



# North Texas Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society



## *North Texas Zephyr*

*(Interim editor - Skip Waters)*

### Chapter News

## **April Chapter Meeting to be held in the 1885 Houston & Texas Central Railroad Depot, Anna, Texas!**

**Monthly Meeting:** Tuesday, April 6, 2021

**Time:** 7:30 PM

**Location:** Anna Depot & Museum

**101 S. Sherley Rd., Anna, TX 75409**

The Anna Area Historical Preservation Society (AAHPS) would be honored to host the April 6 meeting of the North Texas Chapter NRHS.

The historic Anna Depot, built by the Houston & Texas Central Railroad in 1885, is the oldest extant railroad structure in the state of Texas. It has recently been restored and being set up as a local history museum - the Anna Depot and Museum.

Anna is located in north Colin County, 12 miles north of McKinney. From SH-75 exit at "Anna-Weston Rd" (exit 48A). Go east for two miles then turn left (north) on Powell Parkway (Hwy 5). Go 3 blocks (about a 1/4 mile) then turn Right (east) onto W. 4th St. When you cross the railroad tracks, the depot will be on your right. Parking is available on 4th St and S. Sherley Rd. Call the Anna Depot & Museum at 469-982-6396 if you need assistance with directions.

Feel free to arrive early if you want to look around historic downtown Anna. There are a number of historic buildings such as the A. Sherley & Bro. Hardware and the First Christian Church (both built in 1894). Our WPA water tower, built in the early-mid 1930s by the Chicago Bridge and Ironworks still stands. An interesting note about Chicago Bridge and Ironworks is they were not from Chicago, they did not build bridges, and what they did build (mostly water towers) were not built using iron - go figure.

Anyway, we look forward to seeing y'all in Anna for the April meeting!

Elden Baker, Director

Anna Depot & Museum, 101 S. Sherley Rd., Anna, TX 75409

**Program:** Business meeting followed by viewing of Anna Depot & Museum

## ***Chapter News about April Chapter Meeting continues...***

*For those members who will get an early start to April's meeting in Anna, Texas, Elden says...*

We have a few choices for dinner in Anna depending on what you're looking for. Of course, we have the all cookie-cuter chain joints (McD's, Whataburger, Salsa Tex-Mex, Chick-fil-A, etc.) but, I'm sure you may be looking for something local.

In no particular order, we have:

- \* Spurlock's Malt Shop - an authentic 50's malt shop (family owned since 1952) - GREAT Burgers!
- \* Joe's Bistro - Italian cuisine (pasta, pizza, sandwich's, etc.)
- \* Crow's Country Café - country fired steak, catfish, etc.
- \* My Estrella - Mexican cuisine.







## ANNA TRAIN DEPOT

WHEN THE HOUSTON & TEXAS CENTRAL RAILROAD CAME THROUGH IN 1872, THERE WAS NO TOWN HERE. THE RAILROAD WAS THE SPARK THAT IGNITED THE TOWN OF ANNA, AND THE POPULATION HAD GROWN TO 20 PEOPLE BY 1883.

THE DEPOT WAS 70 FEET IN LENGTH WHEN IT WAS BUILT IN 1885 BUT WAS SHORTENED TO 30 FEET IN 1937. FOR MANY YEARS AN ABUNDANCE OF JOHNSON GRASS AND BALES OF COTTON CROSSED THE THRESHOLD OF THE DEPOT. IT WAS CLOSED IN THE LATE 1950'S AND REMAINED IN ITS ORIGINAL SPOT ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE RAILROAD TRACKS 200 FEET WEST OF THIS SITE.

IN THE EARLY 1960'S, THE RAILROAD PLANNED TO TEAR THE DEPOT DOWN SO A LOCAL BUSINESSMAN ACQUIRED IT. HE MOVED IT TO HIS FARM 2 MILES WEST OF TOWN AND USED IT TO STORE HAY.

THE FARM WAS PURCHASED BY A DEVELOPER IN THE LATE 1990'S AND THE DEPOT WAS IN JEOPARDY OF BEING DESTROYED. THE ANNA AREA HISTORICAL PRESERVATION SOCIETY WAS FOUNDED ON FEBRUARY 12, 2004 WITH A GOAL TO RESCUE, RELOCATE AND RESTORE THE DEPOT. THE DEPOT WAS DONATED TO AAHPS IN 2007 AND MOVED TO A TEMPORARY LOCATION WEST OF DOWNTOWN NEAR THE POWELL GIN.

IN NOVEMBER 2017, THE ANNA CITY COUNCIL DESIGNATED SHERLEY HERITAGE PARK TO BE THE PERMANENT HOME FOR THE DEPOT AND IT WAS MOVED HERE ON MAY 8, 2018.

## Reminder — **NORTH TEXAS CHAPTER NRHS MEMBERSHIP DUES**

If you have not already done so, please consider paying your 2021 Chapter dues this month. Chapter dues are \$16 per member per year plus \$2 for a family membership. Payment may be made in person by check or cash, by mail with a check or paid online with a credit card. Chapter membership includes our monthly newsletter, the Zephyr, and enables us to hold our monthly meetings at various locations throughout the DFW Metroplex.

To pay by check - Make your check payable to “North Texas Chapter NRHS” for \$16 (individual) or \$18 (family). **Either mail your check to North Texas Chapter NRHS, PO Box 600304, Dallas TX, 75360 or give it to a Chapter Officer at our monthly meeting.** If you are paying for a family membership, make sure to include your Family Member’s name(s) in the memo section of the check.

To Pay Online - Visit the chapter’s on-line store at <https://northtexaschapternrhs.ecwid.com/> to pay by credit card or PayPal. A small service charge (50 cents for individuals, 75 cents for families) is added to your dues payment to help offset processing fees.

To pay by cash, please have the correct amount and give it to a Chapter Officer at our monthly meeting. Please include a note with your cash indicating your name and any Family Members. Do not send cash by mail.

If you have any questions, please e-mail me at [northtexaschapternrhs@gmail.com](mailto:northtexaschapternrhs@gmail.com) .

Bob Kennedy, Treasurer, North Texas Chapter, NRHS

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President Wayne Smith surveying location for “24 Hours @ Saginaw” 2021.

Photo by Skip Waters

## **15th Annual “24 Hours @ Saginaw” 2021**

May 28 & 29, 2021, 7pm to 7pm for 24 Hours!

The 15th Annual “24 Hours @ Saginaw” 2021 is in the final stages and about to be announced once plans are approved by City of Saginaw and BNSF Railway.

This year all train activities and train watching will be done outdoors. Due to continued Covid restrictions, there will be no access to the depot this year. Outdoor restrooms will be available. Stay tuned for more info and announcements on the “24 Hours at Saginaw” Facebook page.



## President's Roundhouse: Railroad Folklore (Source: B&O Museum)

"Screaming Jenny" is a famous ghost of Harpers Ferry. She was living in a small house by the tracks when a spark from the stove lit her dress on fire. She burst from her home in flames, screaming for help. She stumbled into the path of a B&O train and was killed. For decades, trains have slammed on their brakes to avoid hitting a flaming, screaming woman who vanishes as quickly as she appears.

**More screaming info at - <https://www.agingbutdangerous.com/screaming-jenny/>**

The Denver & Rio Grande No. 107 is remembered as a cursed engine. It first lost two crew in a bridge washout. After another two crew and some passengers were killed in an accident, she was known as "Dread 107." Another accident claimed four more crewmen, and someone carved the names of the dead into her cab. Years later, two brothers went insane and killed themselves in the engine. Then the engine went runaway, killing its five-man crew. After that, crews refused to work on it and it was scrapped.



## March Chapter Meeting Minutes

The March meeting of the North Texas Chapter of the NRHS was held on March 2, 2021 at Sokol Hall in Dallas. The meeting was called to order at 7:36 pm with 10 members in attendance with Bob Kennedy conferenced called in during part of the business meeting bringing the total member participants to 11.

Wayne Smith reminded everyone that the Anna Area Historical Preservation Society (AAHPS) is hosting the April 6th meeting of the North Texas Chapter at the historic Anna Depot and Museum. Anna is located 12 miles north of McKinney. Elden Baker encouraged members to arrive early to look around the historic downtown Anna area. There are a number of historic buildings such as the A. Sherley & Bro. Hardware and the First Christian Church. Elden also passed around a set of 8x10 black and white photographs of Katy steam locomotives. The set also included a photo of the famous Katy/Frisco E7's from the *Texas Special* passenger train. The photos are from the Anna Museum collection.

Wayne announced that 24 Hours @ Saginaw will be held this year in a greatly modified version. It was cancelled last year because of COVID. Skip Waters reported that we will not have any access to the depot itself, but the grounds and outside restrooms will still be available. Wayne and Skip recently visited the grounds in order to come up with a plan to be presented to the city of Saginaw, per the cities' request. Lots of logistics and details still need to be worked out. We included Treasurer Bob Kennedy on a conference call to discuss how to move forward. The membership unanimously agreed that we should move forward with the annual event. We also discussed shortening the event to 12 hours instead of 24, but the majority wanted to continue the tradition of 24 hours. There will be little to no media presentations, except for possibly after dark on the grounds area with media being projected on the side of the small restroom structure, but nothing would be presented after midnight until daybreak. So, the need for more hands-on type of activities will need to be planned. Ken Fitzgerald has already agreed to bring his diesel horn collection for his popular horn demonstration. We discussed creating a grid and requiring reservations for those attendee's wanting a space to set up a tent for the event.

Skip announced the recent passing of Ed Seay, Jr. of MAL Hobby Shop fame. Skip brought some framed 8X10 B&W photos of steam locomotives from Ed's personal collection. Skip and Steve Goen attended Ed's viewing. He had an open casket.

Skip also shared NRHS National News - A hotel has been chosen for the Annual Convention on August 23-28 in Milwaukee, WI. Details for it and the convention will be announced on May 15, 2021. The next board meeting for the NRHS will be on March 18th via a Zoom call. They may be voting on bringing back Regions or Districts to the national organization when they were removed upon lowering the total number of Directors at the Dallas NRHS Board Meeting.

Jon Shea brought his usual assortment of newsletters including those published by the Galveston Island railroad Museum and the Union Pacific Historical Society.

Sam Metzgar brought his small personal collection of Rock Island memorabilia for display.

***(March Chapter meeting minutes continue...)***

Dave Podrahsy/Dave Gram shared that the recent Plano Train Show was a success in spite of reduced vendors and reduced attendees. The good news is that all expenses were covered and the show pretty much broke even.

The business meeting was followed by viewing of "Last of the Giants" Vol. II, with vintage footage of the UP's Big Boys and Challengers.

Minutes submitted by Wayne Smith, President

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**Chapter Directory**

North Texas Chapter Officers, 2021.

- 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, Vacant
- Secretary, Jerry Nunn.
- Treasurer, Bob Kennedy.

Webmaster: Kim Hays, kimhays516@gmail.com

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

Chapter Email: northtexaschaptarnrhs@gmail.com

North Texas Chapter site: <https://ntxnrhs.org/>

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

North Texas Zephyr (current issues): <https://ntxnrhs.org/>

North Texas Zephyr, newsletter archive <https://ntxnrhs.org/> <http://www.gogeocaching.com/gorailfanning/Home/northtexaszephyr.html>

**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. Visitors and newcomers are welcome. Chapter membership includes our monthly chapter newsletter, the North Texas Zephyr.

Currently, chapter dues are \$16, plus \$2 per additional family member. Payment may be made by check or paid online. By check - Mail a check payable to "North Texas Chapter NRHS" for \$16 (individual) or \$18 (family) and mail it to North Texas Chapter NRHS, PO Box 600304, Dallas TX, 75360. If your check does not clearly indicate who the member is, please add a note with the member's name. Online - Visit the chapter's on-line store at <https://northtexaschaptarnrhs.ecwid.com/> to pay by credit card or PayPal. A small service charge (50 cents for individuals, 75 cents for families) is added to your dues payment to cover processing fees. 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)