

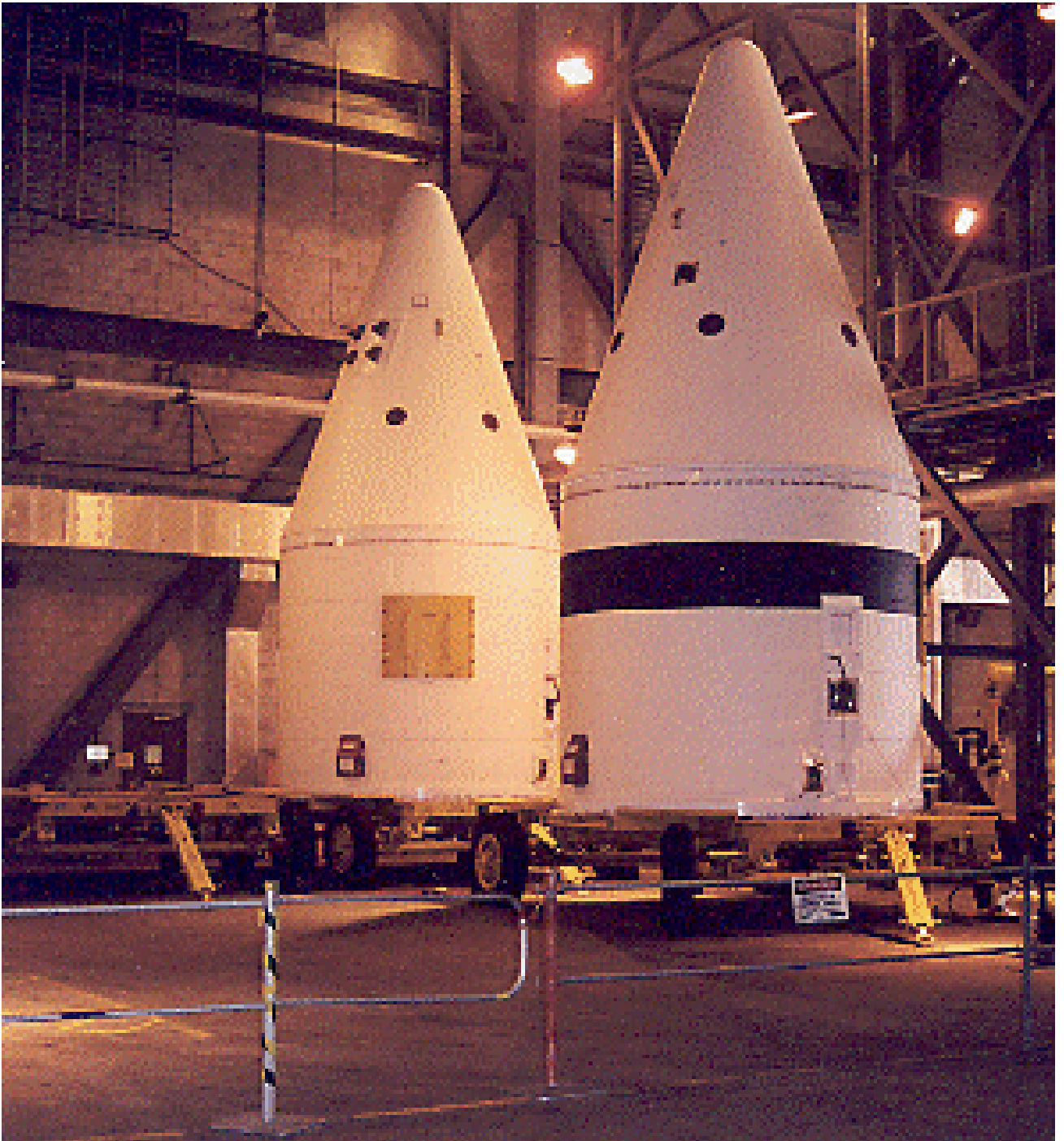
# SOUTHEAST LIMITED

The Railway  
Historical  
Southeast



& Locomotive  
Society, Inc.  
Chapter

Newsletter No. 65, June, 2001



# R&LHS National Convention A Success!

By James A. Smith, R&LHS Southeast Chapter Chairman

All photos by James A. Smith,

Some drove, some flew, and some rode one of the following trains to attend the 2001 R&LHS National Convention in Jacksonville, FL: the *Silver Meteor*, *Silver Palm*, *Silver Star*, or the *Sunset Limited*. Riding a train to a railroad convention must be special! And I'm sure those people had a great time enjoying dinner in the diner and sleeping on the train. The history, and future, of passenger travel in Florida were two of our speaker panel topics, so it seems fitting to point out that riding a train to the sunny South was the right way to come to the convention.

On Thursday, May 31st, the Board of Directors met to handle various business matters for the Society. One of the most important was a resolution honoring John A. Goodwin for serving as Secretary of the Society from 1981 to 2001. John has been a R&LHS member for more than 50 years and while he will continue as a Director, he decided to scale back some of his activities. The resolution was enacted to express "our appreciation to John A. Goodwin for his contributions to the Society and its members and for the fellowship we enjoy while in his company". Bravo John! Our new secretary will be Dr. R. Michael Walker who is also a Director.

On Friday we took a field trip to the 44 mile NASA Railroad at the Kennedy Space Center. First, we toured the railroad shop facility and saw the NASA Railroad's entire roster of three SW 1500's. Officials described how the solid fuel rocket booster segments were transferred from rail car to the Vehicle Assembly Building (VAB). We then toured inside the VAB; originally built to construct the Saturn 5 moon rocket. This part of the space center tour is closed to the general public, so walking in the VAB and being able to photograph solid rocket nose cones, an external fuel tank, and the shuttle Atlantis ready to move to the launch pad - well, it was just SUPER. Our bus tour around launch pad 39A was also unique since

we got much closer than the public tours. Visiting the new Saturn 5 Visitor Center was fun too since the last time I had seen that rocket, it was lying on its side next to the VAB.

After all the rockets, we came back to earth at the New Smyrna Beach shops of the Florida East Coast Railway. This tour was a rare event because up until a recent change in top management, the FEC had been off limits to rail fans and historical organizations. That has all changed now, and the FEC even brought locomotive No. 2000 out for us to see, including a cab tour. This "one of a kind" GP40 has been repainted in the old Flagler red and yellow scheme and was the backdrop for a group photo. The FEC also let us go through its round-end observation car, *Azalea*, originally built for the Detroit-Miami, *New Royal Palm*. Besides being a functional inspection car, it is also rather historic since so few operational round-end observation cars exist. Special thanks to Southeast Chapter members Paul Barnes and Seth Bramson for arranging these tours.

That evening the Southeast Chapter hosted a dinner with guest speaker/historian John Hankey, who



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## SOUTHEAST CHAPTER OFFICERS:

James A. Smith	Chairman
William F. Howes, Jr.	Vice-Chairman
Mark S. Bennett	Secretary
James H. Wilk	Treasurer
Clifford J. Vander Yacht	Editor

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**NASA Railroad No. 1 showing the current paint scheme for the three SW 1500's.**



**NASA Railroad No. 3 with the Vehicle Assembly Building in the left background.**



The shuttle *Atlantis* ready to move to the launch pad.



R&LHS group listening to NASA employee Bill Riddle describe the VAB and the *Challenger* failure.

talked about the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad roundhouse complex at Martinsburg, West Virginia. Titled “Things Aren’t Always What They Seem”, it touched on the history of the facility, it’s pivotal role in the Civil War and the current plans for restoration. John’s talk, illustrated by slides, was wonderful; full of historical significance that detailed the special nature of this unique railroad facility - which includes two roundhouses, the recently renovated station (believed to be the oldest active station in the country), NA (Martinsburg) and R (Miller) towers, and a freight house. Without a doubt, John finished a great day with a fantastic speech about a true historical highlight!

On Saturday, we copied the Lexington Group’s “Speakers Program” format that included feature

century?” Ed Lewis said yes and used the Pee Dee River Railway expansion to serve four new large customers as an example of how a short line can help itself and its connecting carriers.

Jim Benz, President of Rail Link also said yes by noting that they operate a number of switching operations to satisfy customer’s needs for service and do it cheaper than a Class 1 carrier. There has been a significant trend toward short line switching operations, with Rail Link operating 24 at this time. Jim also noted that the Genessee & Wyoming, who owns Rail Link and other short lines, is also expanding by acquiring railroads in foreign countries who are privatizing their existing state owned lines. An example is the recent acquisition of significant operations in Australia by the G&W.



**Our Short Line Panel: Noel Perry of CSXT, Tom Hoback of the Indiana Rail Road, Jim Benz from Rail Link, Ed Lewis of the Aberdeen & Rockfish Railroad, and moderator, Mark Bennett.**

speakers and two panels. The morning was devoted to short lines and the afternoon to passenger railroading in Florida. Kicking it off was Ed Lewis, President of the Aberdeen & Rockfish Railroad. Our members were impressed with the frank discussion of short line operation and how the A&R and Pee Dee River Railway handled a variety of activities, including bridge load limits, attracting new industries, etc., that impact today’s short line railroads.

This was followed by a Short Line Panel hosted by CSX Director Mark Bennett, which asked the question: “Is there a role for short lines in the 21st

Tom Hoback, President of the Indiana Rail Road also said yes based on the use of advanced technology to reduce operating costs. The IRR is now running remote control engines, solar powered switch machines and one man crews to efficiently operate their line. Listening to Tom, you soon realize that the IRR is a short line at the technological forefront in developing new ways to run their railroad.

Finally, Noel Perry, a CSX Marketing Director also said yes in that short lines play a significant part in providing Class 1 carriers with revenue traffic. Noel also gave us some significant insights into truck costs

and how both short lines and the large carriers are developing service and price guidelines that are competitive with long haul trucking costs.

Our Passenger Panel was moderated by R&LHS chairman Bill Howes. The theme was introduced by Seth Branson who talked about the "Development of passenger service in Florida". His theme for the major carriers was to concentrate on one "special" route that gave both a unique picture of Florida history as well as how the particular railroad was known by Florida residents. Of course, his favorite route was visualizing a ride over the FEC's Seven Mile Bridge on the Key West Extension and only being able to see ocean!

and the West Coast and *Auto Train* between Sanford, FL and Lorton, VA. This will grow with the projected addition in 2002 of two trains a day operating over the FEC between Jacksonville and Miami.

Mr. Alan Yorker, the new NARP Chairman talked about the continuing need to promote Amtrak and both long and short distance passenger service. He also noted a number of state supported passenger train operations. He encouraged us all to support future passenger train operation by writing our congressional representatives at both the state and national level to secure continued funding.

Mr. Bob Lewis, former Editor and Publisher of *Railway Age*, also supported future passenger op-



**The Passenger Panel: Bob Lewis former editor of *Railway Age*, Jeff Barker of Amtrak, Alan Yorker, chairman of NARP, Seth Bramson who represented the FEC as their Corporate Historian, and the moderator, Bill Howes. Not shown is John Gibson of CSXT.**

Seth also participated on the Passenger Panel and everyone present enjoyed his "center stage" review on the development of the Florida Fun Train and the various events that spelled it's ultimate demise. As information, Seth also arranged to provide our group with the FEC's centennial edition of their book, *The Story of a Pioneer*.

Amtrak was represented on the panel by Jeff Barker who fielded numerous questions about its Florida operation, past and present. Existing train service is strong, with three Miami/Tampa-New York trains, the *Sunset Limited* running between Orlando

and in doing so told us some interesting stories from his editorial days. Finally, John Gibson, CSX AVP Operations Planning, informed us of some of the many items considered by Class 1 carriers when studying possible increases in passenger service. He also addressed some of the actions taken by CSX to improve service over their Amtrak routes.

We received a number of compliments, all saying that both the short line and passenger panels were well done and a major part of why this R&LHS National Convention was one of the best. Bravo to all who participated!

Saturday evening's R&LHS National Banquet

was proceeded by a delightful reception which gave those present a chance to mingle with many of the speakers and other members. After our dinner, we were entertained by Don Phillips, who is well known for his column as the Potomac Pundit, in *Trains*



*Magazine* and as a transportation reporter for the Washington Post. Don lived up to the definition of a pundit by giving us both positive and negative views on the industry, including comments on Amtrak, railroad mergers, traffic flows, and the future of possible government spending on railroads. Our members were very impressed with his review of current events.

On Sunday morning we held the official R&LHS Annual Membership meeting. Chairman Bill Howes gave a brief “state of the union” talk about the R&LHS. Atlanta historian, Dick Hillman, who is also the Manager-Safety for the Georgia Northeastern Railroad Company in Marietta, GA, gave a special talk on the



history of the Glover Locomotive Works (the last steam builder in the South). He covered the history of the Clover Works, details of the locomotive building complex and the rescue/transition of artifacts (including a locomotive) to the proposed addition to the Kennesaw Museum Foundation (home to the famous Civil War locomotive, the *General*).

Some of our attendees returned home via the *Silver Star*, or the *Sunset Limited*, either way I suspect they had an enjoyable journey. But before everyone leaves, a few words of thanks. First, to Bill Howes for securing speakers and moderating the passenger panel, to chapter registrar Cliff Vander Yacht, to Paul Barnes and Seth Bramson for arranging Friday’s tours, to Mark Bennett for moderating the short line panel, to all of our great speakers, to Gary Sease, Bill DeWitt and others for our registration/door prize material, to Ed Mueller and Arby Vandenbossche for handling registration, to John Goodwin for being a R&LHS member for 50 years, and to my wife Ann for being very understanding through it all! Thanks!

Wait! One more very important item: next year’s National Convention will be held in Colorado Springs, COLORADO from June 6-9. They have a tentative schedule that includes a possible tour to the FRA Test Center in Pueblo, a ride on the Canyon City & Royal Gorge RR, and a trip up Pike’s Peak on the Manitou & Pike’s Peak Cog Rwy. The annual banquet, along with other meetings will be in the convention hotel, the Wyndham. Sounds like a great time. If you want more information, please contact Dr. Mike Walker, Attn. 2002 Rails in the Rockies, P. O. Box 62924, Colorado Springs, CO 80962-2924. I plan on going, so see you there!





**R&LHS Chairman Bill Howes presents a plaque to John Goodwin honoring his 20 years as Society Secretary.**

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

The April meeting of the Chapter was held at the CSXT General Office Building in Jacksonville, Fla., beginning at 6:10 PM with a video on Civil War railroading presented by Art Towson.

The business session began at 6:55 PM with Chairman Smith presiding. The minutes of the preceding meeting were approved without change; the Treasurer's report was not available. Chairman Smith will update the membership roster.

#### Old Business

1. Convention - registrations have been received; Cliff Vander Yacht is serving as registrar. Hotel

- arrangements are on course and the committee is continuing its work. The machine nuts from the "General" will be presented to the Kennesaw Museum Foundation at the Convention.
2. Book Committee - photo identification, selection and caption drafting is underway. The book will include maps. Additional support is coming from the Jacksonville Historical Society.
  3. *Southeast Limited* - means of reducing reproduction costs were discussed. Editor Cliff Vander Yacht is presently handling all aspects of the newsletter publication.
  4. Program Committee - Jim Smith will discuss this topic with Paul Barnes and Paul Newton.
  5. R&LHS Update - Bill Howes advised that there were no national R&LHS issues to discuss.

#### New Business

None

Following announcements, the meeting concluded with a video on the Milwaukee Road.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mark S. Bennett, Secretary

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

The May meeting of the Chapter was called to order at 6:10 PM in the CSXT General Office Building, Jacksonville, FL. Chairman Jim Smith presided.

The minutes of the preceding meeting were approved; the Treasurer's report was not available.

#### Old Business

1. Newsletter - material is needed for the next issue
2. Convention - the hotel space commitment has been made
  - several prepayments are due shortly and will be paid on time
  - for non-members attending the Saturday only session, the registration
3. Book Committee - work continues on identifying suitable photos and drafting initial captions. Additional photo sources are being locate
4. Newsletter costs - commercial preparation may be less costly than alternative

#### New Business

There were no new business items to discuss.

For the next meeting, Ed Mueller will conduct a post card sale and time permitting a vedio.

The business meeting was adjourned at 6:40 PM. .

The evening's program was provided by Paul Barnes who showed several railroad video

Respectfully submitted,

Mark S. Bennett, Secretary



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