

# THE NEWSLETTER OF THE RED RIVER VALLEY RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

Web Site: [WWW.RRVVRS.ORG](http://WWW.RRVVRS.ORG)

On Facebook: [Shreveport Railroad Museum](https://www.facebook.com/ShreveportRailroadMuseum)

Russell Pedro – President

W. Conway Link – Vice-President

Jim McClure – Secretary

Bill Hasheider – Treasurer

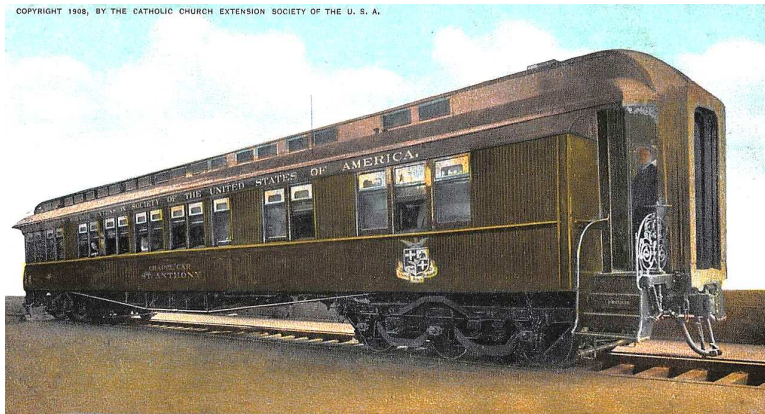
Dave Bland – Newsletter Editor – [DDBland@aol.com](mailto:DDBland@aol.com)

May, 2015

SHREVEPORT, LA

Our 34<sup>th</sup> Year

## *This Train is Bound for Glory - America's Chapel Cars*



CHAPEL CAR "ST. ANTHONY"  
The Catholic Extension Society of the U. S. A. General Offices: The Rookery, Chicago.



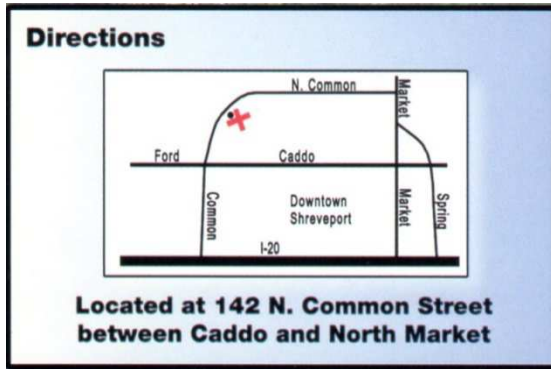
The transcontinental railroads, no doubt, helped make America great, but at their beginnings, they did little to help America to be good. Towns were springing up along the rail lines as fast as they could be built, but the first businesses established in these boom-towns were saloons, hotels and general merchandise stores. Spiritual leaders saw that churches were not being built so some came up with the idea of a rolling church to take to the people. From 1890 to 1946, thirteen chapel cars made spiritual journeys across America's West, Northwest, South, and Southeast. They brought faith, morality, and hope to the faithful and faithless alike. There were three Episcopal cars: *The Cathedral Car of North Dakota* and two chapel cars of Upper Michigan; three Catholic Extension Society cars: *St. Anthony*, *St. Peter*, and *St. Paul*; and seven American Baptist Publication Society cars: *Evangel*, *Emmanuel*, *Glad Tidings*, *Good Will*, *Messenger of Peace*, *Herald of Hope*, and *Grace*.

Father Francis Clement Kelley had not forgotten the concept of the Baptist chapel car he had seen in 1904 at the St. Louis World's Fair. In a 1906 issue of *Extension Magazine*, he explained how the novelty of a chapel car would draw non-Catholics to hear about the faith, carry literature in large quantities, while also being the home of missionary priests. He concluded by asking, "If the Baptists can do it, why not the Catholics? Who will give us a chapel car to place in the service of the scattered ones of the flock?" So a sympathetic Pullman Company general manager had the interior of an 1886 coach reconstructed for chapel car use. The chapel car *St. Anthony* (shown above), aptly named after "the saint of the lost," began its mission in Kansas and continued through Louisiana and Mississippi before finishing its existence in Oregon around 1921.

Records show that at least 2 of the cars visited Shreveport. The Baptist chapel car *Evangel* visited in 1898 and 1899 via the Texas & Pacific Railway, and the Catholic Extension car *St. Paul* came in 1916 on the Vicksburg, Shreveport & Pacific Railroad.

(Editor's note: Information and photos are from *This Train is Bound for Glory – The Story of America's Chapel Cars*, Online Version, 2012, by Wilma Rugh Taylor. You can read it at [www.chapelcars.com](http://www.chapelcars.com) )

## Upcoming Events



May 15 – RRVRS Meeting – 7 p.m. - Shreveport Water Works Museum – 142 N. Common St. – call (318) 797-8008 for information.

May 16 – Frierson “luv tha” Country Festival – contact Jerry Sumrall at email4jerry@yahoo.com

May 16-17 – Jefferson Texas Train Days – call (903) 665-2775 or [www.Jeffersontraindays.com](http://www.Jeffersontraindays.com)

Note – the First Friday Railroad Photography group will not meet during June because of the KCS Historical Society Convention in Shreveport on June 6.

## The President’s Message

Russell is continuing to have chemo treatments on an out-patient basis at M. D. Anderson Cancer Center in Houston. Since there is not much time between treatments, he is staying at his sister Connie's house in Katy, Texas. Russell may be able to come home to Shreveport soon and only return to Houston once a month. Please continue to keep him in your thoughts and prayers.

Dave Bland  
Editor

### It is time to pay your 2015 Dues!

Please send a check or money order for \$20.00 with this membership form to Bill Hasheider at 6813 Despot Road, Shreveport, LA 71108

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Red River Valley Railroad Historical Society  
3012 Nottingham Drive  
Shreveport, LA 71115

**Next Meeting**  
**May 15**