



FORT SMITH TROLLEY MUSEUM

TROLLEY REPORT

Winter 2005

Number 80

Annual Open House Sunday May 1st

The museum open house is Sunday, May 1, 2005, 1-4:30 PM at 100 South 4th. Free trolley rides and refreshments will be available.

A special A&M railroad excursion train will leave from the museum at 2 PM to travel to Winslow, Arkansas and return at approximately 6 PM. This will allow riders to participate at the open house before leaving. Seating on the train is limited. Make your reservation early to insure availability. The normal adult fare is \$35, but for this train special fares of \$31.50 for adults and \$17.50 for children are offered. First time members of the Fort Smith Trolley Museum may purchase a \$25 adult ticket. To make reservations call 1-800-687-8600, extension 117.

On display this year will be the 1904 Hot Springs streetcar that is undergoing restoration. This car operated in Hot Springs until 1939. It is identical to the larger Fort Smith streetcars that ran to Van Buren. An assortment of antique radios, cars, tractors and Trolley Museum rail equipment will also be displayed.

The new track extension in front of the National Cemetery that crosses Wheeler Avenue to the 7th Street entrance of the Arkansas Best Performing Arts Center should be in use for the open house.



For additional information call Bradley Martin at 479-650-5456.

Hot Springs Railway 50 Progress

The streetcar body is now mounted on the two restored trucks and motors. By connecting four 12-volt car batteries, the car can move in and out of the barn. The seat frames are together awaiting the cushions for the backs and bottoms that will be covered with rattan.

When the last of the interior wood is finished the seats can be installed. Cleaning and refurbishing the controllers is in progress. Some-one familiar with DC controllers to help with wiring harnesses for the motors and controllers would be welcome.

Anticipation is increasing as the car begins to come together after thousands of hours of restoration. It

isn't too late to help with this restoration. If you have prior skills, that is great but if not, you can be trained as most volunteers are. Most of the work required now is assembling the already restored parts.

Volunteers Get Free Rides to Trolley Museum

The Fort Smith Trolley Museum is a RSVP volunteer workstation. If you are 55 or over you may join the RSVP. As a volunteer with RSVP, you can receive tickets to ride the public transit busses. Since the transfer point moved from Rogers Avenue and 8th street to the Sebastian County Parking lot on Garland, all busses going in any direction wind up at the Trolley Museum. What better deal than that.

Looking Back

Continued

by Becky Meyers

The sixteen cars that had two man crews were replaced with twenty-one one man cars with operating schedules of ten minute headway instead of twenty minutes. The Birney Safety Car, a lightweight standard streetcar for one man operation, appeared on the streets of many cities. Although Light & Traction cars were already modified for one man P.A.Y.E. operation, Green announced the purchase of eight new Safety Cars late in 1920. The new lightweight streetcars consumed far less electricity than the older, heavier cars, producing less wear on existing facilities. Lightweight cars would also permit economy in future extensions of transit service.

In 1920 fare increased to 6 cents due to increased operating expenses. Carmen received a pay increase and contract provisions provided for operation of split shift assignments, where a motorman might work during peak traffic hours in early morning and late afternoon, with an idle period during the middle of the day. The Chicago headquarters of the Light & Traction ordered the closing of Electric Park in 1919 and buildings were razed in 1920 causing baseball games to cease. More sidings at strategic points particularly along North Fifth permitted more frequent scheduling but Andrews Field at South 5th and B streets, where sports events were held, was still some distance from streetcar service.

Light & Traction failed to put track on the almost completed Garrison Avenue Bridge in 1922. Workers filled the track spaces with paving materials. Thousands came to the opening ceremonies of the bridge crossing the river to Moffett. Soon, there were a number of entertainment attractions in Moffett, only a mile from downtown Fort Smith. Joyland

Park, carnival shows, flying exhibitions, and other features drew large crowds to events that Light & Traction service failed to reach.

In 1923 fares increased to 7 cents and weekly passes, good for unlimited rides, sold for only \$1.25. George Tilles received the first weekly pass. The fare increase covered life insurance for company employees but no funds for maintenance. Many street railways sold weekly passes in an effort to attract more use of transit facilities. Compared to other cities Fort Smith's mileage related to population was 33 miles of tracks/33,000 population. Little Rock's was 36 miles of tracks/75,000 population. Muskogee had 15 miles of tracks/30,000 population.

Garrison Avenue's wood paving blocks continued swelling and buckling, at times even floating away following heavy rains. As work progressed in replacing wooden blocks with new brick pavement in 1923, sidewalks were stacked high with new bricks, and people entered stores and offices through alley entrances. Light & Traction management and city authorities agreed that the heavy rails resting on creosote treated cross-ties supported by concrete foundation should provide adequate support of the new pavement. Heated exchanges ensued with the subsequent pavement failure.

to be continued...

Arkansas: A Two Trolley State

by Art Martin

Central Arkansas Transit System dedicated River Rail's streetcar line in Little Rock and North Little Rock ceremonies on November 1, 2004. This was the first time a trolley had run in these areas since they ceased operation 57 years ago in Little Rock and 65 years ago North Little Rock. The River Rail system has three replica vintage electric streetcars built by Gomaco Trolley Company

operating on 2.5 miles of track.

The system connects many of downtown Little Rock's and North Little Rock's favorite stops, including Alltel Arena, the Statehouse Convention Center, the River Market district, dozens of office buildings and museums along with two libraries, two courthouses and two city halls. Future expansion will include a stop at the Clinton Presidential Library. Their goal is to have seven streetcars in operation.

In Fort Smith, streetcars began operation again on May 19, 1991, with restored former Fort Smith Light and Traction streetcar #224, built by the Saint Louis Car Company in 1926. This car served as a diner in Ashdown, Arkansas after the system was closed in 1933. The car was returned to Fort Smith and restored by the Fort Smith Streetcar Restoration Association, a non-profit organization that operates the car. The car operates on two-thirds mile of restored railroad track in the historic district that includes the Fort Smith Museum of History, National Historic Site, and the Riverfront development. Fort Smith's original streetcar track, which has been removed, covered 35 miles.

The city of Fort Smith aided the museum by building track alongside Garrison Avenue to the bridge, and they plan to extend the track to the Fort Smith Visitor's Center on the north side of town. The east end of the track has been extended across Wheeler Avenue to the Performing Arts Center entrance on 7th Street, and it will soon be operational.

Eventually, the track will extend past the front of the Convention Center and Holiday Inn to stop at Garrison and 8th Street.

Memberships and Contributions

Ronald Hastie
 George Schriver
 Raymond Toler
 Floyd Barger
 John Ford
 Thelma Woosley
 Stan Kujawa
 Paul Overholt
 Kathleen Safreed
 Isabel Marks
 Franklin & Pat Hawkins
 William & Betty Klusmeier
 Richard & Betty Griffin
 Donald Peer
 Jayne & Sam Allen
 Leon Taylor
 Greed Little
 Dave Galloway
 Dennis Smith
 James Fair
 Wilma & John Ayers
 M/M Walter Stouffer
 Julian Dyrhood
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 Walter Carter
 William Harriss
 Bob & Margaret Hawkins

Wesley & Sandra Bender
 Bradley Jesson
 Dan Hall
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 Phillip Moseley
 M/M Kenneth Klyne
 Art Martin
 Salley Vick
 Loring Lawrence
 Gordon Jordan
 Jake Commer
 J. Harry Feldman
 Frank Lockwood
 Rudy Garza
 Russell Williams
 Nancy & Clarence Sharum
 Mary Adams
 Robert Johnson
 Bev Puckett
 Robert Miller
 Mike Condren

Memorials

Amelia Martin by
 Rudy Garza

Reminder

The date on your mailing label is the date of your last monetary contribution to the trolley restoration and serves to keep your membership up to date. A current membership card is your pass to ride the trolley.

Discussion Group

The museum has a Yahoo group to facilitate distribution of information and encourage discussion of equipment, events, and work at the museum. You are invited to join. Log on to <http://groups.yahoo.com> to join. Just type fortsmithtrolley in the search block and follow directions.

World Wide Web Page

Visit our website for current news or to view past newsletters.

<http://www.fstm.org>

E-mail info@fstm.org

Membership application

Check appropriate type of membership and send this form with check or money order to:

FORT SMITH TROLLEY MUSEUM

c/o Fort Smith Streetcar Restoration Association, Inc.

2121 Wolfe Lane

Fort Smith, AR 72901

___ Annual Individual	\$10.00	___ Annual Benefactor	\$500.00	(Receive 224 Plaque and Lifetime Pass.)
___ Annual Family	\$15.00	___ Life	\$1000.00	(Receive Certificate and Lifetime Pass.)
___ Annual Sponsor	\$25.00	___ 224 Club	\$224.00	(Receive Plaque and Lifetime Pass.)

MEMBERSHIP CARD SERVES AS AN ANNUAL PASS

The Fort Smith Streetcar Restoration Association, Inc. is a non-profit organization under Sec. 501©(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954. GIFTS AND LEGACIES ARE DEDUCTIBLE.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

Street

City

State

ZIP

Additional Information on the Fort Smith Streetcar System is printed in "The Streetcars of Fort Smith, Arkansas" by Charles E. Winters, available from the Association for a donation of \$7.50 plus \$1.00 mailing cost.

Volunteer Opportunities

The Trolley Museum is operated exclusively by the time and energy of generous volunteers. Many projects still need to be completed and not all of these require specialized skills. There is a place for everyone, either doing something you already know how to do or being trained to do something new.

Restoration projects require a wide variety of skills, from woodworking and upholstery to mechanics and electrical work. The museum has all the tools and materials needed to do these projects, but they cannot be done without your help. A full restoration requires hundreds or even thousands of hours of work, but every hour makes a big difference. Volunteering at the museum is a great chance to learn new skills, and training will be provided when needed.

In addition to restoration, many

things are needed to keep the museum running smoothly. The buildings require maintenance, bookkeeping and inventory need to be kept up-to-date, and the landscaping and grounds need attention. People are also needed to greet visitors and operate the trolley. Even a few minutes taken to sweep the floors would be appreciated.

If you would like to volunteer at the museum, please don't hesitate to contact Bradley Martin at 650-5456 for detailed information. Regular workdays are Saturdays from 8-5 and Tuesday evenings from 6-10, and other arrangements may be made.

Operators Needed

Starting May 1, the Trolley will be running from 10-5 daily and 1-5 on Sundays. Operators usually work half-day shifts. Training will be provided. Contact Art Martin at 783-0145 for more information.

Trolley Report

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The logo for the Association of Railway Museums, Inc. (ARM) features the lowercase letters 'arm' in a bold, serif font. The letters are closely spaced and have a slightly distressed or textured appearance.

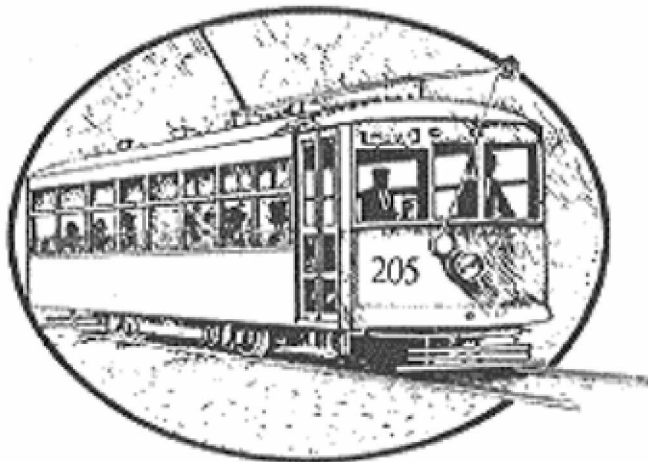
Association of Railway Museums, Inc.
Founded 1961

Promoting The Railway Museum Movement!

FORT SMITH TROLLEY MUSEUM

2121 Wolfe Lane
Fort Smith, AR 72901

Return Service Requested



Open House Sunday, May 1, 2005

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