



# FORT SMITH TROLLEY MUSEUM TROLLEY REPORT

Winter 2010

Number 99

## 2009 - What a Year!

The Trolley Museum had an exciting 2009. In addition to celebrating its 30th anniversary, the museum experienced unprecedented growth.

One of the most noticeable achievements involved an existing building. The dilapidated warehouse already featured a painted mural of the history of the trolleys, but three years of extensive renovation have converted it for use as a multi-use Visitor's Center. Still in progress, the completed building will include a climate controlled library and archive room, a reading room, display areas, restrooms, gift shop, a kitchenette, and storage space. Two 8 foot glass patio doors frame an excellent view of the Arkansas River, and a covered deck will serve both as a stage for special functions and as an observation deck.

The project was partially funded by a matching grant from the 20<sup>th</sup> century Electric Railway Foundation. Local businesses and individuals donated many materials, and community service workers from the Arkansas Department of Community Correction and the Fort Smith District Court and other volunteers provided most of the labor. Boy scouts are paving the area around the entrance to the building as an Eagle Scout Project.

The Arkansas & Missouri RR is already using the reading room as the Fort Smith Station for their excursion trains. Passengers may now purchase tickets, board at, and return to the museum.

We still have a lot to do before the project is complete. Additional construction in the building depends on the availability of volunteer and financial resources.

The Arkansas Community Foundation awarded a grant to the museum to purchase **Past Perfect Software**. Designed specifically to manage museum collections, the software will make the museum's unique resources easier to catalog and more accessible. Library and archive materials are being moved to the building, and volunteers have started importing data from the museum's books, photographs, maps, and files into the software's database.

In addition to the new building, several new cars were unexpectedly added to our collection. **Capital Transportation Company 305 and 310**, two Little Rock Birney cars, were donated by the Hillcrest Merchants Association of Little Rock, Arkansas. These will be combined into one restored car, the CTC 305. It will be the only museum restoration of the single ended Birney with both doors on the same side of the car.

The **Veracruz 9 Open Car** from the Lake Shore Electric collection in

Cleveland, Ohio, was another exciting and very unexpected acquisition. The VC9 is a sister car to the Veracruz 6 we already had in kit form. The VC9 will be restored with parts from the VC6, representing years of previous restoration work. The parts we remove from the VC9 will then be restored to use later on the VC6. When restored the Veracruz 9 will be the only vintage open car operating in a city in the US.

The Lake Shore Electric collection also provided many parts needed to complete the Hot Springs Street Railway 50 and other useful parts and equipment.

2009 represented an extraordinary growth period for the museum, and 2010 promises to be another exciting year. The amount of funding and number of volunteers available will determine what we can accomplish this year. Volunteers are always needed, and Trolley Museum projects require a wide variety of skills. Everyone can find some way to help. Stop by the museum to lend a hand or just to see the latest progress.



## Looking Back

By Becky Meyers

“Shortly after delivery of the Safety Cars, two of the new vehicles collided at a very low speed in a severe ice and snow storm that completely obscured vision at North E near 17<sup>th</sup>. Both motormen believed they were about to enter the passing tracks situated only a short distance away, colliding headon, but inflicting no injury and only slight damage. Three boys on a motorcycle collided with a Park Hill car at 21<sup>st</sup> and Dodson in September. On October 2, 1920, car 25 collided with a Crabtree cab at 7<sup>th</sup> and Garrison. When the motorman chided cabbie Harmon Durden for driving onto the tracks in the path of the streetcar, Durden drew a knife, threatening the retreating carman, drawing a large crowd. On November 3, an outbound Eleventh Street car operated by shop foreman Benjamin Bullis struck the automobile driven by J.E. Johnston of Muldrow as it turned off Grand onto 11<sup>th</sup> in the path of the streetcar. In December, a streetcar collided with Fred Brown’s roadster at 4<sup>th</sup> and Garrison. With the roadster hardly damaged, but resting on the streetcar fender, motorman T.I. Davis and several husky passengers picked up the automobile and set it on the pavement, where its driver cranked the engine and sped away.

“Brakes locked on one set of trucks on a South Fort Smith car at Texas Corner, Christmas Day of 1920, delaying streetcars as the operator moved from point to point so other streetcars could switch around the crippled car. With machinists arriving on emergency car 105 making temporary repairs to the malfunctioning brake rigging, the car was soon on its way.”

*To be continued*

## World Wide Web Page

Visit our website for current news or to view past newsletters.  
<http://www.fstm.org>  
E-mail [info@fstm.org](mailto:info@fstm.org)

## Streetcar Restoration Progress

### Hot Springs Street Railway 50

The HSSRR 50 should be operational soon. Resistor grids, canopy switches, and other parts needed to complete the car were acquired from the Lakeshore Electric collection. Henry Moore, Wayne Porter, and Zack Hilton are currently working on the project, and they would welcome your help. Regular work nights are held at the museum Tuesday evenings from 6pm – 10pm. Knowledge of the cars is not necessary to get involved. We will train you.

### Capital Transportation Company 305

The body of 305 has had the windows and hardware removed. The car is now being stripped to bare metal and will then be primed. Between the 305 and 310, one complete set of window guards is usable. They were repaired, straightened and stripped, then painted with 3 coats of epoxy primer and 3 coats of top coat. Work is beginning on the repair and restoration of the folding doors. After the car is painted the roof will be repaired and the canvases replaced and painted..

### Fort Smith Light & Traction 224

Rope guards that fit the edge of the roof to protect the canvas from abrasion by the trolley rope are being fabricated using one from the CTC 305 as a pattern. Both cars were built by American Car Company in 1926.

### Veracruz 9

Considerable work has been done inside the car barn to make room for the VC9. The guard rail on the center door track to the car barn has to be completed before the 50 can be taken out and the VC9 put in out of the weather.

Bill Calvert has completed the machining of the step brackets from the VC6. They will be installed on the VC9

to make the long step along the side of the car step fold.

The car’s truck will soon be removed to repair a damaged axle and journal. The motors will be gone through at that time.

### Fort Smith Light & Traction 221—Restored by Boy Scout

The Fort Smith Light & Traction 221 and the house built around it was damaged by the 2008 hail storm. James Batura of troop 16 restored the structure for his Eagle Scout project.

After the FSL&T Co. 221 was removed from service in 1933 Paul Alexander of Mulberry Arkansas bought the car and moved it to his farm. A house was built around it. Jack Alexander donated the 221 to the museum several years ago and it now sits on the corner of South 3<sup>rd</sup> and Garland Avenue.

The car helps tell the story of the great depression. Most trolley lines went out during the depression and because of the shortage of cash many cars were adapted to other uses. That is why we have car bodies to restore today.

The 2008 hail storm damaged the metal roof and beat the paint off the wood. There was also some damage caused by age. James and his fellow scouts replaced the roof and repaired and painted the wood, restoring the car’s appearance.

### 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 forsmithtrolley in the search block and follow the directions.

### Reminder

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

# Memberships & Contributions

Rick Krenske  
 Godfrey Thomas Foundation  
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 Dave Galloway  
 Pauline Beckman  
 J. P. Bell  
 Gordon Jordan  
 Bob & Margaret Ann Hawkins  
 Art Martin

Rudy Garza  
 Jake Comer

# Memorials & Honorariums

Rodney Naucke 79<sup>th</sup> Birthday  
 By Mrs. Rodney Naucke  
 Susan & Clay Hinshaw  
 Ann & Courtney Dunn  
 Elaine & Chuck Girard  
 Kathy & Bill Priakas  
 Marvin & Victor Hart  
 By Elizabeth Echols  
 Elbert McCullough  
 By Mickey & Joseph Irvin  
 Tom Ross  
 Art Martin  
 By Iris Breed Jones  
 Dr. Rex Russell  
 By Judith, Rod & Randy Russell  
 Bill J White  
 By Phil White  
 Charles Winters  
 By Ann Winters  
 E.T. Lichty  
 By Connie Lichty Smith

## Support Your Trolley Museum

Your continuing support of the *Fort Smith Trolley Museum* is appreciated. Your tax deductible contribution insures the continued operation and development of the museum.

### MEMBERSHIP CARD SERVES AS AN ANNUAL PASS

___ Individual	\$10.00	___ Sustainer	\$100
___ Family	\$15.00	___ 224 Club	\$224 (Receive Plaque & Lifetime Pass)
___ Sponsor	\$25.00	___ Benefactor	\$500 (receive 224 plaque & Lifetime pass)
___ Conductor	\$50.00	___ Life	\$1,000 (Receive Certificate and Lifetime Pass)

### Special Gifts

General Fund	\$ _____	Restoration fund	\$ _____
Endowment Fund	\$ _____	Special _____	\$ _____

### Memorials and Honorariums

In \_\_\_ Memory \_\_\_ Honor of \_\_\_\_\_

Please Notify \_\_\_\_\_

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## Mail Your Tax Deductible donation to:

The museum is a 501c(3) Non- profit organization.

## Fort Smith Trolley Museum

100 South 4<sup>th</sup> Street

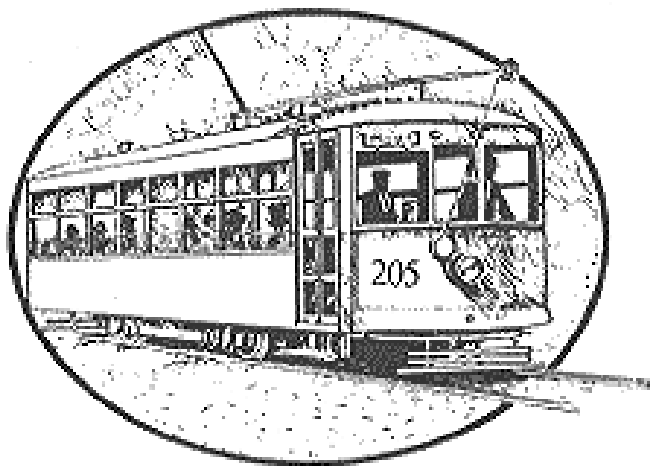
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# FORT SMITH TROLLEY MUSEUM

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Fort Smith, AR 72901

Return Service Requested

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FORT SMITH, AR



## Winter Operating Schedule

Saturday 10 am-5 pm and Sunday 1 pm-5 pm  
Daily operation begins May 1



Keep an eye out for more information about the fund-raising Dinner Train on July 10th and the 2010 Open House planned for July 11th. Attractions will include the recently acquired Veracruz 9 Open Car (shown above).

## Trolley Report

Is a quarterly publication of the Fort Smith  
Trolley Museum  
100 S 4th St  
Fort Smith, AR 72901  
(phone) 479-783-0205  
<http://www.fstm.org>  
E-mail [info@fstm.org](mailto:info@fstm.org)

Officers: President Art Martin  
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**arm**

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