



Streetcar CURRENTS



September 2004

Minneapolis, Minnesota

The TCRT in 1907

- TCRT operates a total of 363 miles of track (at it's height TCRT will have 523 miles of track)
- TCRT's basic fare is five cents
- TCRT operates approximately 600 streetcars (ten years later TCRT will operate over 1,100 cars)
- TCRT's Snelling Shops are opened
- No. 1239 is part of the last group of cars built by the 31st Street shops
- No. 1267 is one of the first cars built by the new Snelling shops (No. 1267 is preserved at Maine's Seashore Trolley

TCRT's 1907 Minnesota State Fair Operations

BILL THE MOTORMAN



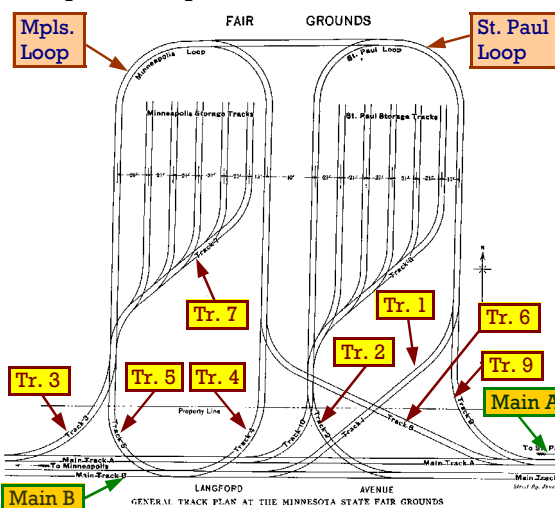
Bill

Well, a quick look at the calendar tells me right quick that it is Minnesota State Fair time. What a great State Fair we have, probably one of the best in the Midwest if not the entire country! And as you all know the State Fair was located on the Como-Harriet "interurban" line.

The TCRT was thoroughly prepared to move the throngs of people who took the streetcars to the fair each year. So, let's take a closer look at the TCRT's State Fair operations for the year 1907 (as described in the Street Railway Journal) and you can get an idea of what the company did to "move the masses," so to speak.

During the six days of the fair in 1907 (September 2-7) the company carried approximately 250,000 people to and from the grounds; the heaviest single day was Sept. 2, Labor Day, when attendance mounted to 80,000. The company's fair terminal consisted of two great loops, enclosing five storage tracks between each loop. This duplicate arrangement is adopted to separate the Minneapolis and St. Paul traffic; the St. Paul cars enter and leave on the east or St. Paul loop, while the Minneapolis cars use the west or Minneapolis loop. Large signs direct the passengers to the proper points and absolutely no confusion occurs. The main loops are so connected to the two main tracks that cars can be run in and out of the terminal on almost any conceivable manner, making a very flexible arrangement.

The method of handling and dispatching cars in and out of the terminal is as follows: Through service, running on a five minute schedule, is maintained between Minneapolis and St. Paul (this is the Como-Harriet Line—Ed.). These cars come from Minneapolis on main track B and enter the St. Paul loop by means of track 1. They proceed around this loop, stopping at the upper end to receive and discharge passengers, and then go out to main track B again via track 2. Through cars from St. Paul enter the Minneapolis loop from main track A via track 6, proceed around the loop, stopping at the loading platform at the upper end as described above and then leave the terminal over track 3 which switches the car again on to main track A.



Local cars are run from both cities on a 1 1/4 minute schedule. The Minneapolis cars enter from main track B via track 4 and proceed to the unloading platform, from which they return to Minneapolis over track 3 or enter the storage yard via ladder track 7. St. Paul cars are run around the St Paul loop in a similar manner. This method gives

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Masthead Photo: No. 322 loads NRHS convention visitors on July 1st
Wendy Dunham photo

OUR SEASON SO FAR *Jim Vaitkunas—General Superintendent*

CHSL and ESL ridership statistics for the months of May, June and July 2004 are shown in the tables below.

Como-Harriet Streetcar Line

Month	Total passengers	Paid Passengers
May	4,789	3,112
June	7,409	5,395
July	8,412	6,319
TOTAL	21,610	14,826

Excelsior Streetcar Line

Month	Total passengers	Paid Passengers
May	130	99
June	737	531
July	1,350	1,060
TOTAL	2,217	1,690

A review of previous years' statistics shows that this year's ridership is comparable to the past few years, but the rider numbers are significantly lower when compared to the halcyon years of the 1980s and early 1990s. Of course, if you listened to or read the weather reports this summer what you heard or saw were statements like: bizarre; unprecedented cool weather; where did the summer go; and other comments like that. It's abundantly clear that our ridership is negatively affected by adverse weather and there is simply nothing that we can do about that. On a more positive note, the number of streetcar charters we've done this year, and the resulting revenue, are way ahead of past years.

It is self-evident that ridership has a direct impact on revenue. Our fare increase has to some extent offset the lower than usual passenger numbers for this season and anecdotal evidence from our passengers seems to indicate that the increase of our basic fare to \$2.00 has had minimal impact on those who do ride with us. But the costs of everything continue to go up which results in our net revenue remaining flat or somewhat lower than in past years. A maxim amongst all-volunteer museums like ours is that revenue has a direct impact on what we are able to do as a museum to preserve and interpret the Twin Cities' and Minnesota's transportation heritage. So it is incumbent upon all of us to do what we can to save money when and where we can and especially to encourage ridership. But, how can we all help to either stabilize or maybe even increase ridership? Here are some suggested ways **YOU** can help:

- Talk about CHSL among your friends, neighbors and relatives. Let them know what we do and how much fun it is to ride our streetcars.
- When we send out flyers for our special events like our Halloween ghost trolley print these out and post them at your office, church, etc. Spread the word on who we are and what we are doing.
- Have fun when you are volunteering. This shows our passengers that while what we are doing is historic it is also fun for the whole family.

CREW REMINDERS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Streetcar Memories Exhibit. The "Streetcar Memories" exhibit at the Edina Historical Society opened August 7th and will remain in place for the next few months. It was made possible thru the cooperation of Traction Division volunteers who provided numerous artifacts, photos and other info. The exhibits are well done and well worth a visit. **George Isaacs** is loaning his LRT/Como-Harriet demonstration layout. **Aaron Isaacs** did a "Streetcar Ride to Edina" slide presentation on the exhibit's opening day. **Louis Hoffman** was instrumental in developing the event. The Edina Historical Society is located at 4711 West 70th Street, Edina, in Artisan Acres Park and is open on Thursday and Saturday mornings.

Linden Hills Station Doings. We've noticed recently that some crew have taken it upon themselves to do some rearranging of the merchandise around the counters in the Linden Hills station. Certain things are placed where they are placed for a reason and to move them can defeat the purpose of our merchandising efforts. So, to help our Merchandise folks, here are some guidelines that we would ask you to follow.

1. Please do not take it upon yourself to rearrange things in the station and put things back if you were forced to move some of the items.
2. Please try to keep the area on top of the counter and behind the counter uncluttered and neat. First impressions are always lasting.
3. Spares of all brochures and some smaller merchandise items are now stored in the blue storage bin located behind the counter. Please check the brochure supply in the streetcars and in the station racks at the beginning of your shift and restock these as necessary from the stock in the storage bin.
4. Passenger Traffic Manager **Rod Eaton**, Merchandise Manager **John DeWitt**, and Stationmaster **Louis Hoffman** are the people responsible for station operations and these hard working folks have considered all aspects of merchandising before they made the appropriate decisions.
5. If you do have concerns about what we do in the

(Continued on page 3)

TCRT GATE CAR NO. 1239 TO BE DEDICATED ON SEPTEMBER 11TH

Restoration work on No. 1239 is all but done! The car has been tested several times. Adjustments were made to some electrical components and to the brake rigging and everything now is in operating order. The Excelsior car cleaning crew has gone over the car and have it spiffy looking and we're ready to put the car into regular service.



Bill Graham Photo

If you helped in any way with the restoration of No. 1239 we would like to have you present for the ceremony so we can recognize your fine work. We hope to have the Mayor of Excelsior help us dedicate No. 1239. Other local dignitaries will also be present.

September 11th is also a big day as Excelsior is holding the annual festival called **Apple Days**.

Before we officially put No. 1239 in service we going to hold a special ceremony to honor those dedicated volunteers who worked long and hard over the last six years to restore this fine car to its former glory. Details of the ceremony are:

- **Day & Date:** Saturday, September 11th
- **Time:** 11:30 AM
- **Place:** Water Street Platform of the Excelsior Streetcar Line

So, bring the whole family and enjoy an interesting and fun day at Excelsior! Regular operations at Excelsior will start at 9:00 AM using venerable DSR No. 78. We'll suspend operations for the ceremony and then after the ceremony, No. 1239 will provide the service for the remainder of the day until 4:00 PM or so.

Come out and help us celebrate another great restoration by your fellow MTM volunteers.

(FOREMEN, OPERATOR AND AGENT REMINDERS Continued from page 2)

station, we invite you to contact Rod, John, or Jim Vaitkunas as appropriate to discuss your concerns.

If the truth be told, we sure could use some help in managing the affairs at our Linden Hills station. The work wouldn't be strenuous or especially time consuming and it would free-up Stationmaster **Louis Hoffman** to do higher priority things. This is not to say that the station isn't important. It is very important as our passenger's get their first impression of our Lake Harriet operations when they walk into the station to purchase their tokens. If you're interested and would like to help out with station operations, please call **Louis Hoffman** at 612-729-0442.

Service Cancellation or suspension. Foremen are reminded that when bad weather forces you to suspend or cancel operations, place the sign telling people of the suspension or cancellation on the inside of the Linden Hills Station door. One of the standard signs is located in the bottom of the Cashier's lock box cabinet and one is also located in one of the slots right below the cash register in the station.

Telephone reminder. Foremen: Please remember to call your crew members 2-3 days in advance to remind them of their shift. Crewmembers: if you have not received your reminder call, please call your Foreman to check to see if there is any problem.



TRAINING ON OVERHEAD TROLLEY WIRE CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE IS ANNOUNCED.

The Traction Division will conduct a special one-half day training session on trolley overhead wire systems sometime in September or October. This training will include instruction in basic overhead trolley wire parts and terminology, construction, maintenance, and standards. At the end of this training the student will better understand the "what, how and why" of overhead trolley wire systems. Our overall intent is to create a group of volunteers who will know the basics of overhead trolley wire systems so these people can work on maintaining the overhead at both the Como-Harriet and Excelsior Streetcar Lines. Primary instructor will be Jim Vaitkunas and he will have several assistants. We especially need people who are willing to learn these skills so we'll have sufficient volunteers to erect and adjust the overhead wire at CHSL after the TEA-21 project is complete next spring. If you are interested in this training please call or send an e-mail to Jim Vaitkunas.

Streetcar *CURRENTS*
September - 2004

Streetcar *CURRENTS* IS A PERIODIC NEWSLETTER FOR THE VOLUNTEERS AND FRIENDS OF THE TRACTION DIVISION OF THE MINNESOTA TRANSPORTATION MUSEUM.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING ITEMS FOR THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE **Streetcar *CURRENTS*** IS SEPTEMBER 20, 2004.

PLEASE SEND ITEMS TO 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



**MINNESOTA
TRANSPORTATION
MUSEUM**

COMO-HARRIET STREETCAR LINE

EXCELSIOR STREETCAR LINE

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

August 28	Streetcar cleaning—8:30 AM to 11:00 AM (Linden Hills carbarn)
September 6	Labor Day special early bird service starts at 9:30 AM
September 10	Last day of CHSL weekday service
September 11	No. 1239 dedication ceremony at Excelsior
September 12	Last day of ESL weekend service
September 12	Linden Hills carbarn open house—12:30PM to 4:30 PM
September 25	Streetcar cleaning—8:30 AM to 11:00 AM (Linden Hills carbarn)
September 26	Linden Hills carbarn open house—12:30PM to 4:30 PM
October 28, 29, 30 & 31	Halloween GHOST TROLLEY —5:30 PM to 8:30 PM

TCRT 1239 Training

If you are interested in training on No. 1239, and especially if you are scheduled to operate at ESL in September and October, please call Bill Graham at 952-435-9724 to schedule your training on this fine car

SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER 2004 SCHEDULE OF OPERATIONS

Included with this mailing is the September and October 2004 CHSL and ESL Schedule of Operations. If you see a vacancy that needs filling, please contact either Jim Vaitkunas or the Foreman for that shift. Each CHSL shift has a normal complement of four crewmembers. ESL shifts have two crewmembers. PCC shifts have only two crewmembers. If you see a space with no name on a shift on the schedule of operations then there's a shift vacancy.

If you would still like to volunteer to operate on a shift

even though there is a full crew shown on the schedule of operations, please call the Foreman and talk with him/her about it. We can especially use you on those busy weekend shifts. We feel sure that no Foreman would deny you the chance to help out on a shift, especially a weekend shift. So call and sign-up!

Remember that you must inform your Foreman of all substitutions or if you are forced to cancel your shift and please inform both Foremen if you swap shifts with someone.

(The TCRT's Minnesota State Fair Operations *Continued from page 1*)

a continuous uninterrupted stream of both through and local cars, all moving in the same direction on each loop; the traffic from each city is completely separated, an important feature in operating a terminal of this nature. While under normal conditions the cars are dispatched as described above, the main line connections are purposely arranged to permit any variations from the usual procedure that an emergency may dictate. Two or three repairmen and a dispatcher is all the operating force necessary at the terminal. A repair car is also maintained in readiness for any emergency.

Twin City standard cars are designed to load and unload from the rear platform only. At the fair terminal, however, special steps were provided so that passengers were unloaded from both platforms at once. Ninety-five percent of the travel was either in one direction or the other. By using both platforms for unloading and loading, a car could be emptied and filled in practically one minute.

The fair exodus reaches a maximum at 5 and 10 PM. To provide for these rush periods from thirty-five to fifty cars are stored on the Minneapolis tracks and from twenty-five to thirty on the St. Paul tracks. Cars are dispatched from these storage tracks in order of their occurrence, so that during the rush periods one-quarter minute service is maintained to Minneapolis and St. Paul. This amounts to 240 cars per hour to each city. Each car carries about 100 passengers, which means that the maximum number of passengers moved per hour to each city is 24,000.

This record was actually attained several times during the week, and the traffic was handled without undue crowding or congestion. Every passenger did not get a seat, but this could not be expected. The company made an honest effort to provide and keep moving a sufficient number of cars to carry the crowds. By means of this terminal this was accomplished throughout the week without a single hitch.