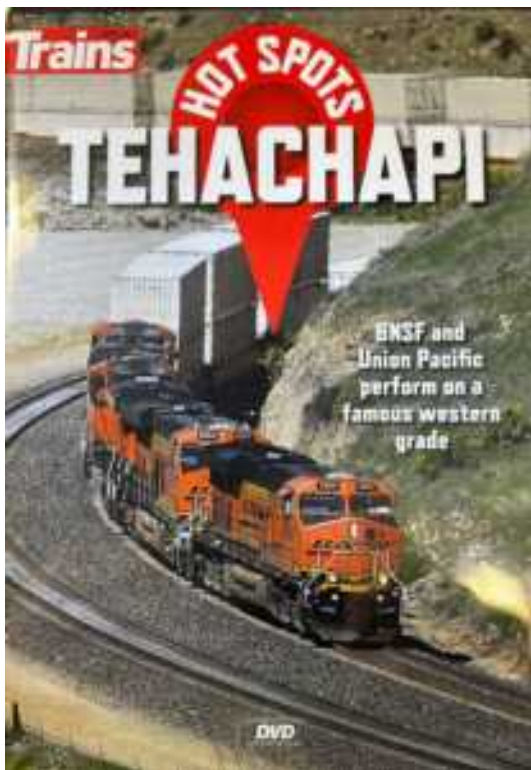


North Texas Chapter — National Railway Historical Society



May Chapter Meeting: “Trains Hot Spots: Tehachapi”



The Trains Hot Spots: Tehachapi DVD from Kalmbach is an action-packed look at Tehachapi, a famous mountain grade for Union Pacific and BNSF Railway (formerly Southern Pacific and Santa Fe) north of the Los Angeles basin. You'll see a now and then look at this famous location. This 75-minute video covers action on the pass as well as the famous Tehachapi Loop!

When: Tuesday, May 6th @ 7:30 PM
(Meet “N” Greet at 7:00 PM)

Where: Cotton Belt Room of the Chill Bar & Grill at 814 S. Main St (NW corner of S. Main St. & Dallas Rd), Grapevine, TX.
{Food will be available for purchase}



Link to Website:
<https://www.chillbardfw.com/>

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The Esquimalt & Nanaimo Railway

Remnants of the Esquimalt & Nanaimo Railway (E&N Railway) can be found on Vancouver Island in British Columbia, Canada. The railway line is 140 miles in length from Victoria to Courtenay, known as the Victoria Subdivision, with a branch line from Parksville to Port Alberni, known as the Port Alberni Subdivision, of 40 miles, for a total 180 miles of mainline track. In 2006, the Island Corridor Foundation (ICF) acquired the railway's ownership from RailAmerica and Canadian Pacific Railway.

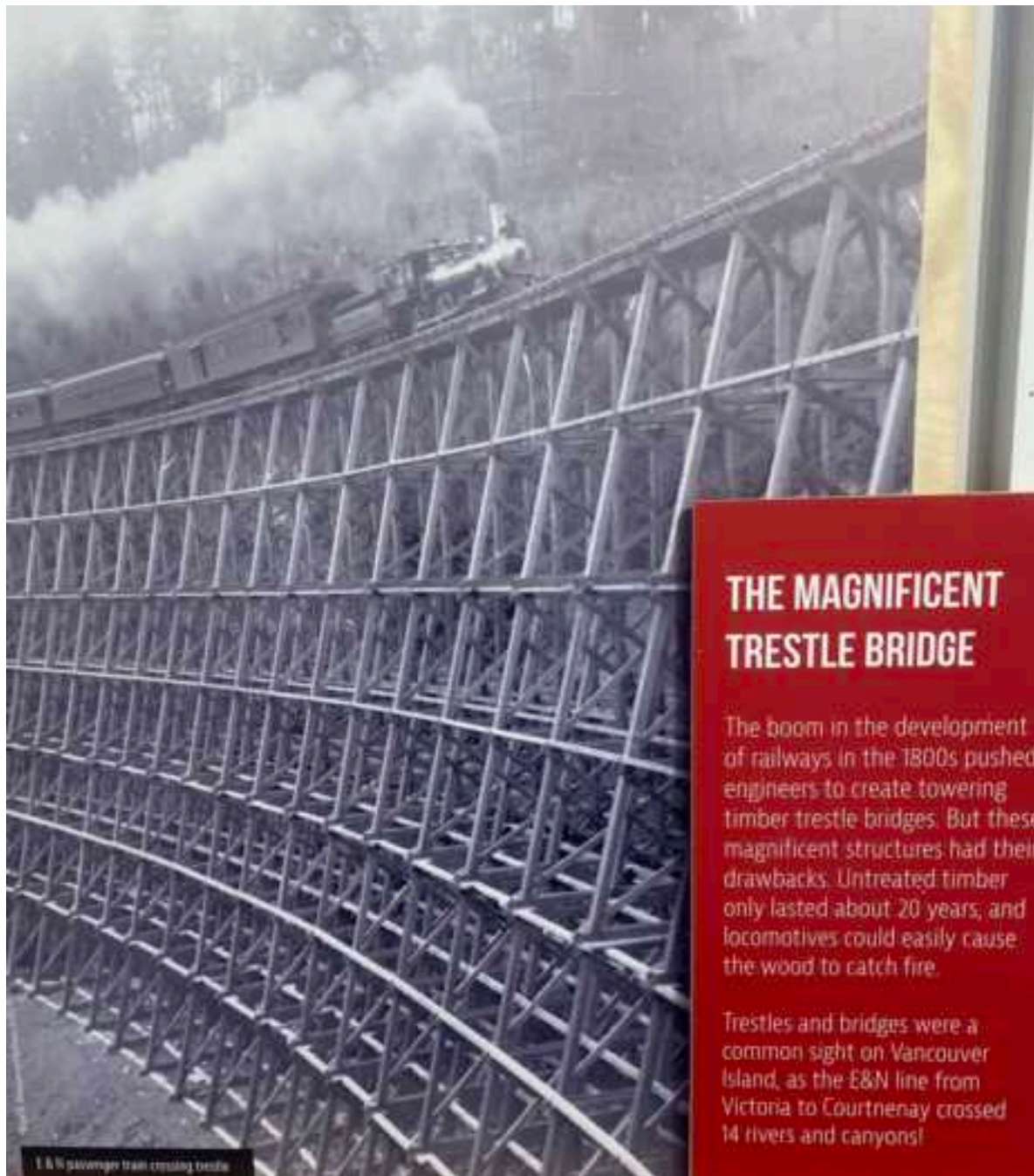
The last spike was gold and the hammer was silver. On 13 August 1886, the last spike was driven at Cliffside, Shawnigan Lake, about 25 miles north of Victoria. Construction of the island railway took three and a half years. Prime Minister Macdonald drove the last spike, during his only visit to British Columbia. The railway was extended to Dunsmuir's mine at Wellington in 1887, and into Victoria in 1888. It was extended west to Port Alberni in 1911, west to Lake Cowichan in 1912, and north to Courtenay in 1914. The E&N Railway was to have been built all the way to Campbell River, but that plan fell through due to the outbreak of World War I.

In 1905, the E&N Railway was sold to the Canadian Pacific Railway. The CPR built the railroad to Lake Cowichan, Port Alberni, Parksville, Qualicum Beach, and Courtenay. At its peak, the railroad had 45 stations on the main line, 3 stations on the Cowichan line, and 8 stations on the Port Alberni line.

Between 1905 and 1999, the E&N Railway was owned and operated by the Canadian Pacific Railway. Via Rail took over operation of CPR's passenger train service, called *The Malahat*, in 1978 when CPR demarketed its freight operation, claiming that freight traffic was declining. In 1996, CPR reorganized the E&N as an "internal short line" named E&N Railfreight while the railbarge operations were sold to Seaspan Intermodal. In early 1999, shortline operator RailAmerica purchased the route from Nanaimo to Port Alberni, and leased the balance of the line. At that time, approximately 8,500 carloads of forest and paper products, minerals, and chemicals were transported by the Southern Vancouver Island Railway each year.

In 1998, CPR sold the middle part of the corridor to RailAmerica. Despite the purchase by RailAmerica, freight traffic continued to decline and the future of the E&N was still in doubt. RailAmerica sought a sale for its acquisition due to unprofitability and deferred maintenance issues. Restrictions from Canadian Pacific on the lease/sale agreement, and major reconstruction of Highway 1 from Victoria to Nanaimo and the new freeway from Nanaimo to Campbell River, led to reduced driving times for the full length of the E&N. This development also affected the privately owned rail line, which did not have the benefit of the provincial subsidies accorded to its competing highways. Freight traffic dropped to about 2,000 carloads a year after the loss of their largest freight customer, a Catalyst Paper pulp mill in Port Alberni. RailAmerica ceased to operate the E&N on 30 June 2006, with the Washington Group's Southern Railway of British Columbia taking over operations the following day.

In 1978, VIA Rail assumed operational responsibility for the E&N Railway passenger service. Post ICF ownership, the rail operator agreement had the private company Southern Railway operate the daily inter-city passenger service from Victoria to Courtenay on behalf of VIA Rail. Train tickets had to be purchased three days in advance to avoid an increase in the cost of the fare. In 2011, due to the disrepair of the railway, VIA Rail and Southern Railway suspended the Dayliner passenger service, the Victoria–Courtenay train indefinitely. The train had scheduled stops at Duncan, Nanaimo, and Parksville, with many other flag stops along the way. VIA and Southern Railway did offer a bus service for several months after the closure, but the service was discontinued August 7, 2011. VIA's bus tickets had to be bought three days in advance and fewer than ten people a day used their temporary bus service. The VIA passenger service used Budd-built Rail Diesel Cars (Dayliners). Those rail cars are no longer on Vancouver Island, and at least one is now owned by Rapido Trains, a model railroad company.



Picture of Exhibit from the Parksville Museum by Wayne Smith (2024).

Until 1996, it was called the Esquimalt & Nanaimo Railway (which it is still called by people living on the Island). It then spent three years as E&N Railfreight, an internal short line within then owner Canadian Pacific Railway. Operations were then sold to RailAmerica. The RailAmerica subsidiary was named E&N Railway Co (1998) Ltd. (reporting mark ENR), thus maintaining the historic name associations for the Vancouver Island line. Currently, the right of way and rail line is owned by the Island Corridor Foundation and operated under contract by Southern Railway of British Columbia, a part of the Washington Companies.



Picture of Exhibit from the Parksville Museum by Wayne Smith (2024).

As of 2018, the only regularly operated track left is a truncated 10-mile section in the Nanaimo area, from Welcox Yard at the waterfront to Wellington siding, to serve the Superior Propane spur in north Nanaimo. In addition, some customers have their goods transloaded to trucks within Welcox Yard.

Beginning March 18, 2011 passenger service between Victoria and Courtenay was "temporarily suspended," due to safety concerns about the poor condition of the tracks. In April 2012 the Federal Government announced that it would match a \$7.5 million grant offered by the BC Provincial Government, providing the required \$15 million for basic repairs and upgrades to reopen the rail line. The line was

expected to reopen, and rail services re-commence in 2013, as early as the spring, but was delayed due to failed negotiations between the Island Corridor Foundation and VIA Rail. In July 2014, an agreement was signed by VIA Rail to resume operations with plans to have services resume in the summer of 2015, but in April 2015, the ICF stated that the resumption of service has been put on hold while the BC Ministry of Transportation and provincial government review the funds for covering repair costs. Scheduled passenger service has yet to resume.

Since the *Heritage Railway Stations Protection Act* was proclaimed into law in 1990, over 150 heritage railway stations have been designated across Canada. To be considered for designation, a railway station must be at least 40 years old and owned by a railway company to which Part III of the *Canada Transportation Act* applies. The Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, with support from Parks Canada, evaluates eligible railway stations based on criteria such as architectural and historical significance and then makes a recommendation for designation to the Minister responsible for the Parks Canada Agency (Minister of Environment and Climate Change).

Once under the protection of the Act, a designated railway station cannot be altered, demolished, sold or transferred without Governor in Council authorization. Parks Canada works closely with railway companies to ensure that authorized alterations and/or transfers of ownership respect the heritage value and character-defining elements outlined in the Heritage Character Statement for each designated heritage railway station. Designated heritage railway stations are found in communities both large and small and are a vitally important part of Canada's built heritage.

Under the *Heritage Railway Stations Protection Act*, four of the stations (Courtney, Duncan, Nanaimo and Qualicum Beach) on the former E&N Railway have been preserved and repurposed for preservation. The Parksville station has also been preserved and repurposed.



The E&N Duncan Railway Station was repurposed into the Cowichan Valley Museum and includes a restored Canadian National Caboose. Photograph by Wayne Smith (2024).



The E&N Duncan Railway Station was repurposed into the Cowichan Valley Museum.



One of the popular attractions in downtown Duncan is the City of Duncan's Totem Pole collection, with 40 displayed throughout the city. Photographs by Wayne Smith (2024).





E&N Railway Station/Cowichan Valley Museum. Photographs by Wayne Smith (2024).





The E&N Railway Station in Nanaimo has been repurposed into the Black Rabbit Kitchen, White Rabbit Coffee Company and a gift shop. Photographs by Wayne Smith (2024).





The E&N Railway/VIA Rail Station in Parksville has been repurposed into the Arrowsmith Potter's Guild Train Station with a studio and a gift shop. Photographs by Wayne Smith (2024).



This is a photograph of a photograph of the E&N Dayliner in Parksville. Date unknown. By WS.



Then and Now: E&N Water Tower in Parksville, British Columbia. Photographs by Wayne Smith.



Above Right: The VIA Rail sign indicates the North Bound “Malahat” Dayliner to Courtenay was Train #199 and the South Bound Train to Victoria was Train #198.

Your editor had the pleasure of riding the VIA Rail “Malahat” at least twice and also had the pleasure of riding the entire line in two segments while experiencing the crossing of 14 rivers and canyons over amazing trestles and bridges and observing breathtaking scenery. The VIA passenger service used Budd-built Rail Diesel Cars (Dayliners). Those rail cars are no longer on Vancouver Island, and at least one is now owned by Rapido Trains, a model railroad company. The Budd Rail Diesel Car (RDC) is a self-propelled diesel railcar. The cars were primarily adopted for passenger service in rural areas with low traffic density or in short-haul commuter service, and were less expensive to operate than a traditional diesel locomotive-drawn train with coaches. The cars could be used singly or coupled together in train sets and controlled from the cab of the front unit. Back in the day, Canadian Pacific used full-fledged passenger trains over the line.



In the above undated photograph displayed in the Parksville Station (repurposed into the Arrowsmith Potter's Guild Train Station Studio and Gift Shop), we see a set of RDC cars on the VIA Rail "Malahat". Beginning March 18, 2011 passenger service between Victoria and Courtenay was "temporarily suspended," due to safety concerns about the poor condition of the tracks. Scheduled passenger service has yet to resume. The RDC in the foreground is showing some of its battle scars.

Texas & Pacific
RAILROAD,
SOUTHERN DIVISION,
Now open to Terrell, Tex
31 Miles East.

Trains leave Dallas, foot of Lamar street,
at 6 a.m.; arrive at Terrell at 8:50 a.m.
Returning, leave Terrell at 10 a.m.; arrive
at Dallas at 12:45 p.m.
Connects at Dallas with passenger trains
North and South on Texas Central Railway;
and at Terrell with stages for Longview, Mar-
shall and Shreveport, and principal points in
Kaufman, Van Zandt, Smith, Upshur and
Wood counties.
For further information apply to
GEO. L. SANDS,
Master of Transportation.
Dallas, June 24. 117d&wt1

T&P to Terrell, TX ad: from Dallas Weekly Herald, 1873

Submitted by Dennis Hogan

From Railroad and Railfan Magazine

Submitted by Dennis Hogan



The long-lost “Merci Train” boxcar from New Jersey, seen here in a warehouse in Kansas City recently, was one of 49 cars that France gave as a gesture of thanks for the United States’ role in World War II. *Courtesy Photo.*

Long-Lost ‘Merci Train’ Boxcar to Return Home to New Jersey

New Jersey’s “Merci Train” boxcar, thought to have been lost and destroyed for over 60 years, has been found and will soon return to the Garden State. The United Railroad Historical Society of NJ announced on March 24 that the car was recently discovered in a warehouse in Kansas City and has been donated to the organization. URHS plans to restore the car and use it as a traveling exhibit and memorial, honoring the sacrifices of soldiers and civilians during both World Wars.

The “Merci Train” comprised 49 boxcars from France gifted to the United States as a thank-you for the country’s aid during World War II. These cars, constructed in the 1890s and previously used to transport troops in World War I, were filled with gifts from French citizens. The 49 boxcars (one for each state, plus the then-Territory of Hawaii) were shipped to New York Harbor in 1949 and unloaded at Weehawken, N.J., before being distributed across the nation. New Jersey’s car was carried to Trenton, where it was formally presented to the state at a ceremony that attracted more than 20,000 attendees.

After the car was unloaded, it was entrusted to the American Legion to serve as a monument and exhibit. However, by 1958, the car's whereabouts were unknown, and historians believed it was lost for good. In 1993, a similar boxcar was found in a field in Tennessee by the National World War I Museum and Memorial. The owner intended to scrap it, but the WWI museum rescued it and put it in storage in Kansas City, where it remained for the next 30 years. In 2024, the curator of the WWI museum, Dr. Chris Juergens, aimed to uncover the history of the boxcar with assistance from Merci Train historian David Knutson.



New Jersey's "Merci Train" boxcar as it appeared in 1949. Courtesy Photo.

"Purely by accident, I saw pictures of an old boxcar posted on Facebook and was able to determine it was New Jersey's missing boxcar," Knutson said. "When I realized the Museum and Memorial actually had the car in their possession, I was thrilled. Now, thanks to URHS, it will return to New Jersey and be properly restored for future generations to appreciate."

URHS Executive Director Kevin Phalon stated that the historical significance of the car cannot be overstated. "For rail historians, this is like finding buried treasure," Phalon said. "We would have never expected to see this car again, so we are incredibly grateful to the National WWI Museum and Memorial for saving it. We are honored to be entrusted with its restoration and return to New Jersey."

Once the car returns to New Jersey it will be restored at URHS' facility in Boonton. Phalon said he hopes to have the car completed by Memorial Day 2027. The group has already secured its first sponsor, a company called Boxcar, a New Jersey-based commuting, parking and services app. URHS is looking for additional sponsors to help fund the restoration. For more information, visit [URHS.org/MerciTrain](https://urhs.org/MerciTrain). — Justin Franz

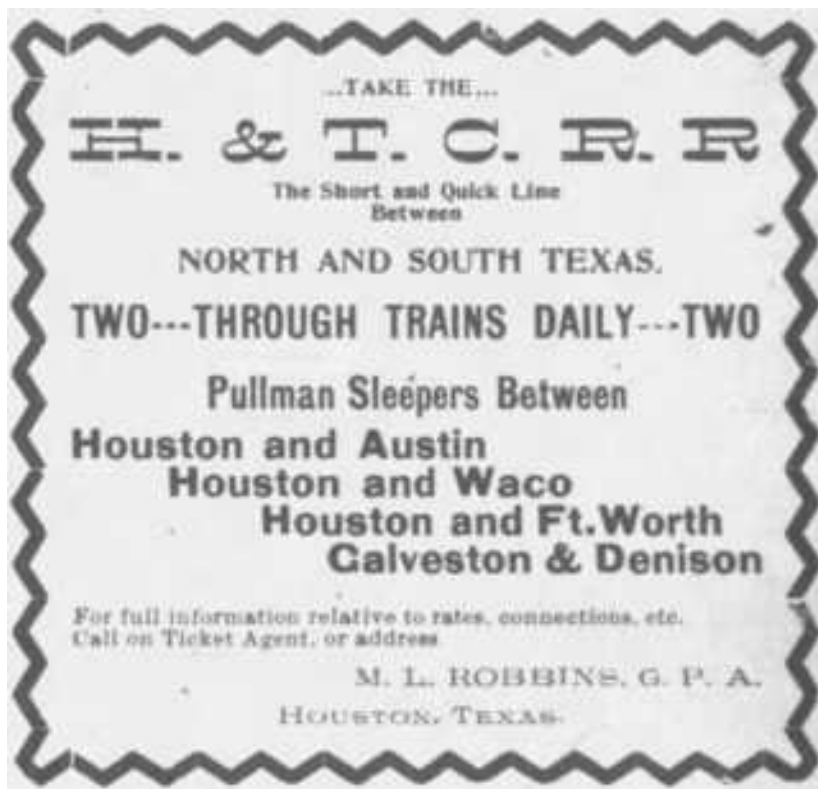
This article was posted on: March 25, 2025

The Texas Merci Car in Color

Submitted by Dennis Hogan



Photo courtesy of David J. Knutson, Grand Chef de Gare, Grande Voiture du Texas, Austin, Texas



**Pullman Sleepers
ad: from *Bryan
Weekly
Eagle*, April 6,
1905**

Submitted by Dennis Hogan



H. & T. C. R. R.

Round Trip Rates.

| | |
|---------------|--------------------|
| Wootan | Rate \$1.00 |
|---------------|--------------------|

Grand Ball 11th.
Gun Shoot 11 and 12

ACCOUNT ON SALE
APRIL 11

Opening Wootan Wells

THROUGH PULLMAN SLEEPERS

Waco to Houston. Bremond to New Orleans

LEAVE WACO 10:05 P. M. ——— LEAVE WACO 1:20 P. M.

For Tickets, Rates, Sleeping Car Reservations, call at City Ticket Office, 112 South 4th street. Both Phones 218.

| | |
|--|--|
| R. E. GEORGE, Div. Pass. Agt, Waco. | IVON LEE, City Ticket and Pass. Ag't. |
|--|--|

Wootan Wells ad: from *Waco Times-Herald*, April 9, 1902

Submitted by Dennis Hogan

You're about to lose the only train service between Fort Worth/North Texas and Oklahoma that's run since 1999!

- **Service on the Heartland Flyer will end as soon as June**
- **Last year this 1 round trip daily intercity train carried over 80,000 passengers**
- **No service means more than 50,000 vehicles go back on I-35**
- **TxDOT asked for supplement funding** for the Heartland Flyer, the daily train between Fort Worth, Gainesville and Oklahoma City.
- **The requested supplement** and yearly operational allotment have been **stripped from the budget – zero funding**
- **Ridership increased 14% last year to over 80,000 passengers**
- **Texas DOT and Oklahoma DOT partner** on this intercity service and share costs
- Texas A&M Transportation Institute study shows **the Heartland Flyer returns more than \$5 in benefits to North Texas for every \$1 the state spends**
- **Texas share of costs** is about \$2.5 million plus a TxDOT exceptional item request of \$2.1 million
- **Oklahoma and Kansas want to extend** the passenger rail service to Kansas but if Texas pulls out that is in jeopardy
- No service is a **black eye** for future rail transportation corridors

*TexasRailAdvocates.org is a 501(c)3 non profit that supports the smart development of freight rail and passenger rail in Texas (214) 803-7285.

Minutes of the April 2025 Meeting of the North Texas Chapter of the NRHS

The North Texas Chapter NRHS meeting was held on April 1, 2025 at The Chill Bar in Grapevine.

Attendance was approximately 14 members and guests.

In the absence of President Wayne Smith, VP Jon Shea led the business meeting for the evening.

Bill Long talked about the November 8, 2025 Chapter trip on Amtrak from Gainesville, TX to Fort Worth and the FW Stockyards to Grapevine. A bus will take us from Grapevine to Gainesville and then from Downtown FW to The Stockyards. Ticket prices and availability will be announced at a later date.

Skip Waters reminded us of the NRHS Spring Conference at Johnson City, TN from May 1 to May 3 and also about the NRHS National Convention on July 12-17 in Lansing, MI.

Skip and A.J. Roquefort talked about the movies scheduled to be shown on April 26 at the Cinemark IMAX Theater at LBJ Freeway and Webb Chapel Road. Movies are Rocky Mountain Express and Train Time. Doors open at 8:40 AM. Showtime is 9:00 AM. Tickets are \$16 each and can be ordered at www.NTXNRHS.ORG/Movie. Ticket sales at that time were 57 tickets. Skip and AJ have high hopes of selling many more.

Jon Shea did a program about the 160th anniversary of the Abraham Lincoln Funeral Train which carried Lincoln's body from Washington, DC to Springfield, IL where he was buried. Jon read a selection from Walt Whitman's poem When Lilacs Last in the Door Yard Bloomed. He also read other information on the train trip and passed out a map of the funeral train route with additional information.

Then a video on *The Lincoln Funeral Train* was shown for the evening's program.

Submitted by Jon Shea, VP of Programs in the absence of Jerry Nunn, Chapter Secretary.





We're excited to share preliminary information about the 2025 NRHS convention in Lansing, Michigan:

- Saturday, July 12: Opening reception, featuring a compelling speaker discussing a relevant railroad topic. Hors d'oeuvres, beer/wine.
- Sunday, July 13: Diesel-powered excursion over Great Lakes Central, operated by Steam Railroading Institute, between Clare and Owosso.
- Monday, July 14: Steam-powered excursion operated by Fort Wayne Railroad Historical Society from Coldwater, Mich., to Ray, Ind., on Indiana Northeastern.
- Tuesday, July 15: A three-for in Elkhart, Ind.: visit to the National New York Central Museum; tour of Norfolk Southern's Elkhart Yard; tour of the Adams-Westlake factory.
- Wednesday, July 16: Visit to Greenfield Village including a screening of the giant screen movie "Train Time," and then a tour of the restored Michigan Central depot in Detroit.
- Thursday, July 17: NRHS business meetings!
- *All events are subject to change.*

Watch your email for registration and hotel information. We look forward to welcoming you to the NRHS Michigan-Indiana Rail Adventure!

Cordially,
Eric Fogg, Mike Yuhas
Convention Chairs

Chapter Directory

North Texas Chapter Officers, 2025

*President, Wayne Smith, 940-300-4407
 *Vice President/Programs, Jon Shea, 972-948-2413
 *Vice President/Trips and Events, Bill Long
 *Vice President/Communications, Vacant
 *Secretary, Jerry Nunn
 *Treasurer, Bob Kennedy
 *National Representative, Skip Waters,
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Facebook Page:

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

North Texas Zephyr (current issues):

[The Zephyr Newsletter - North Texas Chapter, NRHS \(ntxnrhs.org\)](http://TheZephyrNewsletter-NorthTexasChapter.NRHS(NTXNRHS.ORG))

Zephyr Archives:

[Rail History Newsletters \(gogeocaching.com\)](http://RailHistoryNewsletters(gogeocaching.com))

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 usually held 7:30-9:30 p.m., the 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://ntxnrhs.org/store>

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. Learn about the National Railway Historical Society at www.nrhs.com

Doodlebug News Briefs



MKT Doodlebug M10

Tuesday, May 6th, Chapter Meeting @ 7:30 PM
 (Meet "N" Greet at 7:00 PM) – Program
 Presentation: Video, "Trains Hot Spots: Tehachapi",
 at the Chill Grill, Grapevine.

Tuesday, June 3rd, Chapter Meeting @ 7:30 PM
 (Meet "N" Greet at 7:00 PM) – Program
 Presentation: Video, TBA, at the Chill Grill,
 Grapevine.

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Wayne Smith, North Texas News Editor.

The North Texas Zephyr is the official newsletter of the North Texas Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society. It is published monthly for the benefit of its members. Opinions expressed herein may not reflect the official position of the North Texas Chapter or the National Railway Historical Society. All content rights retained by original author. Every attempt has been made to comply with fair use and copyright laws.

Contributing to The North Texas Zephyr

We welcome submissions! The deadline for submitting material to the editor is the 12th day of the month in the month prior to the respective cover date. Please contact President Wayne Smith for more information. Time-sensitive news items will be given priority over general interest subjects. The editor reserves the right to edit, hold or omit material at his discretion.