



The Angelo



Railway
MUSEUM
OF SAN ANGELO



Board Member Tommy Robinson at the throttle of our recently refurbished miniature train. The John Deere tractor, disguised as an 0-4-0 tank engine, was recently overhauled by South Plains Implement, a John Deere dealership. Museum volunteers cleaned and refurbished the locomotive and passenger cars. Volunteers also reattached the pilot (cowcatcher) to the locomotive in time for its appearance in the Mertzon Parade on September 4, 2026.

Train Orders from the Dispatch Office

There has been a lot of "train traffic" at the museum since we entered the fall season! Linda Bond and Liz Curtiss have been busy with school tours since classes resumed in August. Hilda Jewell chaired the committee that organized the museum's first Día del Tren, a kickoff event in September introducing the museum's new Spanish-language program.

Tommy Robinson led volunteers in a much-needed overhaul and refurbishment of our miniature train, the "Concho Flyer." Carl Malone, Bliss Bignall, and Greg Johnson have been brainstorming ideas for building a club layout that would offer operating sessions for members. Please read Dr. Malone's article for more details.

We're also pleased to welcome Abby Boose, an Angelo State University Honors student and accounting major, as our first student board member! Abby is from Gatesville, Texas, and brings sound engineering experience from competing in several One-Act Plays.

There's lots going on at the Railway Museum! Our next station stop is Santa's Santa Fe Christmas on Saturday, December 12. **All Aboard! Christopher Roque**

Fall 2026

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Hours of Operation

Friday: 1pm-5pm

Saturday: 10am-4pm

Sunday: 1pm-5pm

The Railway Museum of San Angelo is located at

**703 SOUTH CHADBOURNE
SAN ANGELO, TEXAS
76903**

325-486-2140

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Día Del Tren by Dr. Linda Bond, Vice President

The Railway Museum of San Angelo kicked off Día del Tren on Saturday, Sept. 12, to celebrate the addition of new tours and signage in Spanish. The museum began this new opportunity with a special day when everything was in Spanish, including costumed guides giving tours in Spanish. Railway Museum board member Hilda Jewell chaired the Día del Tren planning committee. She organized Spanish-speaking guides from the Association of Mexican-American Students (AMAS), Goodfellow volunteers with the White Rope program, and community volunteers. Goodfellow volunteer Doreen Mercado translated the museum's tour script into Spanish for the guides and led a practice tour on Aug. 29.

Spanish-speaking people have a strong connection with the railroads in San Angelo. Many of the people who built the railroad in the Southwest were Hispanic. There is a lot of information about Chinese railroad workers, but here in San Angelo, many people came from Mexico to work with the trains. Near the Railway Museum are houses once occupied by Spanish-speaking railroad families whose descendants still live in San Angelo today.

Everyone was invited to Día del Tren—whether they spoke Spanish, had children who did not speak Spanish, were studying the language, or were simply looking for something different to do. And what happens after Día del Tren? Tours will continue to be available in English and Spanish, with QR codes and signage providing information in both languages during the museum's regular hours on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays.

Día del Tren was made possible by the support of many people and organizations. Special thanks go to our sponsors: H-E-B, Texas Pacifico, The Original Henry's, Conexion San Angelo, Jalapeños Locos, Globos Artisticos, and El Paisano on Knickerbocker. Thanks also to NextHome Century Realty, which provided children with free wooden train whistles to color and take home. Terry Clair donated his engraving services for the whistles.

It was wonderful to have nine new volunteers, including the guides and the volunteers who created the lobby backdrop. We were visited by groups of people who had never been to the museum before. There were even two children who had previously visited on a school tour and brought their families back to the museum for the first time. We were also grateful to see the new layouts that Bliss Bignall, Greg Johnson, and Jack Coad set up with their own trains.

On behalf of Hilda Jewell, Día del Tren chair, and the Rev. Chris Roque, president of the Board of the Railway Museum of San Angelo, thank you to everyone who volunteered to make Día del Tren unique and special. ***We appreciate you so much!***

PRR's GG1
No. 4935



Strasburg
Railroad's 475
(Ex. Norfolk &
Western RR)



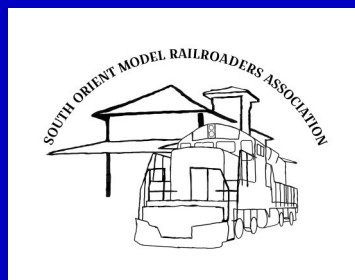
PRR's E7 #5901
PRR's 4-6-0 #5741
Virginia & Truckee's
"Tahoe" 2-6-0 #20

Museum's
O Scale Layout



Photos by Jack Coad

South Orient Model Railroad Association “The Rip Track” Column



A Railfan in Pennsylvania by Jack Coad

During my visit to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in August of this year, I took a day to visit the small town of Strasburg, just west of Philadelphia. To get there, I had to take the 8:00 AM Amtrak Keystone Service from 30th Street Station to Lancaster, the closest Amtrak station to Strasburg. The journey from Philadelphia was about an hour and a half. Strasburg has a reputation for being a central location for train enthusiasts and model railroaders alike, with attractions like the famous Strasburg Railroad and the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania.



Arriving in Strasburg, I was immediately greeted by debatably the Strasburg Railroad's most iconic locomotive, Norfolk & Western No. 475, which had recently been put back into operational use after a long period of maintenance. The Strasburg Railroad runs hourly train rides across rural eastern Pennsylvania, through an area where the Amish community is prominent.

I booked a 1:00 PM train, and since I had plenty of time, I decided to check out the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania across the road from Strasburg Station. I bought an all-day admission so I could return to the museum after my ride. The PRR Museum had an extensive collection of rolling stock used on the Pennsylvania Railroad, from early-era steam power and diesel power to modern electric power. My favorite locomotive on display was Pennsylvania GG1 No. 4935, debatably one of the world's first high-speed electric locomotives, designed in the 1930s and able to haul trains at 100 mph—much faster and more efficient than many locomotives of its time.

To my surprise, the model train club of Strasburg was having a showcase on the weekend I was traveling there, so I saw layouts in O gauge, N gauge, and HO gauge. Unfortunately, and unsurprisingly, no one had a Märklin three-rail AC HO-gauge layout. However, some of the collectors were impressed when I told them I run a Märklin HO-gauge layout.

When it was time for me to board the Strasburg train, I boarded the car nearest the locomotive, an open-air passenger car with a direct view of No. 475. The locomotive was hauling the train backwards, so I had a front-row seat to watch it at work. After returning to Strasburg Station, I went back to the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania and continued visiting with the Strasburg Model Train Club until I left for Philadelphia later that night.

Jack Coad is a senior History/Digital Art student at Angelo State University and has been a volunteer at the Railway museum of San Angelo since 2023.

Railfan News:
Speaking of
“Union Pacific”
What’s the status
of UP’s Challenger
#3985?



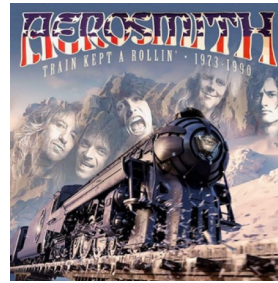
In 2022, Union Pacific Railroad donated Challenger No. 3985 to Railroad Heritage of Midwest America (RRHMA) in Silvis, Illinois. Since its donation, volunteer crews have been steadily working toward its complete restoration and return to operation.

For those unfamiliar with the “Challenger,” it was UP’s answer to the challenging mainline grades of the Wasatch Mountains. The Challenger is an articulated steam locomotive with a 4-6-6-4 wheel arrangement, designed for powerful, high-speed freight service. It is the “little brother” of UP’s famous 4-8-8-4 “Big Boy” class locomotives. A total of 105 Challengers were built between 1936 and 1943. No. 3985 was retired in 1962. In 1981, UP restored the locomotive and returned it to service for excursion trains. It was removed from service again in 2010.

This spring, volunteers completed significant work on No. 3985’s boiler and tender. A total of 222 boiler flues and tubes were installed, and this summer, a new Nathan injector was added. This fall, crews are installing new roller bearings on the locomotive’s centipede tender.

For more restoration news and updates, visit rrhma.org. (Above photo from rrhma.org)

A Personal Note: In 1992, I had the pleasure of riding behind Union Pacific Challenger No. 3985 with my father’s best friend, Kermit Baese. We boarded near the old Missouri Pacific Depot in San Antonio and traveled to the Amtrak station in Fort Worth. More than thirty years later, I still remember that excursion, and I’m looking forward to seeing this magnificent locomotive return to steam.

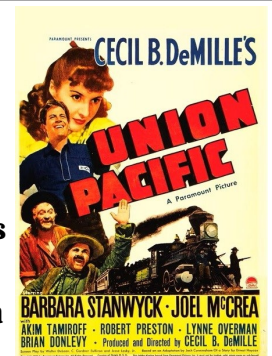


Song of the Season: “The
Train kept a-rollin”
Performed by Aerosmith

Speaking of refurbishment and restoration, the same can be said of music! This “railroad song” was released by Aerosmith in 1974, but its origins date back to a 1942 song, “Cow-Cow Boogie,” about a singing cowboy. In 1951, Tiny Bradshaw reworked the musical idea into “Train Kept A-Rollin” and recorded his own version. The Yardbirds, a popular British blues-rock band, gave the song another overhaul in 1965. Then, in 1974, Aerosmith took it back into the shop for yet another refurbishment! Aerosmith’s version features some incredible guitar work and tells the story of a chance encounter between two travelers aboard a train. Apparently, some old classics just keep rolling along!

Movie of the Month:
Union Pacific (1939)

The wait is over! For the first time ever, Cecil B. DeMille’s epic western, “Union Pacific” is now available on streaming through Fandango and Amazon Prime. This 1939 classic tells the story of the Union Pacific’s race to Promontory Point, Utah to complete the first Transcontinental Railroad. Join our main character, a railroad police officer or “trouble shooter” played by Joel McCrea as he tames the “hell on wheels” rabble rousers, subdues native hostiles and the great Rocky Mountains single handed. The locomotive co-stars include Virginia & Truckee 4-4-0s: #11, #18, #22, and 2-4-0 #21. Union Pacific’s 2-8-0 #6014 is also seen in the picture.



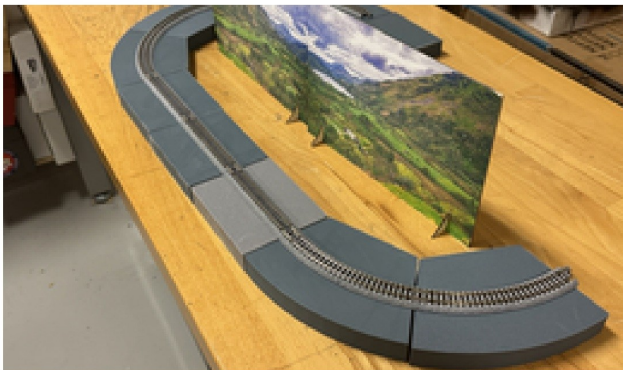
SOUTH ORIENT MODEL RAILWAY ASSOCIATION

Small Modules, Lots of Fun at the Depot

Over the past several months, SOMRA members have been getting together for some informal Saturday operating sessions at the San Angelo train depot. Much of our activity centers around pocket modules—small, portable sections of model railroad that can be connected in different arrangements. They're inexpensive to build, easy to transport, and offer an opportunity to experiment with scenery and track arrangements without committing to a room-sized layout. Our gatherings generally feature N scale mainline operations, along with HO_N30 narrow gauge equipment and, more recently, On18. Since all three use 9mm track, we can enjoy quite a variety of equipment. Strict adherence to a particular scale isn't always our first priority!

These Saturday sessions are fairly spontaneous, with an emphasis on running trains, sharing projects, and exchanging ideas. We've also made the pocket module hobby a little easier to get into by offering 3-D printed module bases to interested club members. We'd love to see this activity grow and encourage other model railroad enthusiasts to join us. You don't need a module or even a locomotive to participate. Announcements for upcoming Saturday sessions are posted on our SOMRA Facebook page. Come by the depot sometime and see what we're up to!

AROUND THE MODULES



3-D printed bases make it easy to get started.



Adding ground cover and vegetation to a module.



A finished curved module, complete with rocky scenery.



A young visitor explores the display at our train fair.

Scenes from the Railway Museum of San Angelo's "Dia del Tren"



Meet the Railway Board:

The Rev. Christopher Roque, President
fatherchrisroque@verizon.net
Elizabeth Curtis, Treasurer
Mary Alice Smith, Fundraising
Charles Horton



Dr. Linda Bond, Vice President
Donna Linton, Secretary
Tammie Virden, Texas Fort Trails
Hilda Jewell
Tommy Robinson