

SOUTHEAST LIMITED

The Railway  
Historical  
Southeast



& Locomotive  
Society, Inc.  
Chapter

Newsletter No. 58, Apr, 2000

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# Pocket Change

by Cliff Vander Yacht

The Pennsylvania Railroad arrived in Pittsburgh in 1852.<sup>1</sup> Seven members of the Pittsburgh city council watched as many people made a fortune over the arrival of the railroad. They were adamant in not wanting this to happen again without them benefiting, so they planned and waited. A long wait because the arrival of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad in didn't occur until 1871.<sup>2</sup> They were ready. Knowing that the B&O would just swallow up any common land purchase, they decided to build a connecting railroad. With nothing more than pocket change, they bought a parcel of land of the requisite 100 foot width, laid ties and rails. Then they, being senior members of the city council, forced the B&O and PRR to connect to their track, one at each end, in order to interchange cars between the two major railroads. They installed a wheel counter on their little piece of track so they could bill the respective companies. Because they liked the sound of the name of the B&O, they named their little company the Pittsburgh and Ohio Railroad Company.<sup>3</sup>

The P&O was a thorn in the side of the B&O, so the B&O made a contract offering full maintenance of the P&O's track in exchange for the sole right to purchase each share of the stock of the P&O when the owners or their estate put it up for sale. The B&O thus owned three shares when, in 1899, the remaining four owners failed to pay taxes on their property and the B&O bought it at a tax sale. That ended the overhead charges.<sup>4</sup>

Railroads, like many companies, carry a lot of old stuff on their books. So it wasn't until the B&O was about to combine with the C&O that they tried to clear up the P&O problem. It seems that transfer train crews used a tongue-in-cheek

excuse for any delays by saying they were having trouble in getting P&O clearance. Legally, the P&O had never been fully purchased, so the remaining four shares were obtained from the heirs. However, a lien against one of the former owners was never resolved, therefore, the B&O ran a land survey and the exact section of track that had once been the P&O was cut out and set aside. The whole interchange was then rebuilt on adjacent land and the old P&O property sold.<sup>5</sup> Physically it was gone, but a thorn remained. Track crews, many years before, had been instructed to properly maintain the P&O section, so the set aside section was carefully ballasted and kept weed free year after year.

The old B&O management personnel missed their chance with the merger into the Chessie System, but were ready when CSX was formed. They arrived in Jacksonville, Florida, complete with that P&O piece of track. What had been the B&O's thorn would now be CSX's pride. You can now see this track proudly displayed on a high pedestal directly in front of the CSX Transportation General Office Building in downtown Jacksonville. Here is the whole length of the P&O, still carefully ballasted and weed free, standing as a fitting tribute to what a little pocket change can do.

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## Notes

1. James E. Vance, Jr., *The North American Railroad*, (The John Hopkins University Press, 1995), p. 92.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 132.
3. In spite of its short length, the P&O did go from Pittsburgh to the Ohio River, which starts, of course, in Pittsburgh at the confluence of the Monongahela and Allegheny Rivers. *Ibid.*, p. 153.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 179.
5. *Ibid.*

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## SOUTHEAST CHAPTER OFFICERS:

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|--------------------------|---------------|
| James A. Smith           | Chairman      |
| William F. Howes, Jr.    | Vice-Chairman |
| Paul V. Newton           | Secretary     |
| James H. Wilk            | Treasurer     |
| Clifford J. Vander Yacht | Editor        |

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# Subject: Mardi Gras Recap

Part One by Paul Newton

Photos by the author

Date: Wednesday, March 15, 2000 9:06 PM

With all due respect to my alma mater, the University of Florida, and I give UF tons, the party atmosphere in New Orleans for the Mardi Gras festival made the college town of Gainesville, Florida, look like a Chuck E. Cheeze. Here's a report.

Thursday evening, March 2nd, I hopped aboard Amtrak's *Sunset Limited* in Jacksonville for a relaxing and smooth way to get to Bourbon Street. With all the trash in the streets of New Orleans, I'm glad I didn't take my car. With beads around my neck, I soon discovered I wasn't the only one on the train heading to the party. There were more than a handful of girls and guys also going to 'Gras.

Mardi Gras has got to be one of the most exciting, tiring, thrilling, erotic, compelling, and fun party-times on Earth. I went with my best friend Lance, also a UF alum. He flew in from his home in New Jersey, we met up at the hotel. We vacationed for 6 days and 5 nights at the Holiday Inn Superdome, just blocks off the French Quarter. After a few days of living on catfish and frozen Hurricane drinks, you forget that life is going on around you. You forget about gross ton-miles, or annual carloadings when you're partying in a karaoke bar and dancing at a nightclub in broad daylight. We basically slept until noon, grabbed a bite to eat, then hit the Bourbon Street bars, clubs, and the street itself until the wee hours of the morning. Breakfast at world-famous Brennan's Restaurant was a treat to wake up for one morning, though. It was so crowded on Bourbon Street that you could have picked your feet up off the ground and kept moving by the force of the crowd! The area below the balconies witnessed the



ABOVE: *Sunset Limited* arrival at New Orleans Union Passenger Terminal, 3/3/00. BELOW: *Sunset Limited* station stop, Pensacola, FL.



most crowds. I was taken back by the amount of trash on in the streets as a by-product of the crowds, it just piles up and piles up on the curbs. Our shoes got so dirty that there was nothing we could do by day five but throw them out.

At Mardi Gras, beads are more valuable than money. We soon discovered beads with the year on them, such as our “Millennium 2000” beads worked like a charm. But even they didn’t compare to the ultimate - the “teddy bear” beads. We kept getting stopped on the streets by girls asking what they could do for a teddy bear bead. I’ll end that part of the story right there. But what a story it always was!

Wednesday evening, Lance departed for home in New Jersey via Delta, and I hopped a Southwest flight back to Jacksonville. I couldn’t take the *Sunset Limited* back home because it’s tri-weekly schedule did not fit my plans. I took the following day off work as a rest day (that was recommended to us by friends who had gone before) and it was a good idea. It gave me a chance to clean my tattered laundry.

We plan to go back next year. They say when you go to Mardi Gras to “expect the unexpected,” as you should.

## Donations!

The Southeast Chapter would like to thank member Richard Dickinson for the donation of two books to our library. Richard recently gave us *Grand Trunk Corporation*, by Don Hofsommer, who is a professor of history at the St. Cloud State University and the chairman of the Lexington Group. This is a detailed history of the Grand Trunk Corporation from 1971 through 1992. The book is well researched with numerous notes and includes a 1992 GTW locomotive roster.

Richard also gave us a copy of *The General & The Texas*, by Stan Cohen and James G. Bogle. Southeast Chapter members may remember that Mr. Bogle, who is considered one of the foremost experts on these two engines, spoke to our group during a meeting we had in Atlanta a few years ago. Thank you Richard for your donations to our chapter!

# Amtrak Trip

## Part two by Paul Newtonson

P001-02 arrived at the Jacksonville Amtrak station tight on time - just after 10:00 PM that Thursday night. It backed into the station as is normal, coupled to the 3 boxcars that were to accompany us, loaded the passengers, and off we went. Train Consist:

AMTK 96 P42 locomotive  
AMTK 63 P42 locomotive  
AMTK 1229 baggage  
AMTK 39026 transition sleeper  
AMTK 32049 sleeper  
AMTK 32045 sleeper  
AMTK 38064 dining car  
AMTK 33000 Sightseer Lounge car  
AMTK 31514 coach  
AMTK 34064 coach  
AMTK 71048 boxcar  
AMTK 71111 boxcar  
AMTK 71058 boxcar

The ride was basically smooth, but slow due to trackwork and several resulting slow orders. At 5:50 AM we passed a freight train on the siding at Sellers, FL, then backed into the west end of that same siding (3-way meet). P002, our eastbound counterpart, passed us with private car Georgia 300 bringing up the rear. Too bad that car wasn’t on our train, even though the vestibule doors wouldn’t have matched up.

Before Pensacola there was an incredible, long, concrete trestle over Pensacola Bay. You could see nothing but water and the bridges of parallel Interstate 10 in the distance. Traveling along the bayou’s before arriving in New Orleans, we basically shared the water with the boats and marsh grass. There wasn’t much land to see, except the grade and ballast. It was quite a sight from the sightseer lounge car. We ended up pulling into New Orleans more than 3 hours late on account slow orders, track work, and the passing of numerous freights, mostly intermodals. But it was a chance to chat with others aboard and just reflect. That is often what train travel is all about.

# BOOK NEWS

## Atlantic Coast Line Railroad Seaboard Air Line Railway

Indiana University Press

When you see a new video or book you want, give Rusty a call (800) 336-7547, FAX (916) 985-3763 or e-mail at <MP1@MP1.COM>. Milepost 1, 198 Wool St., Folsom, CA, 95630. 10% discount to R&LHS members. Retail price of each book is \$49.95.

Richard E. Prince's long out-of-print encyclopedic study of the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad, "The Standard Railroad of the South." Includes pages and pages of rosters and schematic drawings of the line's various steam locomotives plus hundreds of photographs.

"Although the ATLANTIC COAST LINE RR as an organization of that name dates back only to the year 1900, the ATLANTIC COAST LINE as a system of railroads is much older, with sections of its track originally known as the WELDON ROUTE. As a matter of fact, the WELDON ROUTE or ATLANTIC ROUTE existed prior to the War of 1861-65 and included a group of independent standard gauge railroads between Richmond and Wilmington with connecting boat service to Charleston. However, by 1857 a network of 5-ft gauge lines completed the rail link to Charleston as well as other points in South Carolina.

"Beginning in 1869, William T. Walters and his associates of Baltimore gradually obtained control of these companies which soon became known as the ATLANTIC COAST LINE FAST MAIL PASSENGER ROUTE in the 1870's. During the early 1870s this Walters group was also associated with the Pennsylvania RR in the Southern railway Security Company, an ill-fated syndicate, which held control of a number of railroads in the South prior to 1880...."

— from the introduction

Richard E. Prince's long out-of-print ency-

clopedic study of the Seaboard Air Line Railway, "The Progressive Railroad of the South." Includes pages and pages of rosters and schematic drawings of the line's various steam locomotives plus hundreds of vintage photographs.

"Although the SEABOARD AIR LINE RY as a rail network operating 'Through the Heart of the South' in the states of Virginia, the Carolinas, Georgia, Florida, and Alabama dates back only to the year 1900, the SEABOARD AIRLINE SYSTEM, running from Portsmouth to Atlanta is older. The name of that organization was derived from the SEABOARD & ROANOKE RR (formed in 1846), and the RALEIGH & GASTON RR that was advertised after the War as the INLAND AIR LINE ROUTE. However, the SEABOARD ROAD, as the line from Portsmouth to Weldon has been known for more than 120 years, was organized in 1832 as the PORTSMOUTH & ROANOKE RAIL ROAD.

"... Besides the railroad lines of the company, the SEABOARD AIR-LINE SYSTEM included a steamboat line that, over the years, operated from the Elizabeth River docks at Norfolk and Portsmouth to Baltimore, Washington, Petersburg, and Richmond. Known officially as the BALTIMORE STEAM PACKET COMPANY, the BAY LINE, later advertised as the OLD BAY LINE, dated back to 1840.

"...Finally, under the administration of S. Davies Warfield, the SEABOARD AIR LINE RY reached southward to Miami and Naples after the Florida boom of the 1920s...."

—from the Introduction

### **Minutes of the Southeast Chapter, Railway & Locomotive Historical Society**

The February meeting of the Southeast Chapter of the Railway & Locomotive Historical Society was held Thursday, February 10th at the CSX General Office Building in Jacksonville, Florida. There were 12 members in attendance.

#### Treasurer's Report

- A) The Southeast Chapters bank account totals \$1932.41.
- B) Thirty members have renewed so far this year. Dues are due immediately.
- C) The 2000 Uniform Business Report is being filled out so the Southeast Chapter can retain our "tax-free" status.

#### Old Business

- A) Plans continue by the convention committee to search for a suitable location to hold the R&LHS 2001 National Convention which the Southeast Chapter is to host.
- B) Jim Smith plans to seek corporate sponsorship in obtaining funding to send a student to the Scranton Rail Camp.

#### New Business

- A) An updated phone list including space for member e-mail addresses was passed out for members to fill in missing information.

#### Committee Reports

- A) The national R&LHS looks to bring membership back to around 2,500 members.

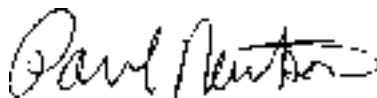
#### Announcements

- A) The big Jacksonville Train Show is February 19.
- B) Southeast Chapter members are invited to the NRHS meeting on February 17th to hear Jack Martin, President of NARP speak.

#### Upcoming Meetings

- March 9th Paul Barnes on Passenger Services  
Paul Barnes to bring snacks.
- April 13th Art Towson on the Pennsylvania Railroad  
Cliff Vander Yacht to bring snacks.
- May 11th Nautical Music slideshow.  
Jim Wilk to bring snacks.

Respectfully submitted,



### **Minutes of the Southeast Chapter, Railway & Locomotive Historical Society**

The March 2000 meeting of the Southeast Chapter, R&LHS was held on Thursday, March 9 at 6:00pm in the CSX General Office Building in Jacksonville, Florida. It was a combined meeting with the North-Florida Chapter of the NRHS. The meeting featured guest speaker Paul Reistrup. There were 13 R&LHS members attending and more than 32 people attending overall.

#### Old Business

- A) The Southeast Chapter continues to make plans to host the 2001 National R&LHS convention, to be held in May or June, 2001.
- B) The Southeast Chapter continues seeking corporate funding to send a child to the Scranton Rail Camp.

#### Treasurer's Report

Members Southeast Chapter dues are due to Jim Wilk as soon as possible.

New Business

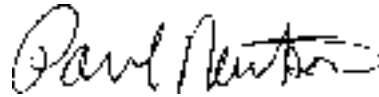
No new business.

Upcoming Meetings

April 13 — PRR video by Art Towson.

The brief meeting adjourned and Paul Reistrup took the podium.

Respectfully submitted,



**Minutes of the Southeast Chapter, Railway & Locomotive Historical Society**

The April 13th meeting of the Southeast Chapter of the Railway & Locomotive Historical Society was held at 6:00 PM at the CSX General Office Building. There were 9 members present.

Secretary's Report

The minutes of the March meeting were read and approved.

Treasurer's Report

Dues are due immediately.

Old Business

The committee members for the 2001 R&LHS Jacksonville Convention include Bill Howes, Reid Adams, Paul Barnes, Jim Smith, Paul Newton, Jim Wilk, and Ed Mueller.

The Southeast Chapter is considering exploring the publishing of another book. Possible book topics would be appreciated.

The Southeast Chapter will not sponsor a youth at the Scranton Rail Camp but will consider sponsoring one next year.

The Congress Plaza Hotel in Chicago will be the site of the R&LHS National Convention to be held June 2 - 4th. Make your reservations now.

New Business

The group discussed the recent top management changes at CSX.

Committee Reports

Bill Howes spoke of the future of the R&LHS national archives in California. This may be a topic of detailed discussion at the R&LHS National Convention in Chicago in June.

Announcements

There were no new announcements.

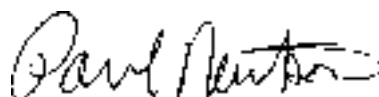
Next Meeting

May 11th: Mueller's Maritime Music with goodies by Jim Wilk.

June 8th: Show-n-Tell. Bring a railroad-related item and tell the group about it.

Goodies by Paul Newton

Respectfully submitted,





Front & rear cover photos by Cliff Vander Yacht. November 1985.

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