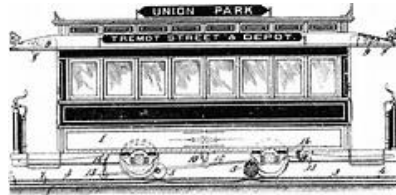


Transit Times



and Gazette

Vol. 1 – No. 2

December 2019

A Publication of the National Museum of Transportation Trolley Volunteers



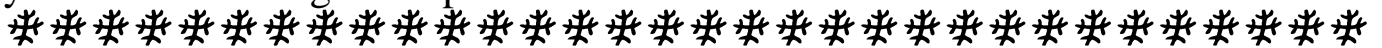
A very special thank you
to a very special person
Neil Norkaitis

After 20 years as Director of the National Museum of Transportation Trolley Volunteers Neil has announced that he is stepping down as the MTTV Director.

Neil has been the driving force behind the group responsible for keeping TNMOT demonstration trolley line operational.

His dedication to and love for both the Museum and its trolley operations are second to none. Simply put, Neil is a prime example of what constitutes a volunteer.

And so it is fitting to say **Thank You Neil** for all you have done these past 20 years and for being an inspiration for all of us. You will be missed.



Have A Holly Jolly Christmas



So that The National Museum of Transportation Staff and Volunteers may celebrate Christmas Eve and Christmas Day the Museum will be closed both Christmas Eve December 24, 2019 and Christmas Day December 25, 2019. The Museum will reopen to the public on Thursday December 26, 2019 at 9:00 am.

CHOUTEAU'S MILL POND: - Once covered 1,000 acres, was suspect in the cholera epidemic. The pond extended from Fourth St. to west of Vandeventer from Laclede to Chouteau. The city purchased the pond for \$400 and drained it. It was a spring fed pond and these springs still exist. Here are the sites of some of them: Rock Spring, just west of Vandeventer and Market. Hammond's Spring at Vandeventer and Lindell. Two Lucas Springs, one under the Public Library at 13th & Olive, and one under the former site of the Title Insurance Corporation Building at Eighth and Chestnut Streets. One under the Old Post Office on Eighth and Olive, one under the Main Post Office at 18th and Market, one under the Missouri Pacific Building at 210 N. 13th Street. McRee's Spring was in the area of McRee City and the train station was called McRee Station. Due to the influence of Henry Shaw this area is now called Tower Grove. The pond in the Japanese Garden at Shaw's Garden is the outlet of McRee's Spring.

The Old Post Office, The Main Post Office, The Public Library, The Missouri Pacific Building and other downtown buildings have pumps discharging spring water into the city sewer system 24/7/365. After the lake was drained the area became known as the Mill Creek Valley.

MARK TWAIN SAID IT: - "ST. LOUIS' WATER IS SO MUDDY IF YOU DRANK ENOUGH OF IT YOU COULD GROW CORN IN YOUR STOMACH!" - In 1867 the city purchased 36 acres to use for a water reservoir on the highest point in the city, Compton Hill, which was named for Richard Jordan Compton, cousin of the developer, John Roe II. Compton Avenue took its name from Compton Hill.

The city, which anticipated hosting the Columbian Exposition of 1892, knew a solution must be found to the water problem in St. Louis. It was necessary to draw water the day before it was used and allow it to settle because of the mud in it. They did not even want to consider the effect a brown water cascade would have on visitors to the St. Louis World's Fair. A saying in those days was "St. Louis water was too thick to drink, but too thin to plow." In March 1851, C.G. Rosenberg, Jenny Lind's manager, said this about St. Louis:

"It is muddier in wet, and dirtier in dry weather than any other part of the United States. It is a huge reservoir devoted to the manufacturing of mud on a wholesale scale....

"The air is so rich along the Mississippi River, and the dust from coal smoke falls so thick in the streets, that one is as satisfied by an afternoon walk in St. Louis, as if one had eaten a heavy dinner."

Mark Twain said:

"St. Louis water is good for steam boating, but worthless for all other purposes except baptizing. If you let your glass stand for a half-hour, you separate the land from water as easy as Genesis. Natives do not take them separately; when they find an inch of mud on the bottom of the glass, they stir it up and drink it. Weak as water doesn't apply in St. Louis; you can chew St. Louis water."

DID YOU KNOW THAT – A street separated the property of two large land owners in the Central West End, each one wanted to name the street after his home state and they finally compromised. Since one was from Delaware and the other from Maryland, the men used the first three letters from the name of each state and formed the name “Delmar.”

JUNE 21, 1890 – The East St. Louis (Ill) Electric Street Railway Company has begun to build its lines.

NEW ORGANIZATIONS, ETC – *The following is taken from the 10th Annual Report of the Railroad Commissioners dated 12/31/1884:* - The St. Louis Cable & Western Railway Company organized to purchase the property of the St. Louis, Creve Coeur and St. Charles Railway Company, (created June 14, 1883,) and defining the line of road to be a main line, running from the west bank of the Mississippi river, opposite East St. Louis, through the city and county of St. Louis, to the south bank of the Missouri river, near Musick’s Ferry; and a branch leaving same near the crossing of Maple Avenue and DeHodamont Road in St. Louis City, to the Missouri River, near Howell’s Ferry, or at St. Charles. Total length 35 miles. Gauge 3 feet or standard or broad, Capital Stock: \$1,000,000. Incorporators: M.A. Downing of Indianapolis, Indiana, E. F. Claypool of Indianapolis, Indiana, S. H. Cobb of Indianapolis, Indiana, George F. Branham of Indianapolis, Indiana, J. A. Hanson of Indianapolis, Indiana, W. C. DePauw of Floyd County, Indiana, F. M. Colburn of St. Louis, Missouri, Articles of Association filed September 12.

AMERICA'S FIRST AUTOMOBILE RACE - On November 28,1895, the Chicago Times-Herald Race was held between six cars. - Months earlier, on July 10,1895, the Chicago Times-Herald first announced that they would hold a race through the city. Prizes totaling \$5,000 (approximately \$153,000 in 2019) were up for grabs. The paper had planned the race as a way to accelerate the still-

young automotive industry in America. America's first automobiles were produced just two years earlier, and the paper wasn't even sure what to call them. They ultimately decided on "Moto-Cycle."

The original route for the race led from Chicago to Milwaukee, but they discovered the roads selected would be too difficult for cars to travel. Instead, they settled on a 54-mile route from Chicago to Evanston and back. The finish line would be at the Palace of Fine Arts from the 1893 Columbian Exposition (today's Chicago Museum of Science and History).

The race was planned to be held on November 2, 1895, but not many cars showed up. It was then rescheduled. In all, 83 cars were initially entered into the race. However, most of the drivers didn't have their cars done in time or were unable to make the trip to Chicago. An early favorite, Elwood Haynes, was unable to make the trip when his car was damaged on the way there. Police stopped him and another driver when they made their way into Chicago. The police insisted that they use horses to pull their cars because they didn't have the right to drive their vehicles on the city's streets.

This forced the race to again be postponed. The paper's editors then addressed city leaders and convinced them to get an ordinance passed, giving them the right to drive on the streets. With that obstacle cleared, they set the date of the race for Thanksgiving Day, November 28.

The day of the race was snowy with 38-degree temperatures. A German car made by Karl Benz was the first to arrive. There were two other Benz cars that arrived and participated in the race. There was also Charles Duryea and his motorized wagon as well as two other drivers with their two-wheeled vehicles. Another car that arrived that day was electric, but its battery died from the cold weather.

The race began at 8:55 that morning and shortly after one of Benz's cars hit a horse and had to leave the race. Duryea took an early lead, but his left front wheel got stuck and broke off the steering arm. He quickly stopped at a blacksmith shop and got a replacement arm and continued on the race. Though one of the Benz cars took the lead during this time, Duryea caught up and regained the lead on the return trip from Evanston.

Then along the way two of Duryea's cylinders stopped firing. He stopped for about 55 minutes to repair his car and was sure he had lost the race. But as he drove through unpacked snow, he realized all the other racers were still behind him. Duryea stopped for gas and a passing train but still managed to cross the

finish line first at 7:18 p.m. Only one other car managed to cross the finish line, the Mueller Benz. But its driver, Mr. Mueller, had passed out from exhaustion and someone else drove it across the finish line.

Stories of the race were published in newspapers across the country. Soon many speculated that these vehicles, which could travel even in harsh weather, would soon replace horse-drawn vehicles. Some credit this race with speeding up the development of the automobile in America by at least five years.