for us. They will be available in powered (DCC ready) and unpowered versions. They will not be available any where else, so if you have friends around the country that are PCC fans, tell them to watch our website for more information.



- There will be three versions of the models.
 - ◆ Souvenir (no motor)
 - ◆ Powered (motor, wired for DCC operation)
 - ◆ Powered with sound
- All cars listed are TCL cars and will be numbered 322, 311, 386 & 400. Our Museum Store will be the only place that will sell the model with the number 322.
- Destination signs: No. 322 **Como-Harriet**, No. 311 **Univ to Snelling**, No. 386 **Grand Mississippi**, No. 400 **Nicollet 2nd ST NE**.
- Prices:
 - ◆ 322 Souvenir — \$40.00
 - ◆ 322 Powered — \$130.00
 - ◆ 386 Souvenir — \$40.00
 - ◆ 311 & 400 Powered — \$140.00
 - ◆ 311, 322 & 400 with sound — \$250.00
- All are expected to arrive December 1, 2011. Just in time for Christmas!
- Order Form can be found in the Museum Store section of our website TrolleyRide.org
- Display cases for the souvenir cars will be available as follows:
 - ◆ The single is 8 1/2' long and 2 3/4" high. The track inside is 7 1/2" long.
 - ◆ The double is 11 inches long, so that cars can be positioned in a passing scene.

Remember that all of our prices include applicable sales tax and that all proceeds help us keep the full sized cars running. Free shipping ends August 15th. Our regular \$7.50 shipping charge applies to all orders received after August 15th. For more promo material on Bowser models: bowser-trains.com 

Tom Fairbairn

It is with profound regret that we report the passing of one of our most active volunteers, Tom Fairbairn. Tom was born in Cairo Illinois and grew up in Virginia (the state). After a stint in the US Army, he moved to Minnesota and enjoyed a very successful career with the Control Data Corporation. He was married to Nancy for 51 years .

Tom was one of the most active and hard-working volunteers in our Museum. Like many of us, Tom started operating the streetcars (in Tom's case it was in 2004) but he quickly decided to help out in other areas. He was MSM's Assistant Trainer for several years and developed several excellent training materials and job aids that we still use today. Tom was one of the key workers on our Winona No. 10 restoration project. His first love was working in our shop and he quickly studied and learned the "ins and outs" of streetcar traction power circuits and specifically the controllers that make our streetcars go. For the last several years Tom was the person who made sure all our controllers were in perfect working order. Since even normal running causes burn marks which need to be buffed off, Tom worked to clean them up, checking the retaining springs and lubricating the contact points. Tom took great pride in how well the controllers worked. The photo on the left shows Tom several years ago doing what he loved to do—contemplating a controller with the front cover open. Tom will be missed by all of us. R.I.P. Tom.

