



FORT SMITH TROLLEY MUSEUM TROLLEY REPORT

Spring 2005

Number 81

Open House Results

In spite of threatened rain, the weather for the annual open house could not have been better. Mayor Ray Baker of Fort Smith presented the museum with a Proclamation marking the official opening of the trolley track crossing Wheeler avenue to 7th street. This track brings the trolley to entrance of the Arkansas Best Performing Arts Center auditorium. The extension was included in part of the truck rerouting project recently completed by the city of Fort Smith.

Workers counted 275 free trolley riders during the three hours of the open house. 42 passengers boarded the A&M passenger train at the museum for a special trip across the Arkansas River to Winslow and back.

The main exhibit piece for this year was the partially restored Hot Springs Street Railway car #50 that is rapidly becoming a show piece. Antique autos and radios were on display as well as the museum's continually growing collection of artifacts.

Thank you to all the visitors and volunteers who helped to make this year's open house a success.

Hot Springs Street Railway 50 Progress

The restoration of HSSRR 50 is progressing at a steady pace. We are at a stage that most jobs are not visibly showy but have to be done and are time consuming. A list of 40 tasks needing to be done on the body has been made and can be checked off as tasks are completed. This was done to track progress and also to help volunteers find a job they wish to complete.

Currently, we have three areas of concentration. The first one is installing rubber weather strip to the bottom of the wood windows and then installing the windows and wood window trim in the car. Second, we are building the metal dashes on the platforms. Part of this job is reproducing the platform corner posts using photos and catalog illustrations. These posts will support the roof bonnets. The third area is the seats. Rattan and canvas are being cut and laminated to install on the bottom and backs of the seats. We will be ready to upholster the seats soon.

Volunteers are always needed and appreciated. Stop by or call Bradley Martin at 479-650-5456 if you would like to contribute to this or any other project.

Summer Evening in Boston Mountains

August 20, 2005 at 5pm, the Museum will host a special excursion train from Van Buren to Winslow and back. It will leave from Van Buren's Frisco station to allow a 45 minute stop in Winslow with entertainment. Before the days of air conditioning many families went to the mountains during the hot summer months to relax and cool off.

First Class Seating and Hobo Class are available. First Class seating will be in the Arkansas & Missouri RR's newly added parlor car and Hobo Class will be in the coach cars. First class will be served a delicious meal and enjoy a presentation by the Post Family Winery; one of the only Arkansas Family owned wineries. Hobo Class will be served special Hobo dinners.

First Class seating is available for adults only. Fares for First Class are \$200. Hobo class is a family-oriented affair with no alcohol served or allowed. Hobo Class tickets are \$50.

The trip promises to be an evening you will long remember. Tickets may be obtained from the Fort Smith Trolley Museum, 100 South 4th, Fort Smith, Arkansas 72901, 479-783-0205 or by calling Bradley Martin at 479-650-5456.

Looking Back

Continued

by **Becky Meyers**

With new Garrison Avenue brick pavement in place, safety zones were painted at streetcar stops for protection of patrons boarding and alighting from the cars. The abandoned Arkoma carline right of way between Texas Road and the Oklahoma State line was deeded to highway authorities for use in building a new roadway. As a regular step in civic improvement, city authorities announced they would pave Greenwood Avenue, notifying the Light & Traction at the same time. With car tracks positioned along the east curb line and resting on rock ballast, the city ordered relocation and pavement of the route along the center line of Greenwood. Objecting to expenses of relocation and pavement, the company announced it would abandon the Greenwood Avenue track. Litigation dragged along for some months before the company began movement and pavement of the trackage.

The 1923 Light & Traction dinner dance was held at the American Legion Headquarters. In August of that year, Dan C. Green, Manager of the Light & Traction, introduced his successor, R. C. Coffy. Some years earlier Coffy had relieved Green at Everett, Washington. Green received an engraved gold watch from grateful employees and friends.

The Oklahoma Gas and Electric Company purchased Byllesby's Fort Smith holdings during February of 1923. Electric power properties in Fort Smith, while retaining their corporate identity, would be closely interwoven with O.G.&E. Coffy announced plans for expenditure of large sums for construction of new electric power generating facilities near Tulsa, of a sufficient capacity to supply the Fort Smith area.

As a public spirited gesture,

Light & Traction cars carried dashboard banners announcing baseball games and other civic events, even though its service failed to reach Andrews Field by some distance. As protest to payment of an amended privilege tax in 1923, which now included a charge of \$2.50 per streetcar, the company announced discontinuance of the use of dashboard banners.

Van Buren Bridge toll collection continued with regular riders purchasing ticket books amounting to 5 1/4 cents per trip, the occasional rider paying 10 cents cash toll to collectors. Bridge tickets were valid only when presented to the collector in books, to prevent book owners from selling a ticket to the occasional rider who was subject to the 10 cents cash toll. Ticket book owners sometimes sold one of their tickets to persons not owning a book, which deprived the bridge commission of the difference between the ticket book rate and the 10 cents cash rate. Van Buren cotton broker, Clarence Kidd, challenged the legality of toll collection from streetcar patrons. Offering a detached toll ticket that was refused by the toll collector, he then refused to pay the cash toll. In court, Judge Bourland held that toll collection from streetcar riders was illegal, but his opinion was overruled by the Arkansas Supreme Court.

Little Rock Trolley

Little Rock's operating trolley system is an interesting new attraction. The trolley began operation in February 2005 and had it's 100,000th rider by the end of May. The new cars, replicas of the last cars to run in Little Rock in 1947, are beautiful and air conditioned. At present three cars are in the system, and two cars operate at a time.

The Little Rock trolley line is divided into two routes. During the week, each trolley runs on separate

routes. The north route starts at Markham Street and crosses over the river to North Little Rock across the Main Street bridge. The route continues for six blocks on Main Street, circles 4 blocks, then returns to Little Rock over the Main Street bridge to end at Markham Street.

The south route operates in a continuous loop on Markham Street and 2nd Street, circling seven blocks.

The routes are combined on Saturday and Sunday so each car travels the entire loop in North Little Rock and Little Rock. The car barn is located in North Little Rock.

Track is being installed to extend the line to the Clinton Library.

Besides air conditioning, the cars have great handicap accessibility. Each door has a handicapped lift that will bring a wheelchair into the car. The parallel front seats fold against the wall, and the wheel chair is strapped down for safety.

The operator carries no change or tokens. Each passenger drops their fare in a fare box. Fares for persons 5 and over are 50 cents. Senior(65+) and disabled fares cost 25 cents. Children under 5 ride free. Transfers are free between north and south routes.

Little Rock and North Little Rock now have three tourist points of interest including the trolley, the Clinton Library, and the SS Razorback Submarine that is anchored in the river adjacent to the bridge in North Little Rock. All are very interesting and worth seeing.

Operators Needed

Trolley Operators are always needed to keep the trolley running. Operators usually work half-day shifts or on a substitute basis. Regular operating hours are 10-5 daily and 1-5 on Sundays. Training is provided. Contact Art Martin at 783-1237 for more information.

Memberships & Contributions

Mrs E Z Hornberger
 Polly Crews
 Billy Higgins
 Pauline Beckman
 Leo Cretnik
 Floy Looper
 Marilyn Barr
 M/M Eugene Staton
 Genevieve Weaver
 M/M Joe Coker
 Martha Jones
 M/M Jack Pollard
 Rosalie Platt
 Jack Vaughn
 Bob Terhune
 Mary Nell Euper
 James Hurt
 Sidney Sternberg
 M/M Ira Jones
 Jack Austerman
 Charles Hearn
 Raymond Sharum
 Art Martin
 Ervin Glenn
 John Furlow
 Tom Raymond
 M/M Gerald Edwards
 Marlin Hoge

Charles Raney
 Ralph / Linda Riley
 Carl Roden
 Mrs Cecil Boulden
 Betty Wheaton
 Rodney Naucke
 Bruce Bente
 Victor Campbell
 Charles Reutzel
 Roland/Judy Borham Jr
 Peter Smykla
 Lorita Rosenbaum
 William Klusemeir
 Carole/George Beattie
 M/M Blake Berry
 Otto Goessl
 David Reutzel
 Edythe Jakiun
 Jimmie Wakefield
 Judith Tuck
 Joe Newell
 Jim Echols

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.

Memorials

Kelly Johnston by
 Deborah Johnston-Gaston
 Carlton Plunkett by
 Stephen Plunkett
 Irvin Meyers by
 Iris Breed Jones

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.

Old Trolley- New Signal

By David Kerr

As mentioned elsewhere in the Trolley Report, the City of Fort Smith recently completed the trolley track expansion east past the Fort Smith National Cemetery main gate to near the convention center as part of the truck route realignment.

How can the trolley cross safely in such a busy and intricate intersection, one might ask? The answer is simple: Out of a maze of several traffic signals pointing in all directions, there is a dedicated trolley crossing signal. It is very similar to a pedestrian crossing signal and its placement.

When the trolley approaches a red

square painted between the trolley tracks, strategically placed on either side of Wheeler Avenue, there are overhead detection cameras that detect the presence of the trolley which then activates the trolley crossing signal and also turns motor vehicle traffic signals red in all directions to allow the trolley to cross safely in thirty seconds.

What is the deal with the red squares? The red squares are in place to warn the trolley operator that if he wishes to cross Wheeler Avenue the trolley must be within the red square to be detected by the overhead camera. If the operator does not wish to cross, he must stay behind the red square.

Come and ride the old trolley and see the new crossing signal in operation.

Trolley Report

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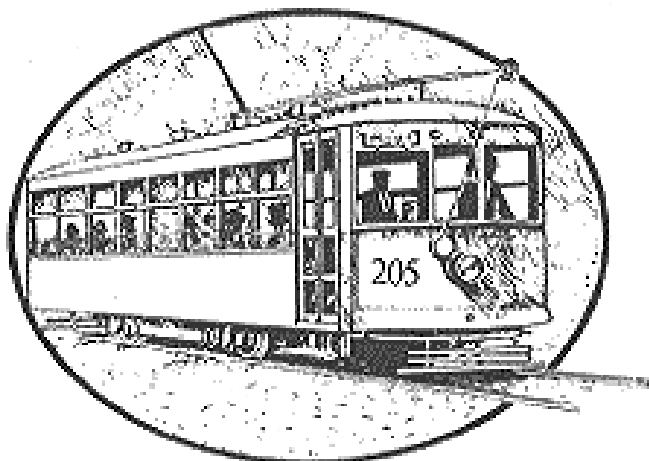
Association of Railway Museums, Inc.
Founded 1961

Promoting The Railway Museum Movement!

FORT SMITH TROLLEY MUSEUM

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