

The Busted Steampipe

Official Newsletter of the New Braunfels Historical Railroad and Modeling Society



April 2024

NBHRMS Celebrates 40 Years in 2024

In October of 1984, a group of local New Braunfels model train enthusiasts gathered for their first meeting. In those early meetings, there were less than a dozen members, but the group quickly grew. The New Braunfels Historic Railroad and Modelers Society (NBHRMS) was formally chartered by the State of Texas in June 1985.

The NBHRMS originally began meeting in a room in the First Federal Savings and Loan. However, they knew they needed a space of their own. Society members looked to the railroad depot on San Antonio Street, which was at that time an eyesore in the heart of downtown New Braunfels. The depot hadn't been used for passenger operations since the advent of Amtrak rail service and been abandoned since the Missouri Pacific Railroad (MOPAC) merged with Union Pacific (UP) in 1982. Club members began organizing with the goal of preserving the depot and using it as a permanent home for the NBHRMS.

After lengthy discussions with the Union Pacific Railroad and the City of New Braunfels, on 24 July 1986, the NBHRMS voted on acquisition of the depot. Under bylaws, 67% of the membership had to agree. By then, there were 44 members in good standing, so 30 members needed to vote in favor of this significant step forward. The motion was carried.



In October 1986, Union Pacific officially donated the former International-Great Northern (IGN), MOPAC and UP depot to the City of New Braunfels. The property would be retained by the railroad and be leased to the city for an initial period of five years for \$1 a year. The City in turn granted a lease of the building to the NBHRMS with the same terms.

On 9 Dec 1986, the New Braunfels Railroad Museum was dedicated with the Mayor of New Braunfels and members of the NBHRMS in attendance. The museum opening was the culmination of two years of negotiations, restorations, and preparations by the charter members of the NBHRMS. NBHRMS president Felix Roque stated, "We'll hold our Christmas party in the depot, even if it has to be by candlelight."

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Spring Train Show

20-21 April

Sat 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Sun 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.



***** Volunteers needed both days - contact Jerry Garteiser to sign-up *****

Welcome to our New Members:

Peter Merry

Steven Helwig

Wayne Howard

*All
Aboard!*

We're glad to have you and look forward to sharing our mutual love of the rails!

Book the Dining Car for your next event



Available for birthday parties, meetings, or any special occasion

Details @ www.nbrm.org or Call (830) 627-2447

New Braunfels Dedicates Railroad Mural

There's new artwork on the wall of the building across from the museum. On April 11, 2024, City of New Braunfels leaders, the Historic Outdoor Art Museum (HOAM) Committee, the Chamber of Commerce, and members of the NBHRMS gathered to officially dedicate New Braunfels' newest mural, honoring the legacy of the railroads in New Braunfels. Beautifully rendered by artist Mindy Allen, the tenth mural in the HOAM's art collection depicts the early railroads that operated in the city, the International and Great Northern (IGN), the Missouri Pacific (MOPAC), and the Missouri, Kansas, and Texas (MKT). The mural also pays tribute to Helen Gould Shepard, who championed the use of the railroad to bring tourists to Landa Park. As HOAM Vice President Jan Kingbury said in her remarks about the decision in 1880 to run the railroad through New Braunfels and add a depot, "the importance cannot be overstated."

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What Is That Thing?

Answer: In the days before wireless 2-way radios, concrete phone booths along the tracks held a direct phone line for train crews to talk to the dispatch office to receive train movement orders. The concrete construction discouraged vandalism but got hot in the summer and tended to attract wasps, bugs and snakes. This booth stood in Harwood, Texas at the branch of Southern Pacific's main line and the branch that ran to Gonzales. It was a gift from the Union Pacific Railroad.



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Renovation and conversion of the depot began in 1987 with less than \$1500 in the treasury. Restoration work was completed almost entirely using volunteer work and funded by dues, donations, Comal County Fair concessions sales, a model railroad display at Rolling Oaks Mall, grants, and the Model Railroad Jamboree. Work included replacement of wainscoting, painting floors, exterior painting and installation of brick pavers along the front of the depot. Doors and latticed transom windows and sidelights that had been plastered over in 1972 were revealed. Air conditioning was also added. In 1990, the waiting room and station agent's office underwent extensive renovations to remove modifications made in 1972 and restore them to historical accuracy.

In Jan 1989, the New Braunfels Chamber of Commerce awarded the NBHRMS its President's Award for historic preservation, and on May 13, 1992, the San Antonio Conservation Society awarded the NBHRMS with a 1992 Historic Preservation Award for the depot restoration.

The NBHRMS received tax-exempt status under IRS Code 501(c)(3) as a museum on September 8, 1987, and on 14 Nov 1993, the NBHRMS was awarded a charter as the Bluebonnet Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society.

The museum's first rolling stock, the MOPAC caboose, was acquired and delivered June 21, 1987. It was followed by the 0-6-0T Porter oil-fired steam locomotive in Dec 1993, the Pullman car in May 2009 and the MOPAC boxcar in 2010. Generous donations from rail fans added to the inventory to create the museum dedicated to preserving and showcasing the history of the railroads in New Braunfels. This continues today, with items from former railroad workers and rail enthusiasts added to the museum inventory.

Forty years ago, a small group met to share their hobby of model railroading and love of the railroads. Over time, they accomplished much more. Today, the NBHRMS and the New Braunfels Railroad Museum is a hub for rail and model railroading fans. The organization preserves, promotes and educates thousands of people who come to

New Braunfels each year on railroad history, both the romance of the rails and the role of the railroad system in the growth and economy of the nation, as well as the joy of N, HO, O and G scale modeling.

NBHRMS members have volunteered countless hours towards renovating, building and maintaining the New Braunfels Railroad Museum and its exhibits. The organization hosts the Model Railroad Jamboree, the largest train show in South Texas, twice a year to spread the joy of railroad modeling and rail-fanning to others.

As we celebrate the 40th anniversary of the NBHRMS in 2024, we thank our charter members and all our members throughout the years for their dedication and enthusiasm. We're looking forward to many more.

Upcoming Events

- 20-21 April:** Spring Train Show
New Braunfels Convention Center
- 4 May:** Kids Fun Day 10am-2pm
** Docents needed*
- 13 May:** NBHRMS General meeting 6:30 pm
Doyle P. Bond Dining Car
- 18 May:** Kids Fun Day 10am-2pm
** Docents needed*
- 1 June:** NBHRMS meeting 6:30 pm
Doyle P. Bond Dining Car
- Plan Ahead:**
- 13-14 July:** N Scale Layout Display
New Braunfels Library



Jr Engineers Model Layout

Every 1st and 3rd Saturday
Where Kids Run the Train!



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Following the dedication ceremony, the museum held an open house, opening all exhibits and serving cookies and popcorn as people enjoyed the shade under the passenger loading breezeway. NBHRMS volunteers “fired up the engines” to run the museum’s three model railroad layouts. A big thanks goes out to all who made the event a success.



The NBHRMS took a traveling N Scale modular layout to the grand opening of the new HobbyTown at Loop 1604 and Blanco Rd in San Antonio on March 23-24. Shown are Mike Finn, Jerry Garteiser and Greg Garteiser. Other modelers were Nick Morgenroth, Lee Garteiser, and Justin Hodge.

Seen at the Museum:



Thanks to Bryan Birdsong for his photo of the Doyle P. Bond Pullman dining car on a sunny day. Sitting next to the active tracks, the 1922 Pullman car has a great view of passing trains. The dining car is available to rent for events.

Share your photos on social media with

#NBRRM

Located across San Antonio St from the New Braunfels Railroad Museum, the location of the mural couldn’t be better. Visitors can view the mural, turn around and tour the museum, or tour the museum and view the mural as they leave. And rail crews are welcomed to New Braunfels each day by the smiling visage of Helen Gould Shepard as they travel the tracks through downtown, past the mural and the Railroad Museum.



Museum Hours of Operation:

Mon, Thurs-- Fri	12-4 pm
Sat	10 am-4 pm
Sun	12-4 pm

Docents are always needed to run the model layouts.

Come share your enthusiasm!