



FORT SMITH TROLLEY MUSEUM

TROLLEY REPORT

Fall 2007

Number 90

Fund Raising Dinner “Quite a Mystery”

By Henry Moore

How many of you have ever had a chance to solve a murder mystery while enjoying a good meal? Well, ninety-two people had just that opportunity at the Trolley Museum’s annual fund raising dinner that was held on Saturday August 25. And some people became master detectives by solving the murder. The play was “Clue. The Musical”, and it was based on the board game of the same name. The Southside High School Drama Troupe performed the play, and they are to be commended for doing an excellent job. These young adults gave up their summer to do five or more rehearsals per week in order to be ready. And ready they were. The most important aspect of the play was audience participation. Everyone was given a “clue sheet” and could keep up with the tidbits of information given by Mr. Body, the victim of the murder. The cast made several trips into the dining area, which made the audience part of the play. Once again, Mickey Sellard of Especially Yours Catering and Events did an excellent job of food preparation. The Don Bailey Trio provided everyone with a wide range of instrumental music that was enjoyed by all.

Probably the most important

part of the evening was the silent auction portion of the night. This was the first time the museum had tried this. But we had a very special project we needed help with. Prior to the evening, we had been given a challenge by the 20th Century Electric Railway Foundation to come up with \$5000.00 for our half of a \$10,000 matching grant to be used for the restoration of FSL&T #205, which currently is on rubber wheels. Well, I am very happy to report that through the generosity of the participants of the silent auction and other donations, we were able to meet our \$5000.00 goal. Over 40 items were featured in the auction, and I am happy to report, there was nothing for this reporter to bring home.

On behalf of the board members of the Fort Smith Street Car Restoration Association, we would like to give ALL our friends and benefactors a rousing THANK YOU.

Upcoming Museum Activities for 2008

by Henry Moore

Well folks, it is that time of the year for the trolley board to map out the activities for the coming year. But this time, we are going to give our patrons and members a say in what we do for upcoming events. We will still have our annual open house on Sunday, May 4th, 2008. There are many other

things we would like to do, but we need input from our members. One thing we would like to continue is our annual fund raising activity. It is the one time of the year we can get together and have some fun. So here is the challenge. We would like to hear from you as to the activity you would like for us to do. We will gather these suggestions together, and we will continue to do so until December 31, 2007. Please mail your suggestions to:

Fort Smith Trolley Museum

100 South 4th Street

Fort Smith, AR 72901

Or e-mail Henry Moore at trolley205@yahoo.com. At our January board meeting, we will select one activity, and the person whose activity is selected, will receive 4 free tickets to that activity. In the case of several of the same suggestions, we will have a random drawing for the winner. Now is the time to put on your thinking cap and help us out.

Hot Springs 50 Restoration Progress

You should stop by the museum to see how well this car is coming along. Motor wiring and brake plumbing are being completed. When these tasks are finished the car will be able to move under its own power. The most challenging part of the wiring is the completion of the resistor grids for the motor control.

Looking Back

By Becky Meyers

The following letter was written by Albert B. Elliott, sexton (care taker), of Oak Cemetery in December of 1922.

“Since an effort has been made by the Ft. Smith Light and Traction Co. to discontinue service on their line from Little Rock Ave. to Oak Cem. on South Greenwood:

“I have been repeatedly asked and urged by the patrons of Oak Cem. and by many parties that are interested in this part of the city to make a statement of facts relating to Oak Cem. how many visitors weekly, hourly that visit the place. And if you will kindly give me space I will endeavor to give you what I really know about this matter.

“I was appointed Sexton of Oak Cem. September 1, 1920. I have served in that capacity for 2 years 3 months. I have interred an average of 19 burials per month that would be about the average. During that time I have sold lots to the amount of about _____ and give spaces to about _____. Oak Cemetery lies 3 blocks South of Little Rock Ave. on So. Greenwood and is composed at present of about 35 acres. This is including the colored cemetery where it is colored on the East side, bordering on the Brick Plant Road on the East. I have been told that the first deeded property to the city for burial purposes was deeded to the city many years ago by Miss Sarah Clark whose remains rest today just East of the Sexton House which stands now in the center of what we call the Old part of the Cem. Miss Clark at that time deeded one acre to the city for that purpose.

“Since that time as new space was needed and more Territory required. The city purchased what we call the new

annex lying directly South: Where later I think during Mayor Bourland former term of office 15 acres more land was purchase being directly East of the New apart or as we call it the annex to the old part. The colored people are mostly interred in this part of the cemetery. As the old Colored Cemetery which lies between the old and first cemetery and the new annex is completely filled up. Except those parties who own lots of their own. A very great number of the old timers that their parents and children are resting here, and the Rich Builders of Fort Smith that are also interred here are visited dayly and weekly by their relatives and friends. And those and hundreds of others regard this old Cemetery as the Home of those who passed away before and they regard this action of the Lantern Company as an effort to in amount do away with the old place that is so dear to so many of them it would be difficult to say just how many come here. I have seen as many as 30,000 people here at one time at other times not so many. Besides this class of people there are hundreds of the poor that have friend here and some of them so bent with age and infirmities that the Street Car is their only way of conveyance to this place that is just as sacred to them as to their more fortunate brother.

“I have a running history of 8 Sextons that proceeded me here. I have been told during Mr. Hofman years of service here that he interred 8000, Mr. Falkner was then Sexton for a time. Safe to say that his interments ran to 15,000. After him Mr. Kagan I was informed was here for a number of years. His interment must have reached as high as 5,000.

“So to sum this whole matter up the reader will see that very few people in Fort Smith should be disinterested in this matter and lastly

but by no means the least this section of the city out South on Greenwood and all in and about the Brick Plant Holdings Scores of School Children who when the weather is bad depend largely on the st car for transportation to and from school. And to sum it all up the position of Oak Cem. as well as all others out in the Sec. that is affected by the effort to be allowed to discontinue services on this line would be not only a determent to business in many cases.”

To be continued...

Fort Smith Light and Traction 205

Brill Waylow Seat frames are complete and awaiting the construction of the wood and rattan seat bottoms and backs. The seat frames are ready to install in the car. The journal boxes for the axles are cast and hopefully will be at the museum shortly. After some modifications to the journals we can start work on the reproduction of the Cincinnati truck for the car. Restoration of this car is partially funded by a grant from the National Railway Historical Society and the 20th Century Electric Railway Foundation.

US Marshall Museum

The Marshall Museum board has chosen to locate the new museum on the river rather than on the 3rd Street block. The 3rd Street location would have been adjacent to the National Historic site and would have required the Trolley Museum to relocate the contents of the 3rd Street building. As it is, we are allowed to keep our current storage building, and we're looking forward to the addition of the Marshall Museum to Fort Smith's growing list of historical attractions.

Thank You Gypsy Journal

A friend picked up copies of the July-August, 2007, **Gypsy Journal** (The RV Travel Newspaper) in Rapid City, SD because the front page was filled with a colored picture of Fort Smith Trolley Museum's 224 streetcar. Six of the thirty six pages were filled with history of Fort Smith and two of these were the Trolley Museum. There were three pictures of the trolley, a picture of the 4003 Frisco locomotive and the MKT passenger car.

Needless to say everyone including the local Convention and Visitor Bureau was pleased with the accuracy of their stories and the good write up of Fort Smith. This Journal is for the RVer's who travel

the country. This should result in increased tourist visitors to Fort Smith. Thanks to Nick and Terry Russell for this publicity.

95 South 3rd

The property with the mural depicting the history of street railways on the west side of the museum was in poor shape due to poor maintenance prior to the museum purchasing the property. This summer the building roof was repaired and doors installed to secure the building. This 4,000 square foot building provides much needed storage space. One immediate benefit of the work is a cover was added over the mural to protect it from the weather and provide a covered car stop at the museum.

Trolley Report

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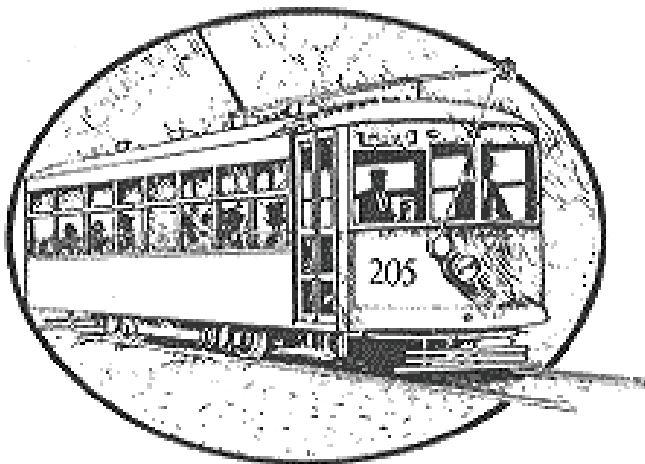
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