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# FOX RIVER LINES

m a g a z i n e



Issue 00-3, Summer 2000

## FRTM Hosts Over 600 Sunday Schoolers



*Rain did not dampen the spirits of the Sunday schoolers as they detrain CRT 5001 at Castlemuir.*

Sunday, July 30, 2000 - Sixteen bus loads of Sunday School students descended upon the Fox River Trolley Museum for six trips in car CRT 5001. A typical "CTA rush hour load" situation developed with an average of 104 people packed in to the car. It was a rainy day but that did not dampen the spirits of over 624 students and their leaders as they unloaded in our parking lot. They ranged in age from four to seventeen years, and part of Northwest Bible Baptist Church's Sunday School "Special Event" program. The bus routes included origins in Arlington Heights, Aurora, Carpentersville, Carol Stream, Glendale Heights and Mt. Prospect.



*Conductor, Stan Nettis, talks with our many and enthusiastic young visitors. Most of the riders had never been on a trolley, "L" car or train before.*

Most of the visitors had never been on a train, much less a "trolley" according to Ken Anderson, the Church's Associate Pastor and coordinator for the program. This "trolley trip" was to be something different from what usually happens on a Sunday. Each bus had its own adult leader who works with the riders on that bus over a long period of time. The same kids are on each bus from each origin each Sunday. The leaders said their students on the trip to the Fox River Trolley Museum had a great time and were very interested and appreciative, according to Anderson.



*Some of the sixteen busses staged in the Museum's parking waiting in the rain to pick up or unload riders.*

Logistics for the undertaking involved staging the busses, some at Blackhawk Forest Preserve and other locations in the South Elgin area. Ken said "cell phones" were used to advise drivers to move to the museum grounds in time to load CRT 5001. All of this was done in "heavy weather" and without any real hitches on their part or ours. We will be looking forward to having another visit especially with better weather and the operation of the Blackhawk Extension.

**- Ken Anderson, Laura Taylor, Don MacBean**  
*Photos by Rich Anderson*

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**Polar Express Last Run Of 2000 Before The**

## Big Snow



*Santa charming the many youngsters as he passes out gifts and candy.*

Sunday, December 10, 2000 two trains of excited children made the last trip of the Museum's 2000 season to the North Pole. The Batavia Park District's second "POLAR EXPRESS" excursion preceded the season's major one foot or more snow storm on December 17.

Two hundred children, their parents and helpers piled into CRT 5001 for a trip to the replacement track stub (North Pole) where they were met by Santa Claus who passed out bells and candy and wished them a Merry Christmas! On the return trips, everyone was treated to hot chocolate and cookies. These were doubly appreciated as the car's heating system failed to respond to the ministrations and efforts of Ralph Taylor and Jim Gonyo to get the car to heat properly.

Two trips operated, one at 6pm and one at 7pm. Bob Blaus was motorman and Jim Gonyo conductor. John Goerth, Blackhawk Forest Preserve ranger delivered Santa to the replacement track stub. Assistance was also provided by Laura Taylor and Jan Gonyo.



*Santa boarding the Polar Express at the North Pole. Don't let Garfield Pk Via Subway destination sign fool you!*

This type of charter is yet another expression of fulfilling the Museum's Mission:

To preserve and interpret Chicago's electric transport era that began in the 1890's and peaked before 1950. The electric transport era is significant because electric railways, including interurban, rapid transit and streetcar, helped the Chicago region grow to be one of North America's great metropolitan areas. The Museum strives to show that electric railways were more than convenient, they were and are, a way of life for generations of people from all walks of life.

The Museum fulfills this mission by preserving, interpreting and operating historic railway vehicles on its demonstration electric railway, over the Aurora, Elgin and Fox River Electric route at South Elgin, Illinois. Furthermore, the museum preserves, displays and interprets smaller artifacts, photos, oral histories and documents which help relate the importance of electric transport in and around the Chicago Metropolitan Area, putting them in context with their surroundings and era.

*"POLAR EXPRESS"* written by Chris Allsburg, is the story of a magical train ride on Christmas Eve that takes a boy to the North Pole to receive a special gift from Santa Claus. The beautifully illustrated book received the prestigious "Caldecott Award" in 1985 for the best illustrated children's

book. It was published by Houghton Mifflin Co. and has become a perennial Christmas favorite for children.

- **Don MacBean**

*Photos by Don MacBean*

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## **Board Doings**

Synopsis from the January, 2001 Meeting of the Museum's Board of Directors:-

**Trolleyville USA** requested and received permission to print "*Fox River Lines*" issue 99-4, the "Batavia Power House" issue.

**Treasurer Taylor** noted the balance in our checking account was higher than last year at the same time.

**Museum Operations, Trainmaster Gonyo** said that the work on the new Rule Book is waiting for track diagrams from Chief Engineer Taylor. Opening day plans for the extension are about July 4<sup>th</sup>.

**Chief Engineer Taylor** reported work was progressing on the drawings for the extension's overhead wire standard. Plans are expected to be ready by January 22, 2001 with total requirements completed by February 13, 2001.

**Roadmaster Konecki** indicated that 700 feet of rail was replaced in the IC bridge area. Over 1000 tie plates were purchased and picked up from the Cedar Rapids and Iowa City Railway. Ed also donated a number five 70 pound switch to be used for the lead into the maintenance of way shed. Three additional 70# switches will be purchased from the CRANDIC.

**Chief Lineman Chuck Galitz** reported on progress on work on the extension with Ralph Taylor.

- **Don MacBean**

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## **Museum Extension Construction Continues In 2000**

The museum took proposals for supplying all of the track material for the extension this Spring. Swanson Railroad Contractors was awarded the contract to supply the rail, ties, tie plates, spikes, joint bars and other associated items. The rails are 90 pound weight from a Norfolk and Western railway line being removed in central Illinois. For those members interested, it is the line which ran west/southwest from Cleveland to East St. Louis. The construction of the extension's new mainline switch and the first 200 of extension track was included in Swanson's contract. Swanson delivered the track materials and installed the initial track in April immediately after the earthwork was completed.

As soon as the earthwork was completed, the Kane County Forest Preserve began installing topsoil and mulch on the earth embankment slopes. The Forest Preserve will plant native grasses and wild flower seeds on the embankment to beautify and help hold the earth in place. The railroad embankment construction and plant seedings are the first steps in the Forest Preserve's plans to remove the weed plant species that have invaded the quarry since quarry operation stopped decades ago. The quarry's ecosystem has an interesting and diverse plant variety which will flourish once the infesting weed plants are removed and/or controlled.

Another major milestone on the extension construction was achieved in June. After receiving proposals, the museum awarded a contract to Aldrich Electric Inc. for installing the wood trolley poles. Trolley poles are necessary to suspend the trolley wire and associated span wires in the air at the correct vertical and horizontal location over the track. Aldrich installed the 51 wood poles needed for the track extension's trolley wire.

On your next visit to the museum, one can see the extension progress made so far out of one of our trolley cars at the south end of the ride. If you drive into Blackhawk Forest Preserve, you can see the progress at the south end of our track extension from the parking lot near the picnic pavilion by the river. The construction work is far enough along that one can start to get a feel for what it will be like to ride a trolley over the extension to the picnic area of the Blackhawk Forest Preserve as trolley passengers did in the late 1890s.

- **Andy Roth**

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## **Car Department Happenings**

March 10, 2001, - Joe Hazinski, Chief Mechanical Officer, said organization is going slowly and it will be a challenge to get the equipment ready for service.

While it is desired to have the exterior of NSL 715 repainted, we will not go forward until all elements are lined up. Last year's roof work will be completed.

L car 4451 needs some door work which may be well along the way due to last season's body repair.

With the paint materials on hand, locomotive W&SLR 73 will be derusted, primed and painted this season.

We are developing a servicing plan for PCC's 5001, 43, 40 and 6101-02. While some parts are on hand we are working on costs of completing overhead conversion for 40 and 6101-02. PCC 1030 will also be moved to a less prominent location on track#1.

If manpower and supplies can be assembled, work will start on stabilizing SSL 14's roof with the "SnowRoof" system. This will involve pantograph removal.

Also planned for later in the season is the work on Line car 11's platforms and roof. The intention is to eventually put the car back in service as a line car but defer actual restoration and motor repair to a much later time.

- **Joe Hazinski**

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