



Streetcar CURRENTS



JUNE 2007

Minneapolis & Excelsior, Minnesota

2007 Season Reminders

- *Please help out if you are asked to staff one of the special events planned for this season*
- *Greet our new operating volunteers and make them feel welcome—they are our future*
- *Remember that you must review the bulletins and notices on the Ops bulletin Board before each shift*
- *Talk to your passengers and get them involved.*
- *Encourage those who show an interest to volunteer with our Museum*
- **HAVE FUN!**

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Masthead Photo: It's fall of 2006 and here's No. 1239 approaching the water street platform and the old M&STL depot now housing the Excelsior Museum
(Jim Willmore Photo)

General Superintendent's Notes

Say Hello

Just this past weekend, two of this year's new operators "graduated" into regular service. There are several more who will be entering their on-the-job revenue training soon, and several more still in training. There are also a few who have yet to begin their operator training. It looks as though we'll be adding a number of new operators to the roster this season. And that's really good news. **Greg Taylor, Dave French, Clyde Hawkins** and **Tom Fairbairn**, aided by a few other volunteers, have done an outstanding job with this year's training program.

You'll probably be meeting these new operators as you work your regular shifts. Say hello and get to know them. Be supportive, offer assistance, instruction, and encouragement as they need it. Make them feel welcome. I remember my first summer as an operator, the help I received, and the things I learned from the more experienced people I worked with. Making friends is an important aspect of volunteering with the Museum. I always look forward to working my shifts, and it has to do as much with the others on the crew as it does operating a streetcar.

Many organizations have trouble retaining newcomers. The fault often rests with the attitudes of the older members, who are reluctant to accept new people into "their" group. We're fortunate, I think, in not having this problem. Although we all have our quirks, as a bunch, we're a pretty friendly group. Let's extend that friendship to our new volunteers. They're the future of the Museum.

Watch This Space

At the start of your shift, take a minute to check out the bulletin board on the Linden Hills Station. There may be posters under the Events heading for coming special events. Right now we're promoting several, and they're worth a quick mention to waiting passengers and in your end-of-line talks.

For the Moonlight Ride we're asking people to reserve a seat to insure that a crew won't show up needlessly. There's a sign-up sheet in the new drawer beneath the cash register to record the names.

How's My Driving?

Recertification went smoothly at both lines this spring, again thanks to our Training Department. But old bad habits die hard. We all occasionally have lapses. Take this short self-test. Do any of the following apply to you?

- ✓ I sometimes toot the whistle under the Berry bridge when traveling southward (returning to the station). Deduct 3 points.
- ✓ As soon as I complete a trip, I reverse or lockup the air transfer control instead of waiting for a signal requesting permission to move from the other end. Deduct 10 points.
- ✓ As Conductor, I remain on the rear platform instead of stepping off the car to assist passengers as they exit. Deduct 7 points.

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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*
 June - 2007

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 June 20, 2007.

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

From the Front Platform

Jim Vaitkunas — Board Chair

Our Unknown Warriors

In the early days of World War II, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill made a radio broadcast on the World-Wide BBC Network frequencies entitled the "Unknown Warrior." The central theme of Churchill's talk to his listeners, British subjects and others, was that the war was being fought by millions of men and women, in uniform and not, and it was these unknown warriors that would win the war against Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan. Churchill praised the unknown warriors for going about their daily duties while not receiving the accolades and glory and, therefore, were virtually invisible and unknown to everyone. But he said that the success in prosecuting the war up until that time was because of the valor and fidelity of these people.

Our Museum also has its own cadre of unknown warriors. These are the volunteers who work behind the scenes on the myriad of tasks that must be done to make the Museum a functioning organization. Our unknown warriors work in the shops on Tuesdays and Saturdays. Our unknown warriors are volunteers who serve on your Board of Directors, collect our daily receipts and deposit them in the bank, work on track and overhead trolley wire maintenance, send out news releases, spread posters and flyers around downtown Linden Hills. Our unknown warriors are the people who are helping to restore Winona No. 10 out in Excelsior, they worked to restore the exterior siding of No. 1300, they edit our new magazine, *Twin City Lines*, they call our crewmembers, they clean our streetcars monthly.

While we try to recognize these people in these pages on occasion, both in print and in photo captions, these words of praise and recognition do not do justice to the contributions our MSM unknown warriors have made and are making to the success of our Museum. And, lest we forget, our operating personnel, while perhaps more visible than some other volunteers, also contribute heavily to the success we have enjoyed down through the years. For if it were not for our operating personnel we would not be able to generate the income that is necessary to pay our bills. My hat is off to each of you for volunteering with our Museum. Your dedication and faithful service to MSM has made our museum what it is today.

Use Our Website

I hope that you have our website www.trolleyride.org bookmarked or have a shortcut to it on your computer's desktop. There's a wealth of information for you in our website that is only a click away. On our home page click the top left button "MSM learn more about us." That gets you into the main area of our website for non-railway specific information. Then click on either "Organizational Documents" or "Operations: Rosters, Schedules and Instructions." In the organizational documents section you'll find basic information on the governance of our Museum including copies of Board of Directors meeting minutes, our by-laws, organization chart, policy documents, forms, etc. In the Operations section you can find our rule book, operating and general procedures instructions, sequence of operations, crew rosters and the monthly schedules for both demonstration railways. You can easily download these to your hard drive and refer to them as you need to or you can print them right from our website. Of course, our website also has basic information on the history of both our demonstration railways for your information and future reference. Check it out next time you are on line.



Photo by Don Curry

MSM News Update*Louis Hoffman — Senior Superintendent*

N*ew Memberships and Donations.* We welcome **Brad and Sara Boehnke, Timothy Christman, Jay Halvorson, Dick Loeffler, Paul Melancor, Robert Reinhardt, Mike Vanoss, and Jeff Wheeler and Wendy Williams** as new members. The total number of memberships is now 246.

We also thank the following members and friends for their donations to the 2006-2007 Annual Appeal and for other worthy causes that support the Museum's many activities: the **Blandin Foundation**, matching a donation from **Ken Albrecht**, and **Thomas Boies** to the General Fund and **Bernie Braun**, the **Linden Hills Neighborhood Council, Phil Settergren**, and the **Twentieth Century Electric Railway Foundation** (if matched with \$5,000.00 in other donations – we've raised \$4,000.00 of that \$5,000.00 so far. . . .) in support of the Car barn Security Fund. To date, we've received \$26,273.00 from 63 memberships and friends to the Car barn Security Fund, the General Fund, for the George K. Isaacs sign above the car barn doors, and for our membership in the Excelsior Chamber of Commerce: That leaves nearly **175** members from whom we haven't heard! Until we have enough money to complete the job, our valuable collection of streetcars sits, under protected from the ravages of fire and vandalism. In addition to the two car barn fires at museums that we've reported on, the East Troy Electric Railroad Museum recently experience a break-in that resulted in severe vandalism. Better to make a modest contribution now than to respond to an emergency appeal later

B*ob Bayers joins MSM Board.* In an effort to reach out to the Linden Hills community, **Bob Bayers** has joined the MSM Board of Directors. Bob is the longtime owner of Bayers Do-it Best Hardware in Linden Hills, and has been a friend to the museum for many years. Coincidentally, he has volunteered to become a streetcar operator this year. Welcome, Bob!

S*ervice Stars.* A big "thank you" to longtime Charter Agent **Tom Beaumont**, who is stepping down

after many years of service to pursue his post-retirement travel career! Our charter business is an important component of our income stream and Tom, working with Charter Crew Caller **Jerry Olsen** (who has backed up Tom as Charter Agent during Tom's travels), have booked and scheduled charters with great efficiency and professionalism year after year.

Being Charter Agent entails monitoring the Museum's voice mail daily from spring through fall and semi-regularly the rest of the year, referring non-charter calls to the appropriate Museum officials (there aren't many of these), and booking charters – handling the minimal paperwork (confirmation letters and issuance of boarding passes after payment is received), responding to e-mails and telephone calls, and ensuring that the "i's" are dotted and the "t's" are crossed. If you're interested in this low-impact way to help your Museum, please contact General Superintendent **Rod Eaton**.

I*s stuff enough?* In last month's *Streetcar Currents*, I wrote about the need to interpret our collection and to make streetcar history, which ended 53 years ago in the Twin Cities, relevant and interesting to our passengers, most of whom don't remember that era. One of the ways that we've done that is via our car barn tours. Sadly, this means of interpretation is, at least temporarily, being scaled back because of a shortage of volunteers. As Superintendent of Operations **Jim Vaitkunas** has bemoaned, our roster of operators has declined from its peak in the 1990s when more than 100 members volunteered to operate streetcars. To date, with a smaller roster, we've managed to operate our full schedule with more May operations, two car operations on Sundays, the Halloween Ghost Trolley, and November operations without having to cancel a shift. But with all of that, there's been a noticeable dearth of volunteers to serve as car barn docents. So, reluctantly, car barn tours have been reduced to the monthly "Family Fun Days" pending increased volunteer interest. Car barn tours will continue for charter groups and special occasions.

(General Supt's Notes Continued from page 1)

✓ I take my time notching up the controller, rarely running in the last notch. Deduct 6 points.

✓ When I can see there is no traffic, there's no need to stop at an un-flagged road crossing. Deduct 15 points and slap yourself on the wrist.

Let's all drive safely!

An Invitation

My garden railway is open and running every Sunday

afternoon from 1 to 3 PM, June through August (unless it's rainy). Please consider this a personal invitation to visit. Call or drop me a note for directions. You can get a preview at my web site: www.HitchcockRy.com

See you at the platform.

Rod Eaton—General Superintendent

Shop Update

John Prestholdt — Shop Foreman

The Tuesday and Saturday crews have finally completed their work on No. 1300, and once you have seen our “mother car” you will agree a big thanks goes to all those who have worked on this car over the last three or four winters. It is now one of the best looking and operating cars in the country.

We are now working to create a list of those maintenance projects that were put off while No. 1300 was in our maintenance barn. Smaller projects on all three cars (yes we missed a few things on 1300) so we will still have work for everyone interested in helping restore or maintain our cars. We will also be working on the Winona 10 restoration in Excelsior as well as maintenance on both 78 and 1239 out there.

PCC 322 has been experiencing some unfortunate electrical problems and we have a crew trying to track down these short circuits, a slow process since that car is all electrical. Thanks to Neil, Tom, Keith and others working on this problem.

On Sunday May 6 the PCC ran about two hours then, while at the Lake Calhoun platform, two of the shaft brakes would not release. The other two worked fine. The shift foreman **Howie Melco** called **Jim Willmore** who came to the car line, studied the problem, released the two locked shaft brakes manually and drove the car to the maintenance barn. Jim along with **Chris Heck** and **Tom Fairbairn** worked from 3:00PM to 7:00 PM and found that fuse F-1 was blown and a wire from the fuse to the center relay panel was shorted to ground. On Tuesday May 8 Jim, Tom, **Neil Howes**, and **Keith Lindberg** worked from 9:00 AM to Noon tracing the short. We discovered that the unused rail sanders were shorted to ground. We disconnected the sanders and problem was solved. The Sanders have never been restored nor have we ever put sand in the bins. The Car was put back in service. Unfortunately, a few days later No. 322 started to blow the F-1 fuse again so more trouble shooting will have to be done. No. 322 missed operating for Linden Hills weekend operations but we hope we can get this fine car back in service for the Memorial Day weekend.



Tuesday crew gets No. 1300 ready for the season.

This group photo taken in front of TCRT No. 1300 shows most of the Tuesday crew who worked diligently over the last 2 years to repair and rehabilitate our Museum's “mother car,” No. 1300. From left to right: **Tom Fairbairn, Keith Lindberg, Neil Howes, Jim Willmore, Shop Foreman John Prestholdt, Ken Albrecht** and **Jim Otto**. There several others who worked on No. 1300 on Saturdays who are not shown in this photo.

Housecleaning in the Linden Hills basement.

This photo shows the crew taking out all the accumulated junk from the Linden Hills station basement. It was amazing how much old junk was in there. Now we can find stuff when we look for it. Shown in the photo (from left to right) are **Jim Otto, Rod Eaton** (back towards the camera), **Aaron Isaacs, Ken Albrecht, John Prestholdt** and you can barely make out behind John, **Scott Heiderich**. (*Jim Vaitkunas photo*)



Archives and History Update

Aaron Isaacs — MSM Historian

Twin Cities by Trolley. The new book *Twin Cities by Trolley* is now on sale at the Linden Hills station. When you buy the book from MSM, the museum makes a nice commission. So don't go to Barnes & Noble, Amazon.com or anywhere else. Support your museum.

Publicity for the book means more publicity for the museum. On May 6th **John Diers** and **Aaron Isaacs** appeared on WCCO Channel 4's Sunday morning news show. The St. Paul *Pioneer Press* on May 10th published an editorial about streetcars by Aaron, in which the museum is named.

Now that the big book mailing project is done, I'd like to give credit to the book mailing crew. They really worked hard. On the crew were **Dave Norman**, **Jim Otto**, **Russ Olson**, **Bill Graham**, **Jerry Olsen**, **Carl Barthelemy** and **Roy Harvey**. Thanks also to **Phil Settergren** for setting us up in Diamond Lake Hardware and to **Charles Barthold** for putting together the mailing materials. **John Diers** and I signed 375 books, no small feat in itself. The museum purchased exactly one ton of books, and we have moved that ton 2-3 times in the course of this mailing.

Photo Archive News. Kathy Haws, daughter of late member **Harold Dalland**, has donated 60 photos taken by Harold from 1943 to 1947, when he was a motorman at Lake Street Station. Most are portraits of his co-workers.

MSM photo archivist **Aaron Isaacs** has completed captioning the 450 photos that have been scanned for the Minnesota Reflections website. By June, the photos are expected to be accessible at <http://reflections.mndigital.org/>. In the meantime, check out the website. It features an ever-growing collection of photos from small historical societies around the state.

George Isaacs car barn dedication. The official dedication of the George K. Isaacs Car barn will

take place on Saturday June 23rd at 10:00 AM at the carbarn. The Isaacs family will be present and all members are invited. Following the dedication, we'll board a trolley and George's ashes will be scattered along the right of way.

Twin City Lines. As this issue of the *Streetcar Currents* is being sent out, the first issue of *Twin City Lines*, the new MSM magazine, is being mailed. We hope it will help us grow our membership, so tell all your non-member friends. If you need extra copies to help sell membership, contact **Aaron Isaacs** at 612-929-7066 or aaronmona@aol.com.

Isaacs Car barn Sprinkler Fund. MSM has received two grants that will be applied toward the Isaacs Car barn sprinkler fund. The 20th Century Electric Railway Foundation has given \$5000, which must be matched by non-member contributions. The Linden Hills Neighborhood Council has given \$1000. These grants, plus cash on hand, bring the sprinkler fund to \$26,273. We still need to raise over \$73,000 to make the magic number of \$100,000. Every dollar helps, so please be generous.

Ebay Sales. Member **Rick Anderson** has volunteered to be MSM's agent for sales on Ebay. The museum has numerous surplus photos, tokens, transfers, books and other miscellaneous items that can be turned into needed cash by selling them on Ebay. Rick and Treasurer **Scott Heiderich** are setting up the sales procedure and should be underway soon.

Linden Hills depot basement cleanup. For years, any item that no one knew what to do with wound up in the basement of the Linden Hills station. On May 8th, **Rod Eaton**, **Aaron Isaacs**, **Scott Heiderich** and others cleaned house. They loaded Rod's pickup truck with items to trash. In addition, some items went to the MSM archive and others were relocated to a more appropriate spot in the carbarn.

Excelsior Streetcar Line Update

Bob Johnson — Superintendent

Selling our museum. One of the challenges that we face is the shift in the character of our passenger base. The older riders that had direct experience with riding on the streetcars on a daily basis are a decreasing part of our customer population. To appeal to our younger passengers generally we need to increase our visibility and inform the public of our purpose and mission.

For this reason, the Excelsior Streetcar Line is exploring some new ways to increase ridership. This in-

cludes connecting with other community organizations to reach out to more people and tell them about us. Community Relations Manager **Bruce Kobs** is developing working relationships with several community organizations. Here are a couple of examples.

The local Chamber of Commerce and the Excelsior Downtown Business Group are two examples of organizations that can help us to reach more people. Bruce is our representative on these organizations and

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What's Happening?

May 28	Memorial Day—CHSL special early bird operations begin at 9:00 AM
June 2	First Family Fun Day at CHSL, 12:30 PM to 4:30 PM
June 2	First Moonlight ride at CHSL, 10:00 PM
June 6	Begin Wednesday afternoon operations at CHSL, 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM
June 16	Streetcar Cleaning at CHSL, 8:30 AM to 11:30 AM
June 23	George K. Isaacs carbarn dedication, 10:00 AM, Isaacs carbarn, CHSL
July 4	Independence Day early bird service at CHSL starts at 9:30 AM

CHSL & ESL Operations Notes*Jim Vaitkunas—Ops Chief*

The June 2007 Operations Schedule for both CHSL and ESL are included with this issue of the *Streetcar CURRENTS*. If you see a vacancy that needs filling (note that there are several shifts at CHSL and ESL that are in the red or yellow zones) please contact Jim Vaitkunas ASAP by either a phone call (952-688-7255) or e-mail: jvaitkunas@msn.com

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

Bulletin Board. Remember that it an MSM rule that operating personnel must review the operations bulletin board at the start of a shift. The operations bulletin board is located in the "ready barn" at Lake Harriet and in the "ready barn" at Excelsior. For those at CHSL all important notices and bulletins are also in the station agent's binder located below the cash register. It is important that you review the items on the bulletin boards as this is the only way we can easily communicate to all operating personnel operations and safety bulletins as well as other important administrative notices.

Yellow Cash Register Tape. All operating personnel and station agents are reminded that when the two-part paper cash register tape runs out, and you put a new one in, that you must keep the yellow roll that you take out. **Please don't throw it away!** We refer to that yellow register tape to reconcile differences between what the cash register says we collected versus what we deposit. Put the old yellow tape in the blue cash bag when you change it and the cashiers will take it and put it in the bottom of the cashier's cabinet so Russ Olson can get and use it later.

Canceling operations because of bad weather. Foremen should not cancel operations on account of weather unless absolutely necessary and then only at the last possible moment. Please remember that weather can change very dramatically and very suddenly—a torrential downpour in the afternoon can give way to a delightful evening (this actually happened on our season's opening day, May 5th). Foremen should pay close attention to the forecast (which can be and are often wrong) **and to actual conditions at Lake Harriet** and should direct his or her crew to report to the carbarn unless, at the time the foreman must leave his or her home for the carbarn, the forecast is for poor conditions throughout the shift. If the forecast holds hope - **however slim** - that operations can begin, albeit late, the foreman and crew should report to the carbarn. Please use your choice of the many Internet weather sources.

(Excelsior Update Continued from page 5)

helps us to participate in their programs in order to help us get more visibility. One project currently under study is a "Santa Trolley" which, if proved feasible, is planned for several Saturdays in December. This will be a static event where one of our cars will be stationed at Water Street with Santa on board. We do have many details to work out, and some technical issues need to be addressed.

We also are closely associated with the Excelsior and Lake Minnetonka Historical Society as partners in the annual Ghost Trolley event. The society manages the event and supplies actors for the streetcar. They also set up tents where face painting, story telling, and

other activities are conducted.

A pilot program with the *Museum of Lake Minnetonka*, the *Minnehaha* steamboat folks, is under way. We plan to market charters with both the steamboat and ESL cooperating to run a combined charter. A pilot program will be run in August.

Winona No. 10. As work winds down on the cars at the Isaacs car barn we look forward to some activity at Excelsior. DSR No. 78 has had a run of about 17 years now, and we need to do a bit of mechanical and cosmetic work on this ESL workhorse. Winona car 10 is approaching the point where restoration of the steel frame can begin.