



**VALLI HOSKI, NORTH TEXAS NEWS EDITOR**

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**Chapter Meeting**

**Tues. February 7, 2017 – Santa Fe Depot, Garland, Texas.**

*Program* Depot tour - Claude Doane. KATY Railroad Stations, Depots, and Structures 1960-1999 – Pat Coughlin.

*When* 7 pm meet 'n' greet. 7:30 pm meeting.

*Where* Location: Garland Santa Fe Depot, 393 N. 6th Street, Garland, Texas. (972) 205-2996.



More information:

[http://www.garlandtx.gov/gov/hk/heritage\\_crossing/landmark\\_museum.asp](http://www.garlandtx.gov/gov/hk/heritage_crossing/landmark_museum.asp)

**Special Features & Announcements**

**Chapter Honors Claude Doane**

*by Jerry Nunn, Chapter Secretary*

At the January meeting, the North Texas Chapter recognized and honored Claude Doane as a Chapter Founder, Charter Member, Past President and National Director.

- In the many years since the Chapter's founding, Claude has contributed to the Chapter's growth, held several leadership roles, and also represented the Chapter with the National Railway Historical Society.
- In addition, Claude has also been an active member of the Dallas Area Rapid Transit's (DART) Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC). From businesses and transit users, to homeowners, students and elderly – CAC Members represent their interests and concerns to the DART Board.



*Above left:* Chapter President Wayne Smith presents the AI Copping award to Claude Doane.



*Above right:* Dennis Hogan (Chapter Charter Member), Claude Doane, Wayne Smith (Chapter President).



Above left: The Al Coppinger Memorial Award plaque given to Claude.



Above right: Jon Shea (Chapter Treasurer), Claude Doane, Edwin Pegelow.

## Special Feature

### ***Railfanning in Texas – Highlights from The Day Trips***

by Dale Jacobson, guest feature writer

(Editor's note: Dale shares his tale of February travel from Washington D.C. to San Antonio TX via the *Capital Limited* and *Texas Zephyr*.)

*Part 1:* I thought I'd have nothing to report about my most recent ride on the westbound Capital Ltd. It was perhaps the most routine, event free, trip I've made. That is, until we neared La Porte, IN. At that point we slowed down and eventually stopped. Once again we were the victims of Norfolk Southern (NSC) freight traffic congestion. Instead of arriving on time or earlier into Chicago Union Station, we arrived a few minutes after 10 AM, over 75 minutes late. That didn't bother me as my connecting train, the Texas Eagle, didn't leave until 1:45 PM.

Anyhow, we stopped and started from La Porte west to Pine Junction (west of Gary, IN - where CN's Elgin, Joliet & Eastern mainline goes over the CSXT and NSC tracks into Kirk Yard. After that, we sped back up and finally reached our destination.

There was one amusing aspect to this ride. The Capital Ltd. was once again its downsized version - two coaches behind the lone P42, the observation car, the diner/café, and two sleepers. I was in the sleeper at the rear of the train. The rear door window was for a change clean so I figured I'd take some shots out of the rear. So I did as we neared Elkhart, IN, and again passing by an NSC coal train that was responsible for much of the loss of time we suffered. However, I had to watch myself as the car attendant was certain that standing near the rear door was quite dangerous; that the door would fly open, and I'd be swept off the train onto the ballast. I told the attendant that if the door wasn't locked he should lock it as he had the key to do so. He said it was locked, but could be a danger nonetheless. I thanked him for his concern and then took my photos as opportunities arose.

Once into the Metropolitan Lounge in Union Station I discovered that the facility is equipped with showers. So, had I wanted to, I could have taken a shower while there. I had not seen any sign or heard about this on my previous trip. Was this a new feature?

One thing that hadn't changed was the 12:30 PM wine tasting with possible cheese pairings. The wines being poured were the same as the last time I was there. The cheeses were the same, too. Even so, a couple half glass tastings with three types of cheese isn't a bad little lunch or appetizer. I had to hurry my tastings as at 1 PM the call came for boarding the Texas Eagle. As there was plenty of time I walked to my sleeper, which was the car behind the baggage car.



The Texas Eagle was configured quite differently from the Capital Ltd. due to its having two cars - a sleeper and a coach - that were going through to Los Angeles on the Sunset Ltd. By Amtrak's logic the Texas Eagle is a Chicago - L.A. train three times a week even though the locomotive and most of the train return to Chicago the following morning. So, the Texas Eagle sleeper that would return to Chicago was behind the baggage car. This was followed by the diner, the observation/lounge, three coaches (rear most the through car), and the through sleeper to L.A.

A history professor I had met in the sleeper on the Capital Ltd. was now in the last car of the train while I was in the first. We had decided we'd eat our meals together because we both had some overlapping history interests. This became interesting as I would be the one who'd walk from one end of the train to the other to coordinate our dinner reservation times.

This was made somewhat easier because we had one of the best dining car crews I can remember, and there have been quite a few good crews I've come across in my train travels. The only problem was once again Amtrak's national menu with all the same items every day. But at least this lead waiter made meals a comedy hour. It was back and forth banter throughout each meal, all in good nature of course.

The Texas Eagle pulled out on time, but slowly lost time as it whizzed through Illinois towards St. Louis. Most of the time was lost in Springfield due to letting off three people in motorized wheelchair type machines. They had been in the bottom level of the sleeper I was in as that space was open enough for them to easily fit in there. This space is usually reserved for the conductor to do any paperwork that had to be done. We lost at least 30 minutes getting these three people off the train.

I should add that the sleeper I was in was the "transition sleeper", with one section of the car given to crew members. This sleeper was configured quite differently than a regular Superliner sleeper. There were no bedrooms in this car; it was all roomettes. I was in room #20, which I initially had thought would be downstairs. It wasn't. There were no rooms downstairs - just the workspace previously described and the toilets including a dressing room/shower with a toilet as well.

Despite arriving late into St. Louis, we easily made up the lost time during the night and for the rest of the trip up to Austin, TX, were early. Part of this is due to now using the Trinity Rail Express (TRE) commuter line route rather than the UP mainline. The schedule has yet to be changed to reflect the time saved between Dallas and Ft. Worth. As a result, we arrived in Ft. Worth at 12:35 PM with a scheduled departure time of 2:10 PM. That gives plenty of time for lunch, going into the Transportation Center, taking train photos, or whatever else one wants to do.

I'm convinced that UP has a rule that states that whenever train #21 is running early, the dispatcher will do whatever is necessary to ensure the train arrives into the station at San Antonio no sooner than "on time." This mischief can begin as soon as the train is back on UP trackage at Temple, TX, but usually occurs once on the former MP at Taylor, TX. This time the mischief started only after we left San Marcos. Most likely at Conrads (north of New Braunfels) we crossed over from track #1 (x Missouri Pacific or MP) main to main track #2, the former MKT track. As I've written many times before, UP has blended these two former RR's mainlines into a double track RR from just south of San Marcos at a place the RR calls "Centex" to San Antonio. The faster track is still the xMP line (main track #1), which is why I think we were switched onto the xMKT. This ended up working for me as the train typically enters the former SP station area from the west so that the next morning the train can be backed up westward along the xSP to where the old MKT track junctioned. Then the train heads north on a faster route out of San Antonio as the trackage connecting the old MP with the xSP mainline is quite slow. Of course, you traverse this slow trackage coming into San Antonio. So, at a place called Ogden we switched over from the xMKT to the xMP at a place called Brackens. This particular stretch of track between these two spots is one I had not previously passed over. For me it was "new mileage."

At least this time the more sedate ride still meant arriving into San Antonio ON TIME !!! For me I think this was a first, at least on the Texas Eagle. It wasn't so great for another couple I met on the train. They were in my sleeper even though they were going to Maricopa, AZ. I assume the through sleeper was booked full all the way to San Antonio. I knew that one passenger in the through sleeper was getting off at Dallas, but assume someone going beyond San Antonio had previously reserved that space. This means when making sleeping car reservations on the Texas Eagle, timing is everything. The sooner reservations are made, the better your chances of getting a decent night's sleep. For this couple arriving in San Antonio meant, NOT staying in their sleeper until the Sunset Ltd., arrived, but rather having to sit in the station (or visit some San Antonio night spot) until the 2 AM or so scheduled arrival time of the Sunset Ltd. I hope they got a break on the price of their tickets.



As for me it was nice getting in on time as that gave my friend Norm Schultze, with whom I was staying, time to have some wine and talk for awhile before calling it a night. The next three days were scheduled to be warm and sunny - a major reason I go visit him at this time of the year. The call of the wiley ferrocerril beckoned.

*Part 2:* What I am calling "week one" runs from my arrival in San Antonio at 10 PM on Feb. 15 through Sunday, Feb. 19. I am visiting railfan buddy Norm Schultze until I leave for home on the Texas Eagle on March 4.

UP is the only one of the Big 7 freight RR's with trackage in San Antonio. Even so, BNSF also runs trains through town between points east and the Hondo RR in Hondo or Eagle Pass. West of San Antonio one sees almost as many BNSF trains as UP trains unless there is a series of stack trains going either to or from the ports of LA/Long Beach, CA. Once west of Spofford, TX, where the line to Eagle Pass junctions with the "Sunset Route", UP freight traffic west of there on the old SP can be quite sparse.

West of San Antonio the landscape can be quite expansive. This, along with the fairly good chance of catching Ferromex RR power (singularly or in pure sets of two or even more) draws my interest. Also, another "south Texas thing" is being able to photograph the Border Patrol agents at work inspecting freights that have recently crossed into the USA from Mexico. On the "Sunset Route" the primary checkpoint is at Uvalde. Norm and I drove out there on Friday, Feb. 17th after I picked up my rental car from the nearby Enterprise Rental dealership.

First, we caught an eastbound BNSF freight of empty tank cars used for hauling corn syrup that came from the Hondo RR. Then we came across a BNSF local (GP38-2 and SD60M for power) going to the Hondo RR. Next, we caught a UP eastbound empty coke train that had come from Eagle Pass. It had a Ferromex GE leading two UP GE's. Those would be the three unique trains we saw that day.

When we arrived at Uvalde (actually, the RR runs north of town, next to a county highway) checkpoint we saw a Border Patrol officer in his truck next to the stand from which an agent can peer down on trains. He said he was waiting for the next train, but didn't know when it would be coming, or so he said. We headed west, but immediately spotted three more Border Patrol vehicles, all occupied. We figured the "next train" was almost upon us. It was. This time it was a UP eastbound grain train, probably empties. The Border Patrol positioned agents on both sides of the train as well as "our friend" on the stand. This train was lead by a Ferromex SD70ACe followed by two UP units. After the visual inspection was completed the train pulled to a stop so the paperwork could be finished. Then the train headed east. We used this train as a block to slow down westbounds as by now the sun angle was rakish for eastbounds, but good for westbounds. After catching a couple UP westbounds, including an empty rail train, we drove back to Norm's place.

On Saturday we drove to Robstown where we intercepted a westbound KCS freight pulled by one GE retro-Belle as it ended its run on the UP's line to Brownsville and swung onto what was once the Texas Mexican Rwy (TM), now part of KCS's "NAFTA Route". It pulled to the far end of one of the three tracks of which Spear Yard (west side of Robstown) is comprised. On one of the other two tracks two retro-Belle GE's were on a train headed north. At that time it was crewless. It was now close to noon.

Overall freight traffic may be down, but it seems that on KCS's mainline to and from Laredo and the Mexican border, traffic is doing quite nicely. When that single unit wonder pulled to the west end of the "yard" a crew van was waiting to pick up the crew and had delivered a new crew as well. We set up west of the yard and waited....and waited. It finally dawned on me that the crew may be waiting for another eastbound [trains run east-west on the old TM and north-south on the UP and KCS's own Rosenberg Sub north of Victoria, TX]. Sure enough the dispatcher told the new crew it would be meeting one before departure and then another freight farther down the line near San Diego. The KCS eastbound finally showed up with a gray GE and a gray GP40 followed by two retro-Belles. Then the westbound departed. We chased it to the siding just east of San Diego where it "met" a westbound BNSF empty train of covered hoppers cut in two on the siding. It wasn't going anywhere soon, so we headed back east until we ran into a BNSF westbound stack train. After shooting it on the east side of Alice, we headed back to Spear. By this time the northbound train had left. We then drove east to Hopkins Yard, the old TM yard west of Corpus Christi. Nothing was happening in the yard, but west of there two eastbound freights were tied up crewless, including the one we had caught earlier. The other was powered by a pair of xTFM SD70MAC's now in retro-Belle paint.

Then we headed north along the UP's xMissouri Pacific between Houston and Brownsville. We found the northbound KCS train sitting south of the interlocking plant at Odem, just a few miles north of Robstown. He hadn't gone very far and was at that time waiting for a train of covered hoppers coming off the line to Corpus Christi to head north ahead of him. We followed that



train north as it had a new and clean GE Tier 4 unit leading. Near Sinton, just a few miles farther north, this train stopped due to yet another northbound stopped ahead. That train was waiting for a UP ballast train to clear the mainline so this trio of northbounds could proceed. Except that seemed to turn into a total screw-up, and for some time nothing moved. As northbound trains were coming almost out of the sun we used them as blockers until we finally found a UP freight coming south at the Crenell (sic?) siding. By the time we finished taking photos the first northbound was now lined up, but it was now about 5 PM. In this part of Texas at this time of the year sunset occurs about 6:20 PM.

We then headed for Victoria. From Robstown north until a passing siding south of Victoria, U.S. #77 and the UP line are next to each other. At that point U.S. #77 swings northwest to Victoria while the UP line continues almost due north. The problem is there is no road bridge across the Guadalupe River anywhere close to the UP track. UP has a division point and fairly large yard at Bloomington that requires going miles out of the way to cross any highway bridge across that river. As it was getting late we headed up U.S. #59 to the north side of Victoria where you pick up KCS's Rosenberg Sub. Had it been earlier we might have gone southeast along the UP's Cuero Sub and follow it from Victoria to Placedo and then down the Brownsville Sub to Bloomington. UP seldom uses the line between Victoria and Placedo. KCS is the principal user of this stretch of straight track. Of course, once at Placedo, UP freights are often seen and certainly in Bloomington as well. UP runs a fair number more freights between Robstown and Placedo than does KCS.

Our final train of the day was a southbound KCS freight with two retro-Belles on the head end and another as DPU. It was in the siding south of Edna. There was still some sunlight to photo the head end power against a set of gray clouds. The DPU was shot with the setting sun in the photo as well. After that we drove home in the dark, stopping only for supper at a good Mexican restaurant in Columbus.

One other "highlight" from this first few days of railfanning was catching a southbound UP freight on the Austin Sub north of San Antonio. What made it interesting was that it was an empty stone train with all its hoppers marked "WRRC" for the Western RR. This was a RR set up years ago by the cement plant that is now owned by CEMEX south of New Braunfels along the old MP and near the old Katy mainlines that UP now calls "Main 1 (MP)" and "Main 2 (Katy)". The purpose of the WRRC was to pit the MP against the Katy to get the cement company the lowest shipping rate possible. At one time the WRRC even had its own locomotives. Now, the CEMEX plant has its own engines painted and lettered for CEMEX. The "star" of the CEMEX fleet is an ES44AC that "lives" under a cement loader that can be seen from a nearby public road. With UP's acquisition of both the MP and Katy, the reason for the WRRC's being is now moot. Still, it was interesting to note that hoppers are still being lettered for this industrial RR.

## Chapter News

### **Chapter Business Meeting Minutes, February 7, 2017.**

**NORTH TEXAS CHAPTER, NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, MINUTES, DATE: February 7, 2017.**

The meeting was held on Tuesday, February 7, 2017 at the Garland Railroad Museum in Garland, TX.

**President Wayne Smith** called the meeting to order at 7:33 PM. There were 10 in attendance, including a "special guest", *Dennis Hogan*, who founded the chapter.

The slate of officers for 2017 was introduced: Wayne Smith, who returns as president; Jon Shea, who returns as Vice President for Programs; Jim King, who continues as Treasurer; Valli Hoski, who returns as Vice President, Communications and as editor for the North Texas Zephyr; and Jerry Nunn, who assumes the duties as Secretary. Former Secretary Dave Gramm was recognized for his years of service to the club.

The office of Vice President for Trips and Events, formerly held by Skip Waters, remains vacant. One of the newer members John Hatler has expressed an interest in the position.

As part of the evening's "show and tell", Wayne Smith passed around several photographs of his grandfather (on his father's side of the family), who was a roadmaster for the Rock Island, and a photo of the Canadian Pacific Railroad in Manitoba where his grandparents lived (on his mother's side of the family).

**Bob Kennedy** led a discussion of recent developments concerning the Texas State Railroad (TSR). Indications are that Iowa Pacific Holdings, the parent company of TSR and other short lines and tourist rail operations, is experiencing financial difficulty. This has affected the TSR, Adirondack Scenic Railway, and the Hoosier State Railroad (which is now reported to be inactive).



At the TSR, most (if not all) operations have been shut down and employees have been terminated. At this point in time, some 4-6 weeks before normal tourist season operations begin, nothing is happening. Bob advises those who are considering a visit to the TSR not to purchase tickets at this time.

**Dave Gramm** reported on the most recent North Texas Council Meeting. Specific attendance and revenue figures for the most recent Winter Plano Train Show should be available at the board meeting, which was scheduled to take place Thursday, 02/09/17, and the next council meeting.

Most attendance figures available show 1899 for the Fall 2015 show; and 4807 for last year's Winter show. The Council had \$12,500 in the treasury going into the Winter show, and anticipates a profit from the Winter 2017 show.

The Council also asked that those who man the admissions desks at the show have the following desirable traits: (1) be able to count money, and (2) have a pleasant attitude. Also, the Council asks that if someone does not have the cash to purchase tickets, remind him/her that there is an ATM on site, and direct them there.

Vice President passed around an article in the Wall Street Journal concerning the Edinburg streetcar line. There is a large, state of the art G scale layout that the Museum of the American Railroad (MARR) is attempting to acquire. The city of Frisco has given the MARR space in the Learning Center for the layout. Moving costs and other necessary costs to accommodate the layout are projected to be around \$400,000.

**Claude Doane** was presented the Al Coppinger Memorial Award for his service to the North Texas Chapter. Vice President Jon Shea read a humorous letter to Claude from member and friend Dave Siegrist. Among other things, Claude has been able to secure the Chapter space in the Garland Landmark Museum for its meetings. Unfortunately (for the Chapter) Claude will be relocating to western New York state in April. Several photos were taken of the presentation.

**The evening program** was a DVD featuring the R.D. Moses Texas and Pacific model railroad layout. The layout has recently been relocated to the Texas and Pacific Museum in Jefferson, TX.

The March 2017 meeting will again be held at the Garland Railroad Museum, 393 N. Sixth Street, Garland, TX 75040. 972/205-2996. The meeting adjourned about 9:30 PM.

Jerry M. Nunn, Secretary, North Texas Chapter, National Railway Historical Society

## Chapter Directory

### North Texas Chapter Officers, 2017.

- **President, Wayne Smith**, 940-300-4407.
- **Vice President/Programs, Jon Shea**, 972-948-2413.
- **Vice President/Trips and Events, Skip Waters**,  
wgcrush@swbell.net.
- **Vice President/Communications, and NTZ editor,**  
Valli Hoski, [ntx.news@yahoo.com](mailto:ntx.news@yahoo.com)
- **Secretary, Jerry Nunn**
- **Treasurer, Jim King**, [jgking@swbell.net](mailto:jgking@swbell.net)

### Chapter Business Address

North Texas Chapter, NRHS, P.O. Box 600304  
 Dallas, Texas 75360

**Chapter Email:** [northtexaschapternrhs@gmail.com](mailto:northtexaschapternrhs@gmail.com)

**Webmaster:** Kim Hays

**North Texas Chapter site:** [ntxnrhs.org](http://ntxnrhs.org)

**Facebook Page:** <http://www.facebook.com/groups/409467244127/>

**North Texas Zephyr** (current issues): [ntxnrhs.org](http://ntxnrhs.org)

**North Texas Zephyr, newsletter Archive**

<http://www.gogeocaching.com/gorailfanning/Home/northtexaszephyr.html>

Publication date: 2/24/17. Filename: 2017\_03 NTx Newsletter v1

## North Texas Chapter History

Founded and chartered in 1996, the North Texas Chapter is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) educational organization incorporated under the laws of the state of Texas. Emphasis of the chapter is activity, history, and enjoyment of railroading past and present.

Meetings are held 7:30-10:00 PM, first Tuesday of each month, usually (but not always) at the Grapevine "Founders Building" at Main St. and the FWRW railroad tracks. Visitors and newcomers are welcome. Chapter membership includes our monthly chapter newsletter, the *North Texas Zephyr*. As of October 2014, chapter dues (\$16, plus \$2 per additional family member) should be sent to the Chapter. Chapter mailing address: North Texas Chapter NRHS, P.O. Box 600304, Dallas, Texas 75360. Learn about the National Railway Historical Society at [www.nrhs.com](http://www.nrhs.com) If you change your email address on file with the NRHS, please send the old and new email addresses to [info@nrhs.com](mailto:info@nrhs.com).



### North Texas Calendar

Tues. Mar. 7, 2017.	<b>North Texas Chapter meeting – 7:30 p.m.</b> Location: Place: Garland Santa Fe Depot. Program: Depot tour - Claude Doane. KATY Railroad Stations, Depots, and Structures 1960-1999 – Pat Coughlin.
Tues. April 4, 2016.	<b>North Texas Chapter meeting – 7:30 p.m.</b> Location, Program: to be confirmed.
Tues. May 2, 2017.	<b>North Texas Chapter meeting – 7:30 p.m.</b> Location, Program: to be confirmed.
Tues. June 6, 2017.	<b>North Texas Chapter meeting – 7:30 p.m.</b> Location, Program: to be confirmed.


*\*\* Meeting starts at 7:30 p.m. Location is confirmed in newsletter issue(s) prior to meeting month.*

### ***New Southern Pacific Book – Sponsored by North Texas Chapter!***

The North Texas Chapter is proud to sponsor David Bernstein's new work on the Southern Pacific's Eastern Lines.

To order, contact the North Texas Chapter at [northtexaschapternrhs@gmail.com](mailto:northtexaschapternrhs@gmail.com)

or see North Texas Chapter store (<http://ntxnrhs.org/store/> )

**NEW**  **BOOK**

Announcing a new book published by the North Texas Chapter, NRHS written by David M. Bernstein!

**Southern Pacific's Eastern Lines 1946 - 1996**

**Southern Pacific's Eastern Lines 1946-1996**

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