

Trolley Fare

Fort Collins Municipal Railway News
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www.fortcollinstrolley.org

Annual Open Meeting

All members are invited to our annual open business meeting on **Thursday, February 22 at 6 pm** in the **Community Room at 215 N. Mason**. Please park and enter at the north entrance. Along with the usual business will be a summary of last season operations and 2018 plans.

Operational news

by Bob Browning

Not surprisingly, there is little to report from an Operations standpoint during the winter months, but this doesn't mean that there aren't things going on during the "quiet" time! Car 21 is undergoing some maintenance: several of its seat backs are being re-caned by Roger Smith and Jim Bowers, there is painting scheduled for the undercarriage and, if weather permits, some exterior varnish will be applied. As usual, Chuck Bade and Tom Mulrone have projects aimed at keeping the car running as well as it ever has for the coming season.

We are in a delightful place for the first time in recent memory: we have sufficient motormen on hand so that we won't need to take new motormen from outside of the Society this year. With about 25 motormen either qualified or scheduled for training, we were afraid that there would be insufficient run time available to keep our existing motormen proficient, much less adding new motormen. John Mol is currently doing some computer work for us, and Chuck Zazcek, who comes from the conductor side, will be training in March and should be ready to operate the car by opening day. We'll also train Tom Mulrone as our second yard hostler. It's a bit premature to schedule recertification and training runs now due to weather concerns, but we're ready to take advantage of any weather breaks to start training people.

A little more on motorman recertification: Our agreement with the City stipulates that all returning motormen be given a written test covering streetcar systems, show a valid Colorado Driver's license, and pass a hands-on evaluation of their streetcar driving skills. We combine City requirements with a crew meeting of all motormen, where operational requirements are discussed, and showing current Society membership. For example, we will present three new training diagrams at the crew meeting developed to enhance motormen knowledge of the electrical system and the car's resistor grid. This all boils down to safety: we want our motormen to be as safe and knowledgeable as possible so that they can deliver an enjoyable, safe ride for our passengers.

A large amount of work has continued in the off-season to eliminate "one man shops" within the Society. We've been quite fortunate that individuals have stepped up to do what's necessary but in many cases, we have no redundancy. We'll soon exert central control over our on-line scheduling

program, we now have control over an MS Word version of the *Equipment Operations Manual* and we're soon to acquire the same control over *Trolley Fare*. For us to revise the *Equipment Operations Manual* without the word processing program would be a monumental effort and we easily make changes in house now. Were we to lose Al Jackson's knowledge of the on-line scheduling, the result would be catastrophic! Greg Koch will be trained to operate the track cleaner this spring which further removes the load (and dependency) on Al. We know that this sounds like sound management practices, but in an all-volunteer operation, extra people are oftentimes hard to obtain. Things are looking better.

We are due to officially start operations for 2018 on Saturday, May 5, at noon and we hope to see you all on Car 21 having a safe and fun trip on our 99 year old trolley!

Improving our membership database

by Bob Browning

One of the projects taken on over this winter was the improvement of our capability to monitor and communicate with our members. Our old mailing list has been converted from a spreadsheet to a database. We can now sort on different parameters and tailor our communications accordingly. We can now print email addresses directly into the server or can print mailing labels directly for those people requesting contact by snail mail. We tested the email function of the program and, of the 250 (or so) names on the list only 19 addresses were returned as undeliverable.

The test of the snail mail addresses will occur with this edition of *Trolley Fare*. If an email had been returned as undeliverable, and the copy of *Trolley Fare* is returned as well, we'll assume that we've lost contact with that member and delete that entry from the system.

If you are now receiving *Trolley Fare* via snail mail, we encourage you to switch to email instead. That would allow us to spend the money now used for printing and mailing to go to restoration and maintenance of our streetcars. When you used the form on the next page to renew your membership, please select [] **email** and include your email address. We'll take care of the rest.

Buy a brick paver!

by Alan Cram

Our buy-a-brick program to help fund expanding the Mountain Ave. barn will reach its first milestone this Spring as we lay the first donated bricks at our downtown Howes St. platform. For more info on this event or to make a brick donation, please call me at: (303) 588-8633

Streetcar restoration

We've accomplished a lot since the last newsletter on cars 21 and 25:

- **Roger Smith** finished fitting interior trim on car 25 and is working with the Pottery Studio in City Park to cast new ceramic buttons for Car 25's buzzer system. He is also recaning more seat backs for Car 21.

- **Bob Browning** completed refinishing and painting Car 25 window sashes and is planning to repaint the people catchers on Car 21.
- **Charlie Rock**, with help from the crew, installed rebuilt controllers on Car 25 and is now connecting wiring to them.
- **Earl Paige** and **Mark Babcock** completed many electrical and mechanical tasks inside Car 25.
- **Jim Bowers** Installed new glass in upper side-windows and measured all side-window sashes for new glass which is now on order.
- **Chuck Bade** and **Tom Mulroney**, reinstalled and tested brake controls on each end of Car 25. They also wired the overhead control panels and made three more sander valves but later found they're too tall to work under the car.
- **Tom Tidd** is exploring making more-compact sander valves with a 3D printer.
- **Blake Bergersen** and **Dave Miller** assisted where needed.
- **Carol Tunner** kept us moving with her yummy snacks each Saturday.

Upcoming Car 25 tasks:

- Install new glass in side-window sashes.
- Complete wiring and testing controllers.
- Complete brake linkages under car.
- Install new sander- and air-lines under car.
- Install power truck under car. Connect motor wiring.
- Install new sand traps. Fabricate and install sand boxes.
- Paint window casings and under-sill metal silver.
- Install and refinish side-window sills.
- Move overhead lights to make room for new OH wire.
- Construct and hang wooden trough for overhead wire.
- Purchase and install new overhead wire.
- Add brass trim to trap doors.
- Secure bids to prep and paint car exterior.

You're always welcome to stop by the Howes barn to view our progress on Saturday mornings.

Time to renew and getting *Trolley Fare*

Trolley Fare is sent to every FCMRS member who has paid dues at least once in the past 3 years. That means if you haven't renewed since 2014 this is your last newsletter. Please renew your membership using the form below.

Although we still snail-mailed *Trolley Fare* to many members, most now get color copies of *Trolley Fare* via email. Please help us reduce expenses by getting *Trolley Fare* via email. Either contact us at

fcMrs1919@gmail.com

or send us your email address on the form below.

To download past newsletters, go to:

www.fortcollinstrolley.org/members.php and select **Newsletter Archive**.

Trolley Fare is published for members and friends of the Fort Collins Municipal Railway Society.

FCMRS Staff:

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Department Contacts:

Advertising on Car 21: John Beckett, 493-1495

Car 21 maintenance: Chuck Bade, Tom Mulroney

Car 25 reconditioning: Al Jackson, Roger Smith, Chuck Bade, et al

Crew scheduling & Charters: Bob Browning, Thea Sapienza

Conductor & depot-agent training: Carol Tunner, Dan Sapienza

Email us: fcMrs1919@gmail.com

Maintenance of way: Al Jackson, Greg Koch

Membership: John Mol

Motormen training: Bob Browning, Roger Smith, Thea Sapienza

Public relations: Wayne Sundberg

Souvenirs & depot management: Alan Cram

Trolley Fare & website: Al Jackson, wslcarshop@gmail.com

Volunteer coordinator: Bob Browning

Please Use This Form to Renew Dues and Donate to FCMRS Projects

Renew my membership for 2018 (check one):

Associate, \$15/yr Family, \$20/yr Sponsor, \$30/yr Benefactor, \$100/yr Lifetime, \$500 \$ _____

Name: _____ I prefer to receive *Trolley Fare*: email (color) USPS (B&W)

Email address: _____

Change of address: Street: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Donation to FCMRS projects:

Help recondition Car 25 for service \$ _____

Help purchase overhead wire for both barns \$ _____

Expand Mountain Ave. barn to house Car 25 \$ _____

Total Donation: \$ _____

Please make out your check to **FCMRS** and mail with this completed form. **THANK YOU!**

FCMRS

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