

# AROUND THE LOOP

*A Publication of the Museum of Transportation Trolley Volunteers.*

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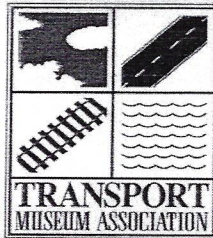


The following was received from:

**ROCKY MASTROCCO,**

Treasurer, Museum of Transportation Trolley Volunteers.

On Saturday, August 6<sup>th</sup>, 2016, a special event was held at the Museum of Transportation for Ballwin Police Officer Michael Flamion. The Museum of Transportation Trolley Volunteers are proud to have been a part of this special day.



*Terri McEachern \* Executive Director*

08 August 2016

The Flamion Foundation  
c/o Ballwin Police Department  
300 Park Drive  
Ballwin, MO 63011

Dear Chief Scott,

Please accept the enclosed checks from the Transport Museum Association and the Museum of Transportation Trolley Volunteers.

We are so grateful to be able to offer a percentage of our gate revenue from Saturday, August 6<sup>th</sup>, to the foundation established for Officer Flamion.

Our volunteer trolley operators are happy to donate the entire fare box collected on August 6<sup>th</sup>. This \$267.75 represents the largest single day donations ever collected! It is so heartwarming to see the community come together to help Officer Flamion and his family.

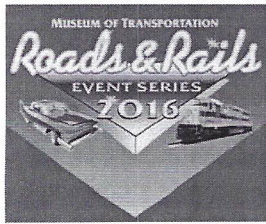
We are glad we could assist in some way.

We will keep Officer Flamion, and your entire department, in our thoughts and prayers.

Respectfully,

Terri McEachern  
Executive Director  
Transport Museum Association

Thanks to all M.T.T.V. members who participated in this worthy endeavor.



## Museum Events for September

September 11<sup>th</sup> - **All Chevy Show** - 9 - 3:30. - Rain date: September 18, 2016.  
Sponsored by: Fabulous 50;s Chevy Club of St. Louis.

September 25<sup>th</sup> - 11 am - 3:30 pm. - **Oldsmobile Fun Show.**  
Sponsored by the Archway Oldsmobile Club.

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## Early Public Transit

**Initial Street Railways** - In December 1855, a group of investors formed the Laclede Railway Company for the purpose of building a street railway, modeled on services then provided in eastern cities such as New York City, Philadelphia, and Boston. However, the Laclede line was never built. In spite of the early failure, by 1859, seven other lines were proposed; however, only four were completed before the outbreak of the American Civil War. The first of these lines began operation on July 4, 1859, running east to west on Olive Street from 4th to 10th streets. However, early operations were marred by difficulty in securing quality rails, and construction problems caused derailments of the cars. All of the prewar railways used horse power to pull their cars, that is they were Horse cars.

After the Civil War, other lines opened in St. Louis that connected the central city with western areas. In 1874, with the opening of the Eads Bridge, a new line opened connecting the city with East St. Louis, Illinois. The first experiments with mechanical traction for the cars took place immediately after the war in 1865 on Grand Avenue, while a fully operational steam-powered line opened in 1868 as an extension of the Olive Street line. This line, however, was not operationally connected with the rest of the horse-drawn lines, and it used a different track gauge than other lines.

### **Next installment: Decline.**

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**Birney Safety Car** - A Birney or Birney Safety Car is a type of streetcar that was manufactured in the United States in the 1910s and 1920s. The design was small and light and was intended to be an economical means of providing frequent service at a lower infrastructure and labor cost than conventional streetcars. Production of Birney cars lasted from 1915 until 1930, and more than 6,000 of the original, single-truck version were built. Several different manufacturers built Birney cars. The design was "the first mass-produced standard streetcar (albeit with minor variations)" in North America.

**Invention** - The Birney car was the joint 1915 invention of Charles O. Birney and Joseph M. Bosenbury (who was issued the patents in 1917 and 1919, and assigned half to Birney; see Brill page 140). Birney was an engineer with the firm of Stone & Webster, an operator of a number of trolley systems in the United States in the early part of the 20th century. The design was named the "Safety Car", and became known as the "Birney Safety Car" and ultimately simply as the "Birney" car.

The vehicle was a return to single-truck (single-bogie) streetcars. Birneys were small and light, about a third the weight of conventional cars of the period; were of rugged, standardized construction; mass-produced and inexpensively built. Twin motors gave them nimble acceleration. Birney cars averaged about 28 feet (8.5 m) in length and typically had seating for about 32 passengers.

The largest producer of Birney Safety Cars was the American Car Company, a subsidiary of J. G. Brill, but several other companies also manufactured Birneys (e.g. Ottawa Car Company).

**Benefits and Safety Features** - The Birney was designed to operate with only a motorman, saving the cost of the conductor. The advent of World War I made single-person operation additionally attractive as it addressed the wartime labor shortage. When labor was available, Birneys could be operated at more frequent intervals, prompting the slogan "A Car in Sight at all Times". This latter attraction was one of the street railway industry's first attempts to deal directly with automobile competition.

The Birney Car also introduced the use of pneumatically balanced and interlocked doors. If a door was stuck open, or a passenger or other object blocked the door, the motors could not be started.

The controls on the Birney Car also included an early application of the "deadman control". This device removed power from the car's motors if the controller handle was released for any reason. The car would then coast to a stop, or could be braked to a stop by the motorman.

A longer, double-truck version of the Birney car was developed in the 1920s, incorporating its most successful features. These were sold to a number of systems, including that of Tampa, Florida,[1] and to the Texas Interurban Railway, which used them exclusively. In addition to 11 double-truck passenger cars, which featured deluxe interior appointments and toilets for interurban service, the Texas Interurban operated 3 unusual Birney-based double-truck express cars without passenger seats or windows—the only cars of this type ever built.

**Decline** - Thousands of the cars were purchased from their inception to a few years after the end of the war. Production peaked in 1920, with 1,699 cars built in that year alone, but then declined rapidly and ended in 1930.

Birney cars began to fall from favor in part because of the features that had originally made them attractive. Their light weight could be a problem in snow that a heavier car could easily plow through. Their short length made their ride quality comparatively poor, and on poorly maintained track they derailed easily. The public began to deride them as flimsy. Their limited passenger capacity rendered them unsuitable for busy routes and rush hour service, causing them to be relegated to minor lines or to be sold mostly to small-town streetcar systems.

The streetcar companies also found that the safety features of the Birney, such as the use of interlocked doors to prevent the car from starting if a door was open or a passenger was stuck, could be incorporated in larger cars and that the public was not as disturbed by the absence of the conductor as the companies had feared.



**City Cleanup Day** - According to Andrew D. Young's St. Louis and its Streetcars, this photo from the Museum of Transportation shows a city cleanup day. During the city cleanup days, school children were bused in from all areas to help. With charter buses unavailable during WWII, streetcars were used. The photo was taken on April 20, 1945 and showed a line-up of streetcars on 14th Street, stretching from Clark Street across the bridge to Chouteau Avenue. The streetcars transported the school students back to their respective schools at the end of the day. Young identified the three men in front of the first car as motorman W.J. Franklin, conductor Hallie E. Miller and trailer car conductor Frank Brinker.



On Tuesday, September 6, 2016, the Museum of Transportation will return to its FALL OPERATING SCHEDULE. The hours of operation are:

- **MONDAYS:** **CLOSED.**
- **TUESDAY THROUGH SATURDAY:** **9:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.**
- **SUNDAY:** **11:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.**

- The Museum is open LABOR DAY, Monday, September 5, 2016 from 9:00 A.M.- 4:00 P.M.
  - Streetcar / Trolley operations will follow a Sunday schedule unless notified otherwise.
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