

The Magazine of the ACL & SAL HS – Covering the
ACL, SAL, SCL, and Affiliated and Associated Railroads



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LINES *SOUTH*

In this Issue:
• Memories of
Burnett's Lake, Part 1
• Riding Seaboard's
Portsmouth Line
• Riding the ACL:
Secondary Lines in the Carolinas



LINES

SOUTH

Volume 34, No. 2, 2nd Quarter 2017

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The Society was formed in July 1983 as the Southeastern Railroad Technical Society, and in 1993 was formally organized as the ACL & SAL Railroads Historical Society to better reflect the railroads covered. The Society is incorporated in Florida as a nonprofit corporation and is recognized by the IRS as a 501 (c) (3) educational group. The Society's mission is to preserve and disseminate the history of the Atlantic Coast Line, Seaboard Air Line, and Seaboard Coast Line railroads and their subsidiaries, affiliates, and predecessors (including the Georgia Railroad, Atlanta & West Point Rail Road, Western Railway of Alabama, and Clinchfield). We welcome memberships and donations; see our “Lines for Members” membership newsletter or our website for more details, or contact us by mail.

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Front cover: This 1963 view shows ACL's historic downtown Wilmington station, part of an extensive headquarters complex that existed from the 1830s until ACL completed its new Jacksonville headquarters in 1960. The two trains laying over here are No. 48, which will head north in the evening to connect with the *Palmetto*, and No. 55, which will head west in late afternoon to Florence and Augusta. No. 55 and eastbound counterpart 54 were discontinued between Wilmington and Florence in early 1966

although their Florence–Augusta segments remained in the timetables. Several buildings from the former complex remain in the background; the long concourse over the tracks is still used for the station, which will stay in service until replaced by a small modern building in 1968. —*Warren Calloway photo*



Back cover top: Surely one of the most unusual items under Seaboard ownership was the tugboat *Seaboard*, used to move the railroad's barges across the river between Portsmouth and Norfolk. Built in 1893, the vessel was off the roster by the early 1950s. —*Perry Breon photo, Norfolk Virginian-Pilot, Robert Wayne Johnson collection*

Back cover bottom: The Seaboard passenger station at Suffolk, Virginia ("Peanut Capital of the World"), was noted for its unusual tower. This view was taken in September 1961. The station has been repurposed and renovated but still exists at this location. —*David Sweetland photo, Bob's Photo collection*

LINES... FROM THE EDITOR

This issue reminds us again of the pleasures that come with sharing the history of our railroads. In the case of our lead article—"Memories of Burnett's Lake"—we had known for a while that it was being planned, was coming together, and finally that it was about to arrive. Despite some advance knowledge of the article's basics, reading it for first time was still a revelation of new facts, fresh understandings of old facts, unpublished photos, and above all the personal observations and interpretations that make history come fully to life. This outstanding contribution from Ken Murdock and Warren McFarland is another chapter in documenting the Atlantic Coast Line's little-known but busy locations that once covered so much of central Florida. And it gets better—Ken and Warren plan a second article with more memories of this fascinating junction town.

If you've visited the present-day Burnett's Lake—or taken a look at Google Earth—you know there are still a junction and wye there, but the large open spaces, additional tracks, buildings, signals, and so on are now just an expanse of trees and undergrowth. Don't miss this thorough overview of what used to be from a time now vanished.

No less enjoyable is our second feature, which arrived quite by surprise—one more installment of Robert Wayne Johnson's series on riding the Seaboard Air Line in 1965. This trip, on the Portsmouth Sub-Division, follows the mold of Wayne's previous installments with fascinating historical anecdotes, a "you-are-there" tour of the route, and highlights of its interesting trains and other sights along the way.

Closing out the issue is also the last installment of the 1966 Atlantic Coast Line rides we've been running, this time on connecting trains to Augusta, Georgia, and Wilmington, North Carolina. We hope these surveys of the pre-merger SAL and ACL will help set the stage for our coverage of the Seaboard Coast Line merger, soon to be marking its 50th anniversary—starting with the Third Quarter issue. We invite you to keep reading, and as always to let us know what you think.

—*Larry Goolsby*

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We welcome submissions of articles and photographs for publication. Our preferred formats are Word documents and "raw" tiff scans of photographs and illustrations. Please contact the editor for details and for other methods of submitting photos. If you do send any items of value to us, particularly original photos or other historic items, please always use a securely packaged, insured method with delivery tracking; *LINES SOUTH* cannot assume any responsibility for loss or damage to materials sent to us. Please submit materials and inquiries to the editor:

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Memories of Burnett's Lake - Part 1

by Warren McFarland and Ken Murdock

This article is dedicated to the memory of the late L.A. Bailey, who provided us with many of the photos of Burnett's Lake that we have used just a few weeks before he passed away on September 16, 2016. Receiving these rare photos inspired us to write this article, which otherwise may not have been written. L.A. also worked at Burnett's Lake and was a longtime friend and former co-worker at the ACL with co-author Warren McFarland. See L.A.'s obituary in *LINES SOUTH* Third Quarter 2016 and "Memories of a Railroad Telegrapher on Florida's West Coast Route" in the Second Quarter 2010 issue.

—Warren McFarland and Ken Murdock

Burnett's Lake was a small, seemingly insignificant railroad junction in north Florida, just about a mile east of the small town of Alachua in Alachua County. The junction was somewhat unusual for Florida because by 1899, three independent railroads crossed there. Yet, through this obscure junction passed the St. Petersburg sections of all of ACL's named Florida West Coast trains for almost 65 years.

History of Burnett's Lake

The first railroad to build through Alachua was Henry B. Plant's Live Oak, Tampa & Charlotte Harbor Railroad Company. Plant, who owned a number of Florida and Georgia railroads known collectively as the Plant System, constructed this 5'-0" gauge line from the Suwannee River town of Branford 46 miles southeast to

Gainesville. The LOT&CH construction crews passed through the northeast side of Alachua between 1882 and 1884. Plant had originally started construction of this line in Live Oak, building south 23 miles to Branford (originally New Branford) under the name of Live Oak & Rowland's Bluff Railroad Company. Both companies were consolidated into Plant's Savannah, Florida & Western Railway upon completion of the lines. Plant's company soon constructed a depot in Alachua, and the line was standard-gauged to 4'-9" in 1886.

During Plant's construction of this line, he had encountered the Florida Southern Railway grading and laying ties for its narrow gauge (3'-0") line in a northwesterly direction from Gainesville towards Live Oak. This would have meant the two competing lines would be paralleling each other between Gainesville and Live Oak.

Plant made a deal with the Florida Southern, which in part was that if FS wouldn't build north of Gainesville, he wouldn't build south of Gainesville. Florida Southern accepted his offer, and Plant took over some of the FS graded right-of-way for his line. Upon completion, the two railroads interchanged cars on the south side of Gainesville using a Ramsey transfer, where trucks were exchanged between their two gauges.

Plant had previously purchased an existing rail line from Live Oak to the Florida state line from the Pensacola & Georgia RR (a Seaboard Air Line predecessor), which gave his new Florida rail line a direct connection via DuPont Junction, Georgia, with his rapidly expanding Georgia system, the former Atlantic & Gulf Railroad Company. Plant had acquired the bankrupt A&G, which stretched almost completely across the lower part of Georgia from Savannah through Waycross to Bainbridge, and renamed it the Savannah, Florida & Western Railway.

The second company to build a rail line through Alachua was the Atlantic, Suwannee River & Gulf Railway. This company bought the right-of-way from Amber Lumber Company and started construction in Starke, Florida, in 1893, where it made a connection with the Florida Central & Peninsular Railroad. This SAL predecessor's mainline ran from Fernandina Beach via Jacksonville to Tampa. This new branchline was built under contract by Atlantic Lumber Company, successor to Amber Lumber Company. The ASR&G crossed the SF&W about a mile east of Alachua in 1896 and continued building westward. In 1899 the railroad reached Buda, and the FC&P soon took control of the new line. The main



This Jacksonville & Southwestern train is at the J&SW Newberry depot circa 1900. The locomotive is 4-4-0 No. 23, an 1887 Baldwin product, purchased used from the Wichita & Western as that road's No. 7. One of eight locomotives owned by the J&SW, No. 23 became ACL class D-7 543, and was later sold to the Aberdeen & Rockfish. The train had made its 87-mile run from Jacksonville through Burnett's Lake to Newberry and had been turned, and was ready to make its return run.
—Florida Archives photo rc12968

purpose of this standard gauge line was to reach the vast timber reserves in that part of the state and connect with the Suwannee River steamboats at Wannee. The ASR&G built a depot in Alachua.

The third and last railroad to construct a line through Alachua was the Jacksonville & Southwestern Railroad Company. This 4'-9" standard gauge railroad was constructed by W.W. Cummer, owner of a large sawmill in Milldale, just north of Jacksonville near Moncrief. The rail line was built from Milldale 86 miles in a southwesterly direction through Alachua, reaching Newberry in 1899. The main purpose of the line was to reach Cummer's large timber holdings in Alachua and Gilchrist counties. Though built as a logging line, this railroad was built to fairly high standards, using 60-pound rail. It was operated as a common carrier and almost immediately began providing scheduled passenger trains. It crossed the ASR&G at Haynesworth, about four miles east of Alachua. About a mile east of the SF&W's tracks, the J&SW tracks began running parallel and immediately south of the ASR&G before they crossed the SF&W. The J&SW also built a depot in Alachua.

By 1899, a fairly busy railroad junction of three railroads had been created about a mile east of Alachua, and soon became known as Burnett's Lake. It acquired its name from a large lake northeast of the junction that was a popular recreational area at the time. Burnett's Lake was named for Mayor Samuel W. Burnett of nearby Gainesville. The apostrophe before the "s" on Burnett's was often dropped on many railroad timetables, train orders, and depot signs. The name first appeared in an *Official Guide* timetable for the J&SW in 1900.

Early Mergers

Mergers soon followed. Plant gained control of the Florida Southern in 1892 and began standard-gauging the line in 1896. Upon Plant's death, his family sold his vast Plant System railroad empire to the Atlantic Coast Line on April 10, 1902, except for the Florida Southern and Sanford & St. Petersburg which were conveyed on April 1, 1903, and March 19, 1903, respectively.



After purchasing the J&SW, ACL built this new depot at Newberry in 1908. The station was quite an elaborate facility with special wood siding and a tile roof. Note the lower quadrant order board and the water tank on the right. Observing the sloping terrain at the base of the depot, it appears to have been built at a different location than the first. Frequently, the old depot was saved and used as the freight depot. —*Florida Archives photo pr7637*



The Atlantic, Suwannee River & Gulf's mixed train was at Starke with Florida Central & Peninsular Railway's 4-4-0 324 on the head end, ready to depart on its 55-mile trip to Wannee in 1905. The 324 was built by Rogers in 1885 for the Florida Railway & Navigation Company, a predecessor of the FC&P. The FC&P was under control of the Seaboard Air Line at this time by stock ownership. —*Ken Murdock collection*

JACKSONVILLE & SOUTHWESTERN RAILROAD.

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 J. CUMMER, Vice-President, Cadillac, Mich.
 H. J. HOLLISTER, Treasurer, Grand Rapids, Mich.
 W. W. CUMMER, Second Vice-President and General Manager, Jacksonville, Fla.
 A. G. CUMMER, Secretary, "
 W. E. CUMMER, Superintendent, "
 S. D. PICKETT, Gen. Freight and Pas. Agt., "
 OLIN P. LOVE, General Agent, "
 G. L. DAVIS, Manager of Construction, "
 McGEORGE BUNDY, General Counsel, Grand Rapids, Mich.

SOUTHBOUND.

April 1, 1900.	Mis	No. 3	No. 9
[LEAVE]			
Jacksonville ¹	0	12 00 P M	
Grand Crossing.....	6	2 18 "	7 55 P M
Cambon.....	12	-	4 55 "
Baldwin.....	22	3 05 "	5 25 "
Deep Creek.....	27	3 20 "	5 40 "
McPherson.....	30	3 55 "	5 52 "
Barnett.....	32	3 42 "	6 00 "
Cummer.....	40	4 07 "	6 25 "
Britt.....	44	-	6 36 "
Raiford.....	48	4 35 "	6 50 "
Varnes.....	52	4 43 "	7 04 "
Lake Butler ²	56	4 55 "	7 20 "
Dukes.....	61	-	7 38 "
Worthington.....	64	5 25 "	7 50 "
Prospect.....	67	-	7 58 "
Hainsworth.....	71	5 50 "	8 12 "
Burnett's Lake.....	74	6 03 "	8 20 "
Alachua.....	75	6 12 "	8 30 P M
Cadillac.....	80	6 30 P M	
[ARRIVE]			

NORTHBOUND.

(Central time.)	Mis	No. 4	No. 10
[LEAVE]			
Cadillac.....	0	7 30 A M	
Alachua.....	5	5 50 "	7 00 A M
Burnett's Lake.....	6	6 03 "	7 09 "
Hainsworth.....	9	6 15 "	7 22 "
Prospect.....	13	-	7 39 "
Worthington.....	16	6 45 "	7 50 "
Dukes.....	19	-	8 02 "
Lake Butler ²	24	7 25 "	8 30 "
Varnes.....	28	7 40 "	8 43 "
Raiford.....	32	7 56 "	8 55 "
Britt.....	36	-	9 10 "
Cummer.....	40	8 32 "	9 25 "
Barnett.....	48	9 05 "	9 50 "
McPherson.....	50	9 30 "	10 00 "
Deep Creek.....	53	9 46 "	10 10 "
Baldwin.....	58	10 32 "	10 22 "
Cambon.....	68	-	10 45 "
Grand Crossing.....	74	11 35 A M	11 00 A M
Jacksonville ¹	80	12 00 Noon	
[ARRIVE]			

¹ Daily, except Sunday; ² daily, except Saturday.

This April 1, 1900, J&SW timetable from the March 1900 *Official Guide* shows that the railroad had completed 80 miles of track between Jacksonville and Cadillac, and had scheduled Trains 3 and 4 operating between those points plus Trains 9 and 10 between Grand Crossing and Alachua. The remainder of the line from Cadillac to Newberry was still under construction. —Ken Murdock collection

Then on July 28, 1904, ACL purchased the Jacksonville & Southwestern Railroad. Though built to high standards for a logging line, the J&SW still required upgrading to handle fast passenger trains and heavy freights. The ACL began by reducing three problematic grades, easing a few curves, and laying heavier rail for improved operations. After ACL's purchase, the junction at Haynesworth with the SAL was protected by hand-operated

ATLANTIC, SUWANNEE RIVER & GULF RAILWAY.

JOHN SKELTON WILLIAMS, President, Richmond, Va.
 D. E. MAXWELL, 2d Vice-President and Gen. Manager, Jacksonville, Fla.
 GEO. TOMPKETT, Superintendent, Starke, Fla.
 Other officers same as F. C. & P. R.R.

No. 3	No. 1	Mis	January, 1900.	Mis	No. 2	No. 4
0 20 A M	8 00 P M		[LEAVE] Jacksonville(F. C. & P. R.)		3 50 P M	7 55 A M
2 30 P M	6 45 A M	0	Starke	55	10 56 A M	7 00 P M
3 20 "	7 07 "	7	arr. Sampson Jn	48	10 36 "	8 40 "
3 20 "	7 07 "	7	lve. Sampson Jn	48	10 36 "	8 40 "
3 40 "	7 27 "	13	Atlantic	49	10 16 "	8 20 "
3 45 "	7 33 "	13	Ward City	40	10 06 "	8 10 "
3 50 "	7 38 "	17	Thomasville	38	10 01 "	8 05 "
4 00 "	7 47 "	20	La Crosse	35	9 51 "	8 55 "
4 10 "	7 57 "	23	Hainesworth	32	9 41 "	8 45 "
4 25 "	8 14 "	27	Alachua	28	9 16 "	8 30 "
4 55 P M	8 46 A M	36	Osceola	19	8 56 A M	8 05 P M
		55	Suwannee River	0		
			[ARRIVE]			
			[LEAVE]			

Additional Train—Leaves Starke 4 00 p.m., arriving at Osceola 7 55 p.m. Returning, leaves Osceola 4 06 p.m., arriving at Starke 9 50 p.m.

N.B.—Trains marked * run daily; † Sunday only; ‡ Saturday only.

STANDARD—Central time.

CONNECTIONS.

At Starke—With Florida Central & Peninsular R.R.

At Sampson Junction—With Georgia Southern & Florida Ry.

Above: This ASR&G Railway timetable of January 1900 lists Alachua as a stop and not Burnett's Lake, but it will soon appear on later timetables. The Seaboard Air Line's control of this railroad is very evident because SAL's president, John Skelton Williams, is shown as its president. The ASR&G's construction had reached only 36 miles to Osceola by this time and would not reach Wannee on the Suwannee River until 1902. —Ken Murdock collection

Facing page: This *Official Guide* ACL timetable of April 24, 1949, shows the schedules for mixed train No. 483 that originated in Thomasville, Georgia, changed to No. 484 at Wilcox, then proceeded north to High Springs via Burnett's Lake. At Burnett's Lake, it backed from the J&SW line around on the long connector (north leg of wye) to the Florida Southern route where, after a station stop, the train continued to High Springs. Meanwhile Train 481 left High Springs for Burnett's Lake where it would take the short connector (dog leg), back up on the long connector, pause at the station, then finally take the south leg of the wye to proceed to Newberry and Wilcox. At Wilcox the train would go north as No. 482 to Thomasville. Passengers traveling to or from Wilcox could connect with the St. Petersburg section of the *West Coast Champion* or locals Nos. 39-40 if they wished to continue from or to Jacksonville. These mixed trains followed various other operating patterns at times over the years. —Russell Tedder collection

gates that were set "normally clear" for the ACL. The ACL also finished the J&SW's partially completed four-mile extension from Newberry westward to Anderson in 1904 and continued building westward to Wilcox, then northwest until reaching Perry in 1909. The purpose of extending the line to Perry was to tap into the freight generated by the lucrative lumber industry in Taylor County.

The Florida Central & Peninsular and the ASR&G had been controlled and operated by the Seaboard Air Line Railway from July 1, 1900, by stock ownership. Their line from Buda to Wannee was completed in 1902. The FC&P was fully merged into the SAL on August 15, 1903. On September 2, 1908, the receivers of the SAL were appointed as receivers of the ASR&G, and on September 30, 1909, the ASR&G was sold to the SAL.

The March 1900 *Official Guide* listing for the J&SW shows passenger train departure times for Burnett's Lake, indicating that this was the first railroad to make it a scheduled stop. The ASR&G came next about 1902, but it isn't known if either railroad had facilities there such as depots or boarding platforms. The SF&W never listed a stop at Burnett's Lake, and none would come for this line until several years after it had been sold to the ACL. In the early years of ACL's ownership, passenger trains on the DuPont to Gainesville line continued to stop only at Alachua, and there were two scheduled trains each way. One was daily and the other was daily except Sunday. The J&SW had two scheduled passenger trains each way, daily except Sunday, between Milldale (north of Jacksonville) and Newberry; the ASR&G had two passenger trains each way daily, but

after the SAL took control, passenger train frequency was soon reduced to one train each way daily between Starke and Wannee.

New Routes for the ACL

After acquiring the J&SW, the ACL owned two of the three rail lines crossing at the Burnett's Lake junction. The purchase of the J&SW had opened two new routes for the Coast Line from Jacksonville to Florida's West Coast via Burnett's Lake. At Newberry, a new wye was built to connect the former J&SW to the former SF&W line running from High Springs south through Dunnellon, Inverness, and Croom. This line was known as the West Coast Route, a name that had been carried over from the Plant System. ACL later double-tracked this route for 60 miles below Dunnellon, and Centralized Traffic Control was added to portions in 1961.

At Burnett's Lake, a connecting track was constructed about 1905 from the former J&SW to the former SF&W line from High Springs that ran south through Gainesville, Ocala, Leesburg, and Croom to Trilby. This created a new easterly West Coast Route that ran through more communities. This new High Springs-Ocala-Croom route became known as the Florida Southern Route, since its trackage from Gainesville south to Croom was originally constructed by the Florida Southern Railway. The route was always non-signaled, dark territory, operated by timetable and train orders.

Study of a 1937 aerial photo reveals two connecting tracks, one being much longer and much closer to the lake named Burnett's Lake, which is thought to have been the original connector. At Croom ACL's passenger trains from both routes merged and followed the same track to Trilby, where the St. Petersburg trains turned southwest on Plant's former Sanford & St. Petersburg line. The Coast Line began using these two new routes for all St. Petersburg sections of its West Coast passenger trains except the *Southland*. The *Southland*, which originated in Chicago, reached ACL rails at Albany, Georgia, then came south via Thomasville, Georgia, and the Perry Cutoff to Dunnellon after that route was completed and opened to through passenger service in December 1928 (see *LINES SOUTH*, Fourth Quarter 2004). While the *Southland's* St. Petersburg section took the S&SP route, its Tampa section continued to that city from Trilby via Vitis. Other through ACL passenger trains from the northeast and Midwest en route to Tampa

Table 14.
THOMASVILLE, PERRY AND HIGH SPRINGS.

....	484	483	33	Mls.	April 24, 1949.		32	481	482	.....	.....
....	A M	A M	....	LVE.] (East time.) [ARR.	A M	....	P M	....	....	....	....
....	7 00	*300	0	+... Thomasville....	1 50	....	8 45	....	....	....	....
....	7 20	--	10.0	..... Metcalf.....	--	....	8 25	....	....	....	....
....	7 25	--	12.5	arr.... Fincher...lve.	--	....	8 20	....	....	....	....
....	7 25	--	12.5	lve.... Fincher...arr.	--	....	8 20	....	....	....	....
....	7 40	--	19.0	..... Alma.....	--	....	8 05	....	....	....	....
....	7 50	3 30	23.3	+... Monticello.....	1 10	....	7 55	....	....	....	....
....	8 01	--	27.2	..... Drifton.....	--	....	7 45	....	....	....	....
....	8 20	--	36.7	..... Lamont.....	--	....	7 25	....	....	....	....
....	8 35	--	43.1	..... Eridu.....	--	....	7 10	....	....	....	....
....	8 59	--	54.2	..... Secotan.....	--	....	6 45	....	....	....	....
....	9 15	4 18	59.2	+... Perry.....	12 25	....	6 35	....	....	....	....
....	9 30	--	65.6	..... Pinland.....	--	....	6 20	....	....	....	....
....	9 40	--	70.0	..... Athena.....	--	....	6 10	....	....	....	....
....	9 55	--	76.2	..... Carbur.....	--	....	5 55	....	....	....	....
....	10 15	--	86.1	..... Clara.....	--	....	5 35	....	....	....	....
....	10 30	--	93.2	..... Hines.....	--	....	5 20	....	....	....	....
....	11 35	5 13	103.3	+... Cross City.....	11 30	....	5 00	....	....	....	....
....	11 59	--	112.9	..... Old Town.....	--	....	3 20	....	....	....	....
....	12 15	--	114.6	arr.... Wilcox...lve.	--	....	13 15	....	....	....	....
....	....	P M	114.6	lve.... Wilcox...arr.	....	....	....	P M	....	....	....
....	....	Mixed.	124.0	..... Chiefland.....	....	....	....	Mixed.	....	....	....
....	....	....	137.3	..... Otter Creek.....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
....	....	....	142.9	..... Gulf Hammock....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
....	....	....	151.0	..... Lebanon.....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
....	....	....	157.2	..... Steen.....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
....	P M	....	6 26	arr. + Dunnellon...lve.	*10 15	P M	....	....	....	....	....
....	12 30	....	114.6	lve.... Wilcox...arr.	P M	3 00	....	....	....	....	....
....	12 50	....	122.4	..... Trenton.....	....	2 15	....	....	....	....	....
....	1 10	....	126.6	..... Tyler.....	....	1 55	....	....	....	....	....
....	1 30	....	135.9	+... Newberry.....	....	1 30	....	....	....	....	....
....	2 30	....	143.5	..... Cadillac.....	....	12 50	....	....	....	....	....
....	2 45	....	148.0	+... Alachua.....	....	12 35	....	....	....	....	....
....	2 50	....	149.7	arr.. Burnett's Lake..lve.	....	12 30	....	....	....	....	....
....	3 00	....	149.7	lve.. Burnett's Lake..arr.	....	12 15	....	....	....	....	....
....	3 05	....	151.4	..... East Alachua.....	....	12 05	....	....	....	....	....
....	3 30	....	159.0	arr. + High Springs.lve.	....	11 45	....	....	....	....	....
....	4 15	....	0	lve.. Burnett's Lake..arr.	....	11 30	....	....	....	....	....
....	5 50	....	70.8	+... Jacksonville.....	....	*9 45	....	....	....	....	....
....	P M	....	....	ARRIVE] [LEAVE	....	A M	....	....	....	....	....



Left: The Burnett's Lake depot was a very unusual design that didn't following any of ACL's standard depot designs. It appears to be an attempt to create a wood version of the Spanish-styled stucco structures popular in Florida in the early 1920s. It was very primitive, never having boarding platforms or a paved access road. This circa-1942 photo was taken looking towards High Springs on the Florida Southern route with Gainesville to the photographer's back. The home signal, BX Tower, and the U.S. Highway 441 overpass can be seen in the distance. The long connector or north leg of wye from the Florida Southern Route to the J&SW is on the right. —*F.W. Thomas (BX Tower operator) photo, L.A. Bailey collection*



Above: This 1937 aerial photograph, with north at the top, clearly shows the track layout of Burnett's Lake Junction and the U.S. 441 overpass crossing over diamonds and the south leg of the wye. The water tank and tower are in the shadow of the overpass. Burnett's Lake is in the upper right. The abandoned remains of an earlier connecting track can be seen closer to Burnett's Lake and are thought to be the original connection. The town of Alachua is about a mile to the left of the junction. Although the ACL (SF&W) route runs nearly east-west at Burnett's Lake, the line to High Springs (at left) soon turns toward the northwest, and the line to Gainesville soon curves to the southeast. —*University of Florida aerial photography collection*

Facing page: This 1965 ACL Ocala Division map from an employee timetable shows the former J&SW line from Moncrief, near Jacksonville, to Burnett's Lake where it splits, forming two routes. The line continuing towards Newberry connected with the West Coast Route, and the line continuing to Gainesville or High Springs was the Florida Southern Route. It also shows the line from Waycross to High Springs via DuPont, which was mainly a freight route. At High Springs the track splits, leading to either the West Coast Route or the Florida Southern Route. Most freight trains followed the West Coast Route. The map is technically incorrect in that the line from High Springs actually went from East Alachua directly to Burnett's Lake, and not through Alachua. Alachua was on the J&SW line to Newberry. —*Ken Murdock collection*





This 1934 photo shows the Alachua depot on the line to High Springs. It was later called East Alachua to distinguish it from the other ACL Alachua depot on the Newberry line. The ornate wood trim on the gable end was typical of Plant System depots, indicating that it dated back to that era. —Ken Murdock collection



BX Tower operator F.W. Thomas was facing railroad south toward Gainesville on the Florida Southern Route, standing just south of BX Tower and the water tank, when he took this 1942 photo. The switch in the foreground, the only one controlled by the interlocking plant, is to the short connector (dog-leg), which curves around to the left to the long connector or north leg of the wye. The home signal for northbound Florida Southern trains can be seen just beyond the switch. All distant signals on all routes were fixed in the approach position; only the home signals were controlled by the interlocking plant. —F.W. Thomas photo, L.A. Bailey collection



This is thought to be train No. 39, the Jacksonville–St. Petersburg local, on the long connector (north leg of the wye), moving from the J&SW to the Florida Southern en route to Gainesville probably in the winter season of 1942-43. The photo shows the typical steam-era consist of Train 39 at the time—head-end cars, a coach, a diner, and the through New York–St. Petersburg sleeper. The Burnett's Lake depot is behind the photographer, while BX Tower is out of sight to the photographer's left. —F.W. Thomas photo, L.A. Bailey collection

and Sarasota all went first to Jacksonville, then took the more easterly route from Jacksonville via Palatka, DeLand, Sanford, Orlando, and Lakeland.

Another new route available for the Coast Line was from Waycross via DuPont and Live Oak to High Springs. Here the route divided and trains could continue directly to Newberry and down the West Coast Route, or continue to Burnett's Lake and beyond on the Florida Southern Route. In the early years, the new West Coast Route via DuPont handled several through passenger trains, but later it became primarily a heavy freight route. Local trains from High Springs or Jacksonville via Burnett's Lake could also take the branch at Newberry and continue to Wilcox, Cross City, and Perry.

Interlocking Plant and Depot

In 1908 the ACL installed an interlocking plant at Burnett's Lake in a one-story tower named BX. This was most likely due to the heavy traffic demands, including passenger trains, which quickly developed over these new routes. The wood frame tower was built between the parallel tracks of the SAL (ASR&G) and the ACL (J&SW). While called a tower, it was one in name only, with its floor being elevated barely a foot above the tracks. It is thought that a new long connector track (shorter than the original one) and a short connector track were built at the same time as the tower. Having SAL's tracks on the north side, paralleling the ACL's former J&SW tracks, had prevented construction of a long sweeping connector from the J&SW directly to the High Springs line. Therefore, the solution was to construct the High Springs connector within the new long connector to Gainesville, which was also known as the north leg of the wye. The short connector to High Springs became known as the "dog leg." The date the original long connecting track was removed is unknown, but it was well before 1942 when co-author Warren McFarland started working there.

In 1914 the interlocking plant was remodeled. It is believed that this remodeling work involved adding control of the dog leg switch nearest BX Tower and adding a semaphore signal for the switch. This would have involved installing two additional levers to the interlocking plant.

The ACL, having two depots in Alachua, named the one on the High Springs line East Alachua. A few early timetables listed the

depot on the J&SW line as West Alachua but “West” was later dropped. The east and west references were apparently based on the timetable north direction for the High Springs mainline rather than compass north. Coast Line passenger trains from Jacksonville through Burnett’s Lake that followed the Florida Southern Route would bypass both ACL depots in Alachua, thus a depot was needed at Burnett’s Lake. The junction was first listed in the *Official Guide* as a stop by the ACL about 1905-06 for their trains from Jacksonville en route to St. Petersburg, but it isn’t known if a depot was built at that time.

The depot shown in this article is the only one known by the authors to have been at Burnett’s Lake, and was quite primitive. The depot didn’t have electricity, indoor plumbing, or a boarding platform or paved access road leading to it. It was of wood frame construction and was very different from other ACL stations in architectural style, not following any of ACL’s standard depot designs. It appeared to be an attempt to replicate a wood version of the many old Spanish-styled stucco structures, with flat roofs and parapets, built in the 1920s in Florida, leading the authors to believe that it was probably built in that period.

A water tank for steam locomotives was built within the south leg of the wye, which was the connector from the Florida Southern route from Gainesville to the J&SW to Newberry. The water tank was built with two spouts positioned so that Coast Line trains crossing their diamond on either route could take water. There was also a small, double-ended, two-track yard just south on the depot on the opposite side of the mainline to Gainesville.

High Springs, a Coast Line Town

In 1895 the SF&W selected the small hamlet of High Springs, just 7.6 miles northwest of Alachua, as a division headquarters due to its two routes dividing there. The headquarters included division offices, car building and repair shops, a roundhouse, and a machine shop. Once under Coast Line ownership, ACL moved its district offices to Gainesville and later Ocala (see *LINES SOUTH* Third Quarter 2011, “Memories of ACL’s Ocala District”), but the facility remained a major shop complex for the Coast Line. It continued to expand until the roundhouse had 23 stalls and a well-equipped machine shop for running repairs. The facility also included a large



Above: This photo was taken on the ACL Florida Southern Route looking railroad north toward High Springs about 1942, with BX Tower, the water tank and its two spouts, and Highway 441 in view. Visible in the foreground are the points of the only switch controlled by the interlocking plant, the short connector from the Florida Southern Route. The J&SW line between Jacksonville and Wilcox can be seen crossing in front of BX Tower and the SAL line is crossing beyond BX. —*F.W. Thomas photo, L.A. Bailey collection*

Below: This southbound freight, powered by ACL P-5-B 1731, departed High Springs and is about to pass under the U.S. 441 bridge as it enters Burnett’s Lake junction in 1949. The SAL track to Bell is seen crossing immediately in front of the locomotive. ACL’s J&SW line, which parallels the SAL, is mostly hidden by the wooden structure in the foreground that runs parallel to the track. —*Russell Tedder collection*





Below: Mixed train No. 481, with ACL P-5-A 1508 in charge, is at Newberry, Florida, on December 31, 1950. The train's roundabout route took it each day from High Springs south to Burnett's Lake, then west via Newberry to Wilcox, then back over the same route to High Springs as No. 484. (During the early 1940s, the same train continued to Perry as No. 482, then returned to Wilcox as No. 483.) The train had to run the wye and reverse directions at Burnett's Lake to get from the Florida Southern route to the J&SW line. The train is westbound here after leaving Burnett's Lake, and is now about to cross the West Coast Route (the High Springs-Dunnellon main) on the way to Wilcox. This pair of mixed runs lasted until November 1951, long enough to be headed by GP7s in their final days. —*William J. Husa photo*

Above: ACL Pacific 1663 has paused in front of the Burnett's Lake station with a northbound extra freight in the late 1940s. The train is on the Florida Southern route headed to High Springs. —*William J. Husa photo*





Above: ACL's first E unit, E3 500, leads Train 291, the southbound St. Petersburg section of the *West Coast Champion*, at Burnett's Lake about 1947. The train has just passed under the U.S. 441 bridge on its way from Jacksonville to Newberry, where it will join the West Coast Route via Dunnellon to Trilby, then turn southwest to St. Petersburg. ACL soon moved all passenger service over to the longer but more populous Florida Southern route via Gainesville, Ocala, Leesburg, and Croom. No. 500 was wrecked in 1953 and rebuilt as an E8. —William J. Husa photo

freight yard, and High Springs quickly grew into a Coast Line town.

Passenger Service through Burnett's Lake

In the 1910s the ACL began providing four local, daily passenger trains between Jacksonville and St. Petersburg running on the Florida Southern route through Burnett's Lake, Gainesville, Ocala, and Leesburg. This service was provided by Trains 39-40, which operated on a daytime schedule, and 37-38 at night. This route was 21 miles longer than the West Coast Route, but it served more communities. The St. Petersburg section of the seasonal *Florida Special* also operated over the District but took the faster

West Coast route via Burnett's Lake and Dunnellon. The ACL began operating a St. Petersburg section of the *Champion* in the 1946-47 season, and it also took the faster West Coast Route via Burnett's Lake.

However, by 1949 all passenger trains were rerouted over the longer Florida Southern Route to take advantage of Gainesville's new station located on a bypass on the west side of downtown. Previously, street running had been required for about a mile in the middle of West Main Street in downtown Gainesville. Street running was still required for about the same distance on Osceola Avenue in Ocala. The daytime local, Nos. 39-40, was dropped with the start of a St. Petersburg section of the *Champion*, which was soon renamed

the St. Petersburg section of the *West Coast Champion*, Trains 191-192. This section was split from the Tampa section, Trains 91-92, in Jacksonville. Beginning in December 1957, No. 191 began carrying through cars from the alternating *City of Miami* or *South Wind* from Jacksonville to St. Petersburg. The night local, 37-38, lasted until April 1967.

Other Early History Notes

The Seaboard Air Line's track through Burnett's Lake never developed into a through route but continued as a branch, serving the lumber and agricultural interests along its route. It did provide passenger service, which in later years was provided by mixed trains. SAL's listing in the 1941

Facing page bottom: All of ACL's Jacksonville–St. Petersburg passenger trains passed through Burnett's Lake, and all had either full or flag stops—even the *Florida Special*, the winter-season queen of the ACL fleet. This interesting scene shows a knot of passengers waiting to board the season's last northbound St. Petersburg *Special* on April 26, 1947, as the all-heavyweight, all-Pullman train pulls in behind E6 522. The train is arriving on the J&SW route from Newberry and is curving past the home signal just southwest of BX Tower on its way northeast to Jacksonville; the track in the foreground is the south leg of the wye that led eastward to the Florida Southern route and then turned southeast to Gainesville. Trains through Burnett's Lake on the J&SW route did not pass the depot and passengers therefore had to walk down to this location, covered with white limerock; a white-jacketed Pullman porter appears to be in the door of the third car, ready to step down and help them board. This was the last season a separate St. Petersburg section of the *Florida Special* ran; its St. Petersburg cars were carried in subsequent seasons on the *West Coast Champion*. —William J. Husa photo



Left: The upper view on this page from the ACL & SAL HS 2003 calendar is ACL Train 192, the *West Coast Champion*, led by a pair of purple FP7 diesels. It is passing the Burnett's Lake depot on the long connector track as it leaves the Florida Southern Route and swings onto the J&SW en route to Jacksonville in this afternoon scene from spring of 1956. The upper quadrant semaphore home signals are clearly visible. The signal on the left is for the short connector or "dog leg." The lower scene shows the remainder of No. 192's streamlined consists of ACL and Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac cars, all with matching purple letterboards. The outhouse for the tower and the depot is visible in the lower left. —R.R. Morrison photo



Left: Another page from the 2003 calendar shows ACL E8 532 on the head end of Train 191, the St. Petersburg section of the *West Coast Champion*, which has just passed through Burnett's Lake before making this scheduled stop in Gainesville on the Florida Southern Route in 1953. No. 532 had recently been rebuilt from wrecked E7 532 and is still shiny in its fresh purple paint. ACL's nearly new (1948) Gainesville depot is on a bypass track built on the abandoned right-of-way of the Jacksonville, Gainesville & Gulf Railway, an SAL subsidiary. Prior to the bypass, street running had been required for about a mile on West Main Street through Gainesville's central business district. —R.R. Morrison photo



Left: The St. Petersburg sections of ACL's *West Coast Champions* are meeting and passing on the West Coast Route in dark territory on this siding with hand-thrown switches just south of Leesburg. Meets didn't usually occur at this location but northbound No. 192, on the right, is running about an hour late as it passes southbound No. 191 on the left, circa 1957. Train 192 will pass through Burnett's Lake in about two and a half hours as it makes its way to Jacksonville to join the main (Tampa) section of the *WCC*. The last car on No. 192 is one of ACL's *Beach*-series 6 double bedroom-bar-lounges distinguished by their unusual triple-porthole end doors. —John Rapalje photo, Central Florida Railway Historical Society collection

Official Guide shows one mixed train each way daily except Sunday between Starke and Bell. These mixed trains were the last to run on the Seaboard, and were not discontinued until 1957. The west end of the line from Bell to Wannee was abandoned in the 1930s.

U.S. Highway 441 passed through Burnett's Lake in a circuitous route as it ran from Gainesville to Alachua, possibly due to the arrangement of the tracks it had to cross. Florida's State Road Department built an overpass directly over the rail junction in the 1930s to solve the problem. BX tower and the water tank were almost covered by the overpass. In the early 1970s the highway and overpass were increased to four lanes.

Our plans for Part 2 include Warren McFarland's memories of working at Burnett's Lake plus Amtrak, mergers, abandonments, and present-day operations.



Above: This 1970 photo is the former SAL Alachua depot on the Newberry line, now under SCL ownership. It was just one short block north of the ACL depot on the Newberry line. This wood frame structure had a lengthened, open freight platform, giving the impression that agricultural freight business had been very good in the earlier years. —Ken Murdock collection

Right: This photo was taken of Burnett's Lake depot from the rear platform of a business car in the mid-1950s by John W. Barriger III while making a tour of the ACL. His train was leaving the long connector at Burnett's Lake and had entered the Florida Southern route southbound, en route to Gainesville and beyond. In the foreground is the manually operated switch, still lined for the long connector. The Florida Southern route to High Springs is the tangent track that passes under the U.S. 441 overpass. While the home signal and BX Tower are still in place, the water tank that was on the left side of the track, just before the overpass, had been disassembled and removed. —John W. Barriger III photo, University of Missouri collection

JACKSONVILLE, GAINESVILLE, OCALA AND ST. PETERSBURG					
Read Down			Read Up		
37 Daily	191 Daily	Mls.	TABLE 20		
PM	AM		Eastern Standard Time		
10 25	10 25	0	Lv Jacksonville, Fla.	Ar	6 00
(S)		19	Lv Baldwin	Lv	(S) 5 25
		38	Lv Sepp	Lv	
11 21		45	Lv Reiford	Lv	4 25
11 33		52	Lv Lake Butler	Lv	4 10
(S)		64	Lv Santa Fe	Lv	(S) 3 25
12 02	(S) 11 51	71	Lv Burnett's Lake	Lv	(S) 3 38
(S)		74	Lv Hague	Lv	(S)
(S)		80	Lv Paradise	Lv	(S)
12 40	12 14	85	Lv Gainesville	Lv	3 00
(S)		94	Lv Rochelle	Lv	(S)
(S)		100	Lv Micanopy	Lv	(S)
1 16	(12) 12 44	105	Lv McIntosh	Lv	2 10
(S)		108	Lv Proctor	Lv	(S) 2 40
(S)		111	Lv Reddick	Lv	(S) 1 45
(S)		114	Lv Lowell	Lv	(S) 1 35
2 16	1 14	121	Lv Kendrick	Lv	1 10
(S)		126	Lv Ocala (Union Station)	Lv	2 12
(S)		141	Lv Ocklawaha	Lv	(S) 12 35
(S)		145	Lv East Lake	Lv	(S) 12 28
(S)		147	Lv Weirsdale	Lv	(S) 12 20
(S)		152	Lv Lady Lake	Lv	(S) 11 59
(S)		157	Lv Fruitland Park	Lv	(S) 11 49
(S)		160	Lv Leesburg	Lv	11 40
(S)		165	Lv Okahumpka	Lv	11 15
(S)		174	Lv Center Hill	Lv	(S) 10 58
(S)		179	Lv Webster	Lv	(S) 10 50
(S)		184	Lv St. Catherine	Lv	(S)
(S)		190	Lv Croon	Lv	(S)
4 45	3 06	199	Lv Trilby	Lv	10 15
(S)		204	Lv Blanton	Lv	(S) 12 12
(S)		210	Lv San Antonio	Lv	(S) 11 55
(S)		222	Lv Ehren	Lv	(S)
(S)		232	Lv Odessa	Lv	(S)
(S)		243	Lv Tarpon Springs	Lv	9 15
(S)		248	Lv Palm Harbor (Ozona)	Lv	9 00
6 01	(S) 4 05	253	Lv Dunedin	Lv	(S) 11 17
6 08	(S) 4 20	256	Lv Clearwater	Lv	8 40
6 20	(S) 4 30	260	Lv Largo	Lv	8 30
6 42	(S) 4 45	265	Lv Cross Bayou	Lv	(S) 11 04
(S)		268	Lv Pinellas Park	Lv	8 20
(S)		269	Lv Lellman	Lv	7 59
(S)		274	Ar St. Petersburg, Fla.	Lv	(S) 10 43
7 30	5 15				(S) 7 40
AM	PM				(S) 10 30
					PM
					AM

See Page 12 for Reference Notes

Above: This 1963 ACL timetable shows the passenger trains scheduled over the Florida Southern route from Jacksonville to St. Petersburg. Trains 37 and 38 were the daily, nighttime locals and Trains 191 and 192 were the St. Petersburg section of the *West Coast Champion*. —Ken Murdock collection





**Riding Seaboard's
Portsmouth Line**



by Robert
Wayne Johnson

We've imagined exploring all of the Seaboard Air Line's major lines as they were in 1965 prior to the merger with Atlantic Coast Line, but there is one significant line we still haven't seen. So to complete our coverage we'll explore the Portsmouth Sub-division between Portsmouth, Virginia, and Norlina, North Carolina.

We'll begin our journey in Raleigh, North Carolina, by boarding train No. 18, the *Tidewater*, to Portsmouth. The train departs Raleigh at the inauspicious hour of 5:00AM. It's too early for sightseeing but the first hour of the trip is over the mainline to Norlina, which we've already explored, so perhaps we'll catch up on a little sleep. The train's consist includes a streamlined coach and sleeper from Atlanta to Portsmouth, a streamlined coach and sleeper from Jacksonville, and two heavyweights, a diner and a baggage-Railway Post Office. The coaches and sleepers from Atlanta were handled to Raleigh by the *Silver Comet*. The *Comet* picked up the Jacksonville cars at Hamlet, North Carolina. Pulling No. 18 is one of Seaboard's ubiquitous EMD E7s.

We reach Norlina's rambling wooden depot at 6:10. Originally called Ridgeway Junction, Norlina is the junction of the Portsmouth line with the line to Richmond. The Norlina yard was once a busy facility, the terminus of trains from Portsmouth, but the trains now terminate in Raleigh and the yard now mostly handles just local traffic.

At dusk southbound freight No. 85 (at left, Portsmouth to Raleigh) heads into the Raleigh yard, as a northbound extra waits for clearance. The evocative scene was recorded in August 1962. —J. Parker Lamb photo, Robert Wayne Johnson collection



Seaboard's Original Mainline

Stretching 115 miles, the Portsmouth Sub was part of Seaboard's original mainline to Atlanta. However, it was eclipsed by the Richmond line when it was completed in 1900. The sub now sees only one through passenger and one through freight train in each direction daily, a small fraction of the traffic over the line to Richmond. The through freights are No. 85 southbound, which departs Portsmouth about 5:00 each morning, and No. 82 northbound, called the *Courier*, which arrives in the early evening. The southbound passenger train, No. 17, departs Portsmouth at 5:00PM. Part of Seaboard's Virginia Division, the Portsmouth Sub is not signaled and trains are operated by timetable and train orders. Railroaders call the line the "long barrel" or "dark country." The prevailing speed limit for passenger trains is 59 m.p.h. Freights are generally restricted to 40 or 45. The first 36 miles of the Portsmouth line, from Norlina to Weldon, North Carolina, was completed in 1840 by the Raleigh & Gaston Railroad, the same road that built the line from Raleigh to Norlina.

After a brief stop, our train departs Norlina and we head to the diner for breakfast. A couple of miles down the road we pass Warren Plains, the junction with the tiny Warrenton Railroad (see *LINES SOUTH*, Third Quarter 2002). It stretches a grand total of 2.775 miles south to the town of Warrenton. When it was being built, the R&G had originally intended to go through the town but the local citizens would have none of it. After a meeting they supposedly grabbed their rifles and chased the railroad's surveyors away. The R&G thus bypassed Warrenton three miles to the north. But the townsfolk eventually had a change of heart and decided the town needed to be connected to the rest of the world; accordingly, the shortline was completed in 1884. Seventy-five percent owned by the town of Warrenton, the line has long been operated on an irregular basis for freight service only. The road's only motive power is a tiny 300 h.p. Whitcomb switcher. In steam days it operated a diminutive Baldwin 2-4-2 that looked like a slightly larger version of something a 10-year-old would find under the tree on Christmas morning.

Major Customers at Roanoke Rapids

No. 18 stops at Macon, North Carolina, and then Littleton. We reach Summit and then descend down the steepest hill on the Portsmouth line, three miles of 1.2 percent grade. Because of this ruling grade a southbound GP7 diesel is limited to only 1,700 tons from Weldon to Norlina, whereas it's rated for 2,600 tons northbound. We next stop at Roanoke Rapids, 32 miles from Norlina, on time at 6:48. The town, located by the first inland rapids on the Roanoke River, has long contained a number of textile mills. It is also the location of a big paper mill, owned by the Halifax Paper Co., that's a major customer for Seaboard. Receiving as many as 100 pulpwood cars a day, the mill is served exclusively by SAL, the sole railroad in Roanoke Rapids. Seaboard stations a switcher in Roanoke Rapids, and local freights to Norlina and Lewiston, North Carolina, operate out of the town.

Just south of Roanoke Rapids one of the worst accidents in Seaboard history occurred

Text continued on page 23

Facing page: The northbound *Tidewater*, led by E7 3030, meets southbound freight No. 85 behind GP7 1808 at Boykins, Virginia, on September 26, 1964. No. 3030 was standard power on the *Tidewater* for many years. —Harvey George photo

Right: Passenger train No. 17, the southbound *Tidewater*, has just arrived in Raleigh in October 1962. The train was the Portsmouth-Raleigh connection for the *Silver Comet*. Power was often an E7, but E8 3055 does the honors tonight. —J. Parker Lamb photo, Robert Wayne Johnson collection

Below: Three GP9s, led by No. 1912, are rolling No. 82 at Manson, North Carolina, in January 1965. The northbound freight will turn northeast at Norlina and finish its run to Portsmouth on the Portsmouth Sub-division. —Curt Tillotson Jr. photo, Robert Wayne Johnson collection





GP9 1968 and three more geeps are between Middleburg and Greystone with southbound No. 85 from Portsmouth. The four units are pulling 35 cars on this summer day in August 1965. —Curt Tillotson Jr. photo, Robert Wayne Johnson collection



Boykins, Virginia, was one of wood depots along the route between Norlina and Portsmouth. This photo shows the station as it appeared in January 1975, when it was still being used as an active train order office—a staple of “dark” territory. —Tom Sink photo, Frank E. Ardrey Jr. collection

Facing page above: Seaboard’s Virginia Division employee timetable of October 31, 1965, shows the four scheduled trains on the Portsmouth Sub-division: the *Tidewater*, listed here as “Passenger, Mail and Express” Nos. 17-18, plus freights 82 (labeled the *Courier*) and 85. —Larry Goolsby collection

Facing page below: The southbound *Tidewater*, Train 17, is ready to leave the Portsmouth station on a January 1964 evening. On the front of the usual single E7 is GP9 1961, an example of the extra power that was added at times to transfer engines or to help haul autorack cars that were sometimes coupled to the rear of the train. —Robert Wayne Johnson photo

SOUTHWARD

PORTSMOUTH SUB-DIVISION

NORTHWARD

SECOND CLASS		FIRST CLASS		Station Numbers	Distance from Portsmouth	TIME TABLE No. 7 October 31, 1965		CAPACITY TRACKS		FIRST CLASS		SECOND CLASS	
85		17				Sliding	Outer	18		82			
Through Freight Daily A. M.		Passenger Mail and Express Daily P. M.						Passenger Mail and Express Daily A. M.		The Courier Daily P. M.			
STATIONS													
		4.15	A	0	0.0	LV	PORTSMOUTH	AR		Yard	10.00		
6.00		4.21	A	2	1.7		SHOPS	Y O		Yard	9.33		3.40
6.10		4.29	A	8	7.5		BOWERS	X Belt Line	57	7	9.25		3.25
6.30		4.43	A	18	17.5		SUFFOLK	X N&W	42	15	9.10		3.10
6.37		4.47	A	21	20.8		KILBY		100	46	9.04		3.05
6.50		4.58	A	31	31.5		CARRSVILLE		45	8	8.53		2.50
7.00		5.08	A	37	37.1		FRANKLIN		38	Yard	8.45		2.40
7.08		5.15	A	44	43.7		HAND		87	10	8.37		2.15
7.37		5.32	A	54	54.1		BOYKINS	Y	31	90	8.25		2.00
7.45		5.36	A	57	57.2		BRANCHVILLE		97	19	8.18		1.55
8.05 ¹⁵		5.52	A	69	69.2		SEABOARD		84	32	8.05 ⁵⁵		1.40
8.15		6.00	A	76	76.2		GARYSBURG		93	10	7.53		1.30
8.20		6.08	A	79	78.8		WELDON			Yard	7.50		1.25
8.40		6.19	A	83	82.7		ROANOKE RAPIDS	Y		Yard	7.34		1.15
8.45		6.22	A	85	84.7		BOLLING		119		7.32		12.42
9.00		6.31	A	93	92.7		SUMMIT		82	6	7.22		12.32
9.10		6.37	A	98	98.3		LITTLETON		40	77	7.15		12.25
9.25		6.52	A	109	109.0		MACON		99	20	7.03		12.10
9.40		7.04	A	115	115.3	AR	NORLINA	Y LV	159	34	6.55		12.01
A. M. Daily 85		P. M. Daily 17									A. M. Daily 18		P. M. Daily 82





Left: Seaboard NW2 1407, a 1942 product from EMD, is switching at the large Portsmouth yard and shop complex. The huge back shop building is in the left background; it was considered a state-of-the-art steam locomotive repair facility when built in 1916. —Robert Wayne Johnson photo

Below: Seaboard once had this extensive warehouse complex at its Portsmouth waterfront terminal, along the west bank of the Elizabeth River. A number of the railroad's lighters (covered barges) are visible in front of and between the warehouses; they were used to transfer freight to the railroad's Norfolk freight station. —SAL photo, Robert Wayne Johnson collection



in 1942 when two freight trains staged a “corn field meet,” a head-on collision, due to a dispatching error. The damage was over three-quarters of a million dollars, a lot of money at the time (see *LINES SOUTH*, Fourth Quarter 2010). That mishap and a similar disaster involving passenger trains near West Palm Beach, Florida, hastened the railroad’s adoption of centralized traffic control over most of its major lines. But the Portsmouth Sub-division has remained “dark.”

Four miles beyond Roanoke Rapids we stop at Weldon, where Coast Line’s elevated north-south mainline crosses over Seaboard. SAL and ACL share the passenger station, which is equipped with an elevator for Coast Line passengers. The Roanoke Rapids switcher runs over to Weldon to pick up ACL interchange traffic for the mill

in the “Rapids.” The line beyond Weldon was originally built by the Portsmouth & Roanoke Railroad between 1833 and 1837. Unfortunately the pioneer line was a financial failure, and much of its track was taken up in 1845. But a new company, the Seaboard & Roanoke Railroad, was formed and the line reconstructed in 1850. The S&R fared better than its predecessor, and it eventually acquired control of the Raleigh & Gaston as well as other lines to form a system reaching from Portsmouth to Atlanta, informally called the “Seaboard Air Line.”

Seaboard was thus an “air line” long before the Wright brothers’ first flight, not because it owned any airplanes, but because it was supposedly a direct air line route. Accurately or not, a number of Victorian railroads styled themselves as “airlines.”

Seaboard is, however, the last railroad to be so named. It was long rumored that Seaboard Air Line’s stock rallied after Charles Lindbergh made his historic solo flight from New York to Paris in 1927. But it’s not true; the price of the stock barely budged.

Over the Rivers into Virginia

As we leave Weldon we cross the Roanoke River, the widest stream on the line. We pass Garysburg and stop briefly at the town of Seaboard, North Carolina. We cross the Meherrin River and enter Virginia. Waiting for us in the passing track at Branchville, Virginia, is freight No. 85. The long train is pulled by the usual lash-up of EMD hood units. Almost all Seaboard freight trains on the Virginia Division are powered by General Motors diesels; SAL’s large fleet



of Alco units is generally assigned to the southern end of the system in Florida and South Georgia.

After the meet we next stop at Boykins. Boykins is the junction with the 35-mile Lewiston branch that runs south to Lewiston, North Carolina. The Lewiston branch is served by a local freight that follows our train out of Roanoke Rapids each morning. The local swaps cars with the Franklin local at Boykins, works the branchline, and returns home in the early evening after the southbound *Tidewater*. Unlike most Virginia Division freights, the Lewiston local is normally powered by Alco RSC-3 units equipped with six-wheel A-1-A trucks for light axle loading.

We next pass the flag stop of Hand, Virginia, without pause. Presumably the station was named for the schooner *Hand*, which delivered the Portsmouth & Roanoke's first new steam locomotive from Philadelphia in 1834. We cross the Nottoway River and stop in Franklin. Franklin is the site of the Union Camp Corporation's big paper mill. The town is served by two other railroads: Norfolk, Franklin & Danville, a Norfolk & Western subsidiary which extends from Portsmouth to Danville, Virginia, and Atlantic Coast Line, which has a branch to Franklin (formerly the Franklin & Carolina shortline, which ACL bought in 1958) off its Rocky Mount-Portsmouth line. SAL and NF&D reach the Union Camp mill over a joint track. Seaboard doesn't interchange traffic with Coast Line at Franklin.

The Peanut Capital and into Tidewater

We cross the Blackwater River as we leave Franklin. From here on the coastal plain, the line is relatively flat with few curves. No.18 arrives at our penultimate stop, Suffolk, 98 miles from Norlina. Dubbed the "Peanut Capital of the World," Suffolk is the home of Planters Peanuts. Several railroad lines in addition to Seaboard pass through Suffolk on their way to and from the Norfolk-Portsmouth area: N&W, ACL, NF&D, and the former Virginian (now part of N&W). SAL was, however, the first railroad to reach Suffolk. Seaboard's Suffolk station, built in 1885 and remodeled in 1920, features a distinctive tower presumably built to afford the operator a better view of oncoming trains. Virginian shared the station with Seaboard until it discontinued passenger service in 1956.



The Portsmouth shops were a major SAL repair facility, and in later years were the primary passenger car shops for the system. This circa-1950 scene shows a lightweight coach in the shops for repairs; note the temporary shop trucks being used and the car's skirting raised for access to the underbody. —SAL photo, Robert Wayne Johnson collection

Leaving Suffolk, Seaboard's line is paralleled by the adjacent ex-Virginian line for several miles. We skirt the fringes of the forebodingly named Great Dismal Swamp and cross the former Virginian mainline at grade at Algren. The unmanned crossing is protected by an interlocking. Nearing our destination, we cross the Norfolk & Portsmouth Belt Line, pass the Seaboard shops and arrive at the Portsmouth station, on time at 9:15.

Portsmouth is just across the Elizabeth River from Norfolk. This area of Virginia, located as it is near the mouth of Chesapeake Bay, is called the "Tidewater." It includes several major seaports. Norfolk is the site of the U.S. Navy's biggest base on the East Coast and the home of the Atlantic fleet. Huge amounts of Appalachian coal are exported from the Tidewater. Norfolk & Western operates big coal piers in Norfolk, and Chesapeake & Ohio has similar facilities across the James River in Newport News. The Virginian also operated coal piers at Sewells Point in Norfolk before it was absorbed by N&W in 1959. Seaboard

itself long owned a large section of the Portsmouth waterfront along the west side of the Elizabeth River and operated its own general purpose piers; however, SAL's piers were destroyed by a fire in 1958. The railroad even possessed its own small fleet: a tugboat unimaginatively named *Seaboard* plus several covered lighters (barges). The tug and lighters were used to transport cargo across the river to Seaboard's freight station in Norfolk.

Altogether there are seven trunk line railroads in the area. N&W and the Norfolk Southern Railway reach the city of Norfolk, as did Virginian prior to the N&W merger. Seaboard, ACL, and NF&D all terminate in Portsmouth, and Southern has trackage rights over ACL (from Selma, North Carolina) into the city. Southern long leased the line that is now operated as the NF&D, but surrendered the lease in 1949, preferring to reach Portsmouth over ACL tracks. Two major roads, C&O and Pennsylvania, operate car ferries to Norfolk: C&O from its terminal in Newport News and Pennsy from Cape Charles, Virginia, on the Delmarva



A U.S. Mail truck is transferring some sacks of mail to the baggage-RPO as a Christmas 1967 version of the *Tidewater* waits to leave southbound at the Portsmouth office building and passenger station. Leading the three-car train is SCL E7 551, formerly Seaboard 3024, with a through coach each for Atlanta and Jacksonville behind the head-end car. The short consist and gloomy light foretell the *Tidewater's* upcoming demise in February 1968; the train was one of the first to be discontinued after the SCL merger. Seaboard began seeking permission to end the train in 1966 because of "light patronage." —*Tal Carey photo, William F. Todd collection*

Peninsula. The Class 1 carriers are all connected by the Norfolk & Portsmouth Belt Line, a terminal line jointly owned by the major railroads, which loops in a semicircle around the towns in its corporate title. All of SAL's interchange with the other big roads in the *Tidewater* area is via its connection with the Belt Line.

Seaboard's Original Home Base

Seaboard originated in Portsmouth and its general offices were long located here. The railroad's Portsmouth station occupies the first floor of the building that housed the company's offices. Located at the corner of High and Water Streets, near the Elizabeth River, the five-story building was built in 1894 and enlarged in 1915. Most of the

company's offices were moved to a building in Norfolk during the late 1920s but some remained in Portsmouth. The last to occupy the Portsmouth building was the accounting department, which left in 1958 when SAL relocated its headquarters to Richmond.

Portsmouth is also the location of a major SAL shop. The Portsmouth shops were the railroad's primary steam locomotive repair facility until 1936, when classified locomotive work was moved to Jacksonville. When it was built in 1916, the back shop was one of the most modern in the country. The 332' x 178' steel and concrete building had 15 tracks in the erecting bays and a 250-ton overhead crane. Machine and blacksmith shops were contained in separate bays in the same structure. After 1936 the shops remained a major freight and passenger

car repair facility and did a lot of special work such as converting hundreds of gondolas into pulpwood racks. The shops still do freight car work and continue to be Seaboard's main passenger car shop as well as its primary scrap yard.

In 1945, when the assets of the bankrupt SAL Railway Company were officially sold to the bondholders to form the new, reorganized SAL Railroad Company, the transaction took place on the platform of the Portsmouth station. While still significant, Portsmouth is obviously not as important to Seaboard now as it was when the railroad's headquarters and main locomotive shops were located here. Nonetheless the Portsmouth Sub-division continues to be a major link connecting Tidewater Virginia to the Southeast.

Riding the Atlantic Coast Line

Part 4 — Secondary Lines in the Carolinas

by Larry Goolsby

Our previous round of travel over ACL's passenger routes in the summer of 1966 found us getting off the *South Wind* at Waycross, Georgia, after riding the lines to Albany, Georgia, and Montgomery, Alabama. We're ultimately heading back to our point of origin, Richmond, but want to ride two secondary routes in the Carolinas that still host passenger trains. This will complete our coverage of ACL passenger service offered just a year before the Seaboard Coast Line merger will become reality.

Starting out from the Oklahoma Avenue passenger shelter where the *Wind* dropped us off west of downtown Waycross, we walk about a mile to ACL's main station on Plant Avenue. This prime trainwatching spot is where most trains coming into Waycross converge, although freights operating between the Waycross freight yard and either Albany or Manchester use a cutoff west of town. The Plant Avenue location is seldom without a train for very long.

At the station, we confirm schedules and reservations for two side trips on the way back to Richmond that will take us away from the north-south main first from Florence, South Carolina, to Augusta, Georgia, and the next day from Rocky Mount to Wilmington, North Carolina. Trains on both routes are timed for passengers coming south to those two destinations, not for railfans going north who simply want to experience the rides. As a result, we'll be doing a good bit more coach riding in the wee hours of the night, but as with the *South Wind* trip, we plan to catch up on sleep in a real Pullman bed during the final segment back to Richmond.

We'll leave Waycross northbound on the *West Coast Champion*, which doesn't depart until 7:15PM. We'll go north as far as Florence, where we'll have a middle-of-the-night layover, then take a westbound

connecting train to Augusta just before dawn. Meanwhile, the hours at Waycross certainly don't go to waste as we watch and photograph the frequent trains that pass through; in fact the southbound *WCC* arrives just as we walk up to the station, and we'll also see the day's north- and southbound *Seminoles*. We also have time to sample Waycross's local cuisine at lunch and supper, the latter at the city's famous Green Frog restaurant just a couple of blocks from the station.

Northbound on the *Champion*

As we board our streamlined coach that evening, we settle into our comfortable window seat for about an hour of daylight viewing on the line up to Jesup, where we join the "Jesup Short Line" that comes north directly from Jacksonville and Folkston. The Jesup-Waycross line is single track but has Centralized Traffic Control and ACL's signature Union Switch & Signal target signals at the ends of each passing siding. Although Jesup is just a flag stop for our



SCL Train 51 still looks much like its ACL predecessor as it passes the Seaboard interlocking tower at Denmark, South Carolina, at 8:35AM on a March 1968 morning. By now, however, the Florence-Augusta run was only a connection for the *Champion* since the *Palmetto* had been discontinued on December 30, 1967. The ACL also crossed the Southern at Denmark. —A.M. Langley photo



ACL E6 506 has arrived at Augusta Union Station with No. 51, the westbound *Palmetto*, on an August 1967 morning. Little has changed so far in the still-young SCL merger, so this scene can easily represent how ACL trains looked here. The ornate structure at left is the Georgia Railroad's general office building; a portion of the equally ornate AUS headhouse is just visible at the right of the huge train shed. —*Bob's Photo collection*

train, we do have a few customers and pause there briefly. Now running on ACL's north-south Richmond-Jacksonville main again (see Third Quarter 2016 *LINES SOUTH*), we rapidly sprint the 58 miles to Savannah on double track. At 8:45, just as darkness descends, we stop at the joint ACL-SAL Savannah station.

We're shortly off to the races again on the main to Charleston, where we stop for about five minutes, and are then quickly moving again at our track speed of 90 m.p.h. We do our best to grab a few winks, but soon are pulling into Florence just before midnight. After getting off the train, it's tempting to do some more dozing on the station's benches – and we do a little of that – but we also catch several trains, including the southbound *East Coast Champion* about 3:00 and *West Coast Champion* close behind at 3:30. The outside scene is also busy with yard switching and with locomotives moving in the shop area

directly across the mainline from the station.

Finally at 4:40, the southbound Washington-to-Augusta *Palmetto* rolls in behind two E7s, a string of head-end cars, and several heavyweight coaches. One of them, from ACL's group of semi-streamlined rebuilds whose interiors are essentially equivalent to lightweight cars, is the through Washington-Augusta coach. The station switcher adds the through New York-Augusta Pullman, one of ACL's many 10-6 *County* cars, that was dropped off by the southbound *WCC* an hour before. The engine also adds one of ACL's heavyweight café-lounge cars, providing a light breakfast going to Augusta and sandwiches and similar fare on the way back to Florence. Appropriately enough, the car's name is *Augusta*; ACL also owns a similar car, *Goldsboro*, both of which ACL converted from second-hand Pullmans in 1944.

We depart Florence on time at 5:00AM,

now renumbered from Train 77 to 51 but still labeled the *Palmetto*. We leave going straight west on the line toward Sumter and Orangeburg, and get a bit more sleep on this stretch of dark territory with a passenger train speed limit of 59 m.p.h. We're roused at 6:00 by the stop at Sumter, and since there's now enough light to see our surroundings, we first notice the passenger station as well as a huge, ancient-looking brick warehouse and freight station. The small yard here is busy with a respectable amount of agriculture-related freight, and a pair of GP7s is laying over from working a local that came in on the ACL branch from Columbia, South Carolina. This branch connects at Columbia with ACL subsidiary Columbia, Newberry & Laurens, and gets traffic destined for Florence coming from that line as well as two former Charleston & Western Carolina lines beyond the CN&L that reach Greenville and Spartanburg. A

second branch, coming off the mainline at Lanes (about halfway between Florence and Charleston), also connects here.

As we resume traveling west, we pause at the full stops of Orangeburg, Denmark, and Barnwell plus several flag stops along the way. Among the interesting sights are the junction with the Creston Branch at Creston and crossings at Denmark of both the Seaboard (its passenger mainline between Columbia and Savannah) and the Southern (its historic route between Charleston and Augusta, which dates from 1833).

Radioactive Railroading

About eight miles past Barnwell, we come to a clearing with a small yard and a spur that continues straight west while the mainline we're on angles toward the southwest. This is Donora, and the spur leads into the sprawling Savannah River Plant. The SRP was built beginning in 1950 by the Atomic Energy Commission to produce plutonium and tritium for use in nuclear weapons. The E.I. DuPont de Nemours Company was contracted to operate the plant, and DuPont crews switch the plant's trackage. DuPont personnel also contribute to those riding the *Palmetto* to Augusta, especially its sleeping car patrons.

Covering more than 300 square miles, the SRP encompassed several small towns that were taken by eminent domain and whose residents were helped to move elsewhere. One was Dunbarton, which is not far up the spur and is where another yard is located. However, the town is no more; most of its residents moved to Snelling, near Barnwell. The spur to Dunbarton is the original ACL mainline; the current mainline on which we're now riding was built to the southwest of the plant area when the SRP was opened.

When the Savannah River Plan was being built, the ACL and its long-time subsidiary Charleston & Western Carolina stayed busy hauling construction material into the site; both railroads acquired groups of second-hand gondolas and hoppers for the effort. The plant also resulted in several other groups of rolling stock being added to the ACL roster, including hundreds of new covered hoppers and nine heavy-duty depressed-center flats for transporting large electrical transformers. By far the most interesting addition though is baggage-combine 666, whose interior was rebuilt to carry lead-lined containers of radioactive material between the SRP and the AEC's Rocky Flats, Colo., nuclear weapons

Read Down		Mls.		TABLE 12		Read Up	
111 375 375 55 3 Daily	173 77 77 51 1 Daily			PRR Trains RF&PRR Trains ACLRR Trains ACLRR Trains GaRR Trains		126 78 78 50 2 Daily	160 376 376 54 4 Daily
Eastern Standard Time						AM	AM
AM	PM			Lv New York (Penna. Sta.) .PRR	Ar	11 20	12 35
7 00	2 00	0		Lv Newark.....	Ar	11 05	12 11
7 16	2 16	10		Lv Trenton.....	Ar	10 20	11 22
7 59	3 00	58		Lv North Philadelphia.....	Ar	9 52	10 49
8 26	3 29	86		Lv Philadelphia, 30th St.....	Ar	9 43	10 32
8 35	3 39	91		Lv Wilmington.....	Ar	9 14	10 03
9 07	4 08	118		Lv Baltimore.....	Ar	8 10	9 00
10 08	5 09	187		Ar Washington.....	Lv	7 30	8 15
10 50	5 50	227		Lv Washington.....RF&P	Ar	6 50	7 15
11 15	6 15	227		Ar Richmond.....	Lv	4 35	5 00
1 35	8 40	341		Lv Richmond, Va.....ACL	Ar	4 08	4 15
1 55	9 05	341		Lv Petersburg.....	Lv	3 25	3 35
2 33	9 59	368		Lv Emporia, Va.....	Lv	.....	2 21
.....	10 40	409		Lv Weldon, N. C.....	Lv	2 22	1 50
[2] 3 30	11 05	429		Ar Rocky Mount.....	Lv	1 45	12 55
4 15	12 30	466		Lv Rocky Mount.....	Ar	1 45	12 35
4 20	12 30	466		Lv Wilson.....	Lv	12 45	12 01
4 40	1 00	481		Lv Selma.....	Lv	12 12	11 15
[2] 5 06	1 35	506		Lv Benson.....	Lv	[9] 11 50	10 40
.....	[9] 1 50	525		Lv Dunn.....	Lv	11 45	10 30
.....	2 05	531		Lv Fayetteville.....	Lv	11 20	9 55
6 05	2 55	555		Lv Pembroke, N. C.....	Lv	[2] 10 35	8 58
.....	[2] 3 25	587		Lv Dillon, S. C.....	Lv	10 10	8 20
7 04	3 50	607		Lv Latta.....	Lv	[2] 9 58	8 07
.....	.....	614		Ar Florence.....	Lv	9 30	7 30
8 05	4 40	638		Lv Florence.....	Ar	9 10	7 00
8 45	5 00	638		Lv Timmonsville.....	Lv	8 48	6 35
9 06	5 12	649		Lv Lynchburg.....	Lv	.....	6 20
9 18	.....	659		Lv Mayesville.....	Lv	[2] 8 27	6 10
[2] 9 27	.....	668		Ar Sumter {Shaw Air	Lv	8 17	6 00
9 40	6 00	677		Lv Sumter {Force Base}	Ar	8 17	6 00
9 50	6 00	677		Lv Pinewood.....	Lv	[2] 7 46	5 04
[2] 10 06	[2] 6 25	691		Lv Remini.....	Lv	.....	[2] 4 56
[2] 10 13	.....	697		Lv Cameron.....	Lv	[2] 7 17	[2] 4 31
[2] 10 35	6 55	711		Lv Orangeburg.....	Lv	7 05	4 18
11 01	7 25	721		Lv Cope.....	Lv	[2] 6 41	[2] 3 48
[2] 11 18	[2] 7 40	732		Lv Denmark.....	Lv	6 28	3 33
11 33	7 55	741		Lv Hilda.....	Lv	.....	[2] 3 25
[2] 11 42	.....	749		Lv Barnwell.....	Lv	6 08	3 14
11 56	8 15	756		Lv Jackson, S. C.....	Lv	5 30	[2] 2 30
[2] 12 37	8 59	789		Ar Augusta, Ga.....	Lv	5 00	2 00
1 20	9 45	805		Lv Augusta.....GaRR	Ar	4 30	1 30
2 20	11 30	805		Ar Atlanta (Union Sta.)....	Lv	11 20	8 45
AM	PM					AM	PM

TRAINS 173-77-51-1 and TRAINS 2-50-78-126—For equipment see PALMETTO, Table 5.

TRAINS 111-375-55-3 and TRAINS 4-54-376-160—For equipment see EVERGLADES, Table 4.

facility. No. 666's passenger compartment was converted to a dormitory for armed guards. The car was typically routed from the plant to Augusta, then to Atlanta via the Georgia Railroad; Louisville & Nashville to Chicago; and Chicago, Burlington & Quincy to Colorado.

As we continue to skirt the south side of the SRP site, we shortly reach Robbins (another town vacated for the SRP), where we join the former C&WC mainline between Yemassee, South Carolina, and Augusta; ACL merged the C&WC at the end of 1959.

ACL had long used C&WC trackage rights north of Robbins to finish its trains' runs from Florence to Augusta. After the merger, ACL classified the Robbins-Augusta portion as a continuation of its Florence-Robbins secondary mainline, and considered the Robbins-Yemassee segment a branch (along with the southernmost part of the ex-C&WC, Yemassee-Port Royal).

At the Robbins junction, we turn to the northwest along the ex-C&WC toward Augusta and are now running next to the western boundary of the SRP. We pass the

Read Down		NEW YORK, WASHINGTON, RICHMOND AND WILMINGTON		Read Up	
173 77-49 Daily	Miles	TABLE II PRR Trains RF&PRR Trains ACLRR Trains		126 78 42-78 Daily	
PM		Eastern Standard Time		AM	
2 00	0	Lv New York (Penna. Sta.)	PRR Ar	11 20	
2 16	10	Lv Newark	" Ar	11 05	
3 00	58	Lv Trenton	" Ar	10 20	
3 29	86	Lv North Philadelphia	" Ar	9 52	
3 39	91	Lv Philadelphia, 30th St.	" Ar	9 43	
4 08	118	Lv Wilmington	" Ar	9 14	
5 09	187	Lv Baltimore	" Ar	8 10	
5 50	227	Ar Washington	" Lv	7 30	
6 15	227	Lv Washington	RF&P Ar	6 50	
8 40	341	Ar Richmond, Va.	" Lv	4 35	
9 05	341	Lv Richmond, Va.	ACL Ar	4 05	
9 59	368	Lv Petersburg	" Ar	3 25	
10 40	409	Lv Emporia, Va.	" Ar		
11 05	429	Lv Weldon, N. C.	" Ar	2 22	
12 30	466	Ar Rocky Mount	" Lv	1 45	
2 45	466	Lv Rocky Mount	" Ar	11 25	
[2] 3 02	475	Lv Elm City	" Lv	[2] 10 58	
3 21	481	Lv Wilson	" Lv	10 50	
3 36	487	Lv Black Creek	" Lv	[2] 10 30	
3 47	494	Lv Fremont	" Lv	10 18	
3 54	497	Lv Pikeville	" Lv	10 12	
4 31	505	Ar Goldsboro	" Lv	10 00	
4 59	519	Lv Mount Olive	" Lv	9 19	
[2] 5 05	523	Lv Calypso	" Lv	[2] 9 13	
5 10	526	Lv Faison	" Lv	9 08	
5 35	534	Lv Warsaw	" Lv	8 55	
5 47	542	Lv Magnolia	" Lv	8 31	
5 56	547	Lv Rose Hill	" Lv	8 24	
[2] 6 03	551	Lv Teachey	" Lv	[2] 8 16	
6 10	553	Lv Wallace	" Lv	8 12	
6 15	556	Lv Willard	" Lv	[2] 8 05	
[2] 6 21	560	Lv Watha	" Lv	[2] 8 00	
6 35	567	Lv Burgaw	" Lv	7 51	
6 50	575	Lv Rocky Point	" Lv	[2] 7 40	
6 59	580	Lv Castle Hayne	" Lv	7 30	
7 30	589	Ar Wilmington, N. C.	" Lv	7 15	
AM				PM	

TRAINS 173-77-49 and TRAINS 42-78-126—For equipment see PALMETTO, Table 5.

These pages: These excerpts from ACL's June 17, 1966, public timetable show schedules for Trains 50-51 between Florence and Augusta and Trains 42-49 between Rocky Mount and Wilmington. Employee timetable maps for these lines appeared in the Third Quarter 2016 issue of *LINES SOUTH*. —Larry Goolsby collection

site of another ghost town, Ellenton, just north of the border between Aiken and Barnwell counties. Other than a passing siding there's little to see here now, or anywhere else along this stretch, beyond woods and the occasional dirt road crossing. Most of those living in Ellenton moved to the new town of New Ellenton, about eight miles north of the town's original location.

Trains at Augusta

Fourteen miles past Robbins, we reach Jackson just before 9:00, our final stop before Augusta. Not long after, we near Augusta and cross the Savannah River into Georgia via a long bridge that includes a bascule draw span and three fixed truss

spans. Our train passes the ACL (ex-C&WC) East Boundary yard and engine terminal, then begins curving through downtown Augusta. Here we're actually on trackage of the Augusta & Summerville RR, a jointly owned terminal line that connects the city's railroads with each other and to Augusta Union Station. We soon take a wye and, pointing northwest, come to a stop inside the large AUS train shed a few minutes before our scheduled arrival time of 9:45AM.

Built in 1902, Augusta Union Station is an aging but still busy place. Our two E units uncouple as a hostler gets ready to take them back to the engine terminal, and after passengers are off and head-end business is completed, an SW7 switcher takes the consist

and turns it on the wye, then places it for our late afternoon departure. Meanwhile, shortly after our arrival Southern Railway's *Augusta Special* comes in from Charlotte, North Carolina, via Columbia, South Carolina, with a through coach from Washington. Then at 11:30AM, the Georgia Railroad's Train 1 to Atlanta leaves, including a few passengers on board who transferred from the *Palmetto*.

There's a lull before the Southern train will return to Charlotte in mid-afternoon, so we get some lunch and walk around downtown a bit. In addition to the freight and passenger activity from ACL, Georgia, and Southern, Augusta also has lines to the south owned by Central of Georgia and Georgia & Florida, both of which are now under Southern's corporate umbrella. Southern has recently abandoned much of the G&F, whose mainline once reached north to Greenwood, South Carolina, and south to Madison, Florida. All the city's major yards are within a mile and a half of Union Station, giving us plenty to take in during our mid-day layover.

Back at the station later in the afternoon, the Georgia RR's eastbound daytime train from Atlanta, No. 2, comes in at 4:30PM, and a few passengers linger to transfer to the eastbound *Palmetto* that is preparing for its departure. AUS has nighttime activity too, with a pair each of ACL and Georgia passenger trains that mirror the two companies' connections during the day. ACL runs a dark-of-night train, Nos. 54-55, that arrives at 1:20AM from Florence and promptly returns at 2:00AM, connecting with the *Everglades* at Florence. The train includes a through Florence-Atlanta coach (normally one of ACL's rebuilt semi-streamlined cars) that is forwarded on Georgia RR Nos. 3-4. Added to all this are extra troop trains on occasion from nearby Fort Gordon, and the influx each April of business cars and other traffic for the Masters Golf Tournament.

The *Palmetto* leaves on time at 5:00, and we settle back again in our semi-streamlined rebuilt ACL coach. The return ride takes us through the same locations in daylight as we saw coming from Florence this morning, with darkness coming about the time we get to Sumter at 8:17PM. After a hamburger plate for supper in the *Augusta*, we try to get some slumber in our coach seat since we'll be there until getting to Rocky Mount at 1:45 in the morning; that's our jumping-off

SOUTHWARD—MAIN LINE—BETWEEN FLORENCE AND AUGUSTA

FOURTH CLASS	THIRD CLASS			FIRST CLASS					Station Numbers	Distance from Florence	TIME TABLE NO. 4 IN EFFECT December 15, 1966		
	531	537	547	223	197	129	55	51					193
	Local Freight	Local Freight	Local Freight	Through Freight	Local Freight	Through Freight	Passenger	Passenger					Through Freight
	Daily Ex. Saturday	Daily Ex. Sunday	Daily Ex. Sunday	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily					Daily
P. M.	A. M.	A. M.	A. M.	A. M.	P. M.	P. M.	A. M.	A. M.			STATIONS		
3:00			12:01		9:45	8:45	5:45		293		T L FLORENCE		
3:05			12:06		9:50	8:57 ⁵⁰	5:49		K-296	2.9	REVELL		
3:40			12:17		10:01	s 9:06	s 5:58		K-304	11.4	T TIMMONSVILLE		
3:55			12:29		10:19 ²⁵	s 9:18	6:20 ⁵⁴		K-314	20.7	T LYNCHBURG		
4:10			12:41		10:32	f 9:27	6:30		K-323	29.7	T MAYESVILLE		
A 4:40	L 8:30	L 3:00	A 12:55		10:45	s 9:50 ²⁵	s 6:50		K-332	39.0	T SUMTER		
	8:42	3:10			10:55	9:58	6:59		K-339	46.0	PRIVATEER		
	8:55	3:20			11:04	f 10:06	f 7:10		K-346	53.0	T PINEWOOD		
	9:05	3:30			11:12	f 10:13	7:17		K-352	58.6	REMINI		
	9:20	3:45			11:23	10:24	7:28		K-357	64.5	LONE STAR		
	A 9:30	3:50			11:29	10:29	7:33		K-361	68.4	ORESTON		
		3:57			11:36 ¹⁵	f 10:35	f 7:35		K-366	73.3	T CAMERON		
		4:18 ⁵⁴			11:49	s 11:01	s 8:05		K-376	83.0	T ORANGEBURG		
		4:30			11:52	11:06 ¹⁵	8:08		K-377	84.6	EDISTONE		
		4:45			12:06	f 11:18	f 8:20		K-387	94.4	COPE		
		5:00			12:18	s 11:33	s 8:35 ⁵⁰		K-396	103.3	T DENMARK X-SOU X-SAL.		
		5:10			12:28	f 11:42	8:44		K-403	110.6	HILDA		
		5:20			12:37	s 11:56	s 8:55		K-410	117.8	T BARNWELL		
		A 6:00			12:48	12:05	9:04		K-420	126.3	DONORA		
					12:51	12:09	9:07		K-422	128.7	SNAPP		
				12:45	1:03	12:20	9:20	L 4:07	K-431	137.7	T ROBBINS		
				1:00	1:12	12:28	9:29	4:16	K-438	144.5	ELLENTON		
				1:10	1:21	f 12:37	s 9:37	4:26	K-445	151.6	T JACKSON		
				1:15	1:26	12:43	9:42	4:31	K-448	155.0	KATHWOOD		
				1:25	1:34	12:50	9:50	4:41	K-454	160.8	BEECH ISLAND		
				A 1:45	A 1:45	12:56	10:01	A 5:00	K-459	165.5	T EAST BDRY. X-CGA		
					s 1:20	s 10:30			K-460	166.5	A AUGUSTA L (Unless Dept)		
P. M.	A. M.	A. M.	A. M.	A. M.	A. M.	A. M.	A. M.	A. M.					
Daily Ex. Saturday	Daily Ex. Sunday	Daily Ex. Sunday	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily			Time of Nos. 129, 193 and 197 at East Boundary applies at Lovers Lane.		
531	537	547	223	197	129	55	51	193					

Southbound trains between Florence and Augusta are listed in this schedule from ACL's Charleston Division employee timetable No. 4 of December 15, 1966. The trackage from Robbins to Augusta was part of the Charleston & Western Carolina, which was merged into the ACL on December 31, 1959. —Larry Goolsby collection

SOUTHWARD—MAIN LINE—BETWEEN CONTENTNEA AND WILMINGTON—NORTHWARD

FOURTH CLASS		THIRD CLASS		SECOND CLASS		FIRST CLASS		Stations Numbers	Distance from Contentnea	TIME TABLE NO. 3 IN EFFECT December 16, 1965				Car Capacity of Side-Trucks	FIRST CLASS		THIRD CLASS		FOURTH CLASS	
547	529	217	49	Local Freight	Through Freight	Passenger	Daily Ex. Sunday			42	216	548	528		Passenger	Through Freight	Local Freight	Local Freight		
Daily Ex. Sunday	Daily Ex. Sunday	Daily	Daily	A. M.	A. M.	P. M.	A. M.					P. M.	A. M.	A. M.	P. M.					
				6:10	8:10	3:29	139			L CONTENTNEA A		10:40	2:57		2:50					
				6:20	8:16	3:36	C-142	3.0		BLACK CREEK	S	10:30	2:50		2:38					
				6:30	8:30	3:47	C-149	9.7		T FREMONT	21	10:18	2:40		2:28					
				6:40	8:45	3:54	C-152	12.9		T PIKEVILLE	125 18 P	10:12	2:35		2:20					
				6:48	9:01	4:01	C-158	18.6		NORTH JCT.	YARD	10:04	2:27		2:10					
				6:52	9:05	4:31	C-160	20.6		GOLDSBORO	Y	10:00	2:23		2:05					
				7:00	9:15 ⁴² 9:40	4:35	C-161	22.2		T ROYALL YARD	YARD	9:37 ²¹⁷	2:15		1:50					
				7:30	10:05	4:47	C-169	29.6		DUDLEY	S	9:26	1:51		1:00					
				7:45	10:12	4:59	C-174	35.0		T MOUNT OLIVE	48 84 P	9:19	1:43		12:40					
				7:57	10:18	5:05	C-177	38.7		CALYPSO	48	9:13	1:37		12:15					
				8:15	10:23	5:10	C-181	41.6		T FAISON	43 18	9:08	1:33		11:55					
				8:30	10:29	5:16	C-185	45.8		BOWDEN		9:01	1:27		11:25					
				9:00	10:40	5:35	C-189	50.1		T WARSAW	125 89 35 Y PN P5	8:55	1:21		11:00					
				10:30	9:20	5:47	C-197	57.5		T MAGNOLIA	23	8:31	1:11	10:20	9:25					
				10:45		5:56	C-202	62.7		T ROSE HILL	78 48 P	8:24	1:04	9:55						
				10:58		6:03	C-206	66.8		TEACHEY		8:16	12:58	9:20						
				11:15		6:10	C-208	69.1		T WALLACE	62 58 P	8:12	12:54	9:00						
				11:40		6:15	C-211	72.2		WILLARD	18	8:05	12:49	8:50						
				11:55		6:21	C-215	75.5		WATHA	18	8:00	12:44	8:40						
				12:10		6:35	C-221	82.5		T BURGAW	185 54 P	7:51	12:34	8:15						
				12:25		6:50	C-230	90.7		ROCKY POINT	7	7:40	12:23	7:45						
				12:40		6:59 ⁴⁸	C-235	96.2		CASTLE HAYNE	69	7:30	12:15	6:59 ⁴⁸						
				12:55		7:09	C-241	102.1		GORDON	128 28 P	7:22	12:07	6:40						
				A 1:10		7:12	C-243	103.5		T SMITH'S CREEK YD.	YARD	7:20	12:05	L 6:30						
						7:15	C-243	104.1		NEW BERN JCT.		7:19								
						7:30	C-244	104.6		A WILMINGTON L		7:15								
				P. M.	A. M.	A. M.	A. M.					P. M.	A. M.	A. M.	A. M.					
				Daily Ex. Sunday	Daily Ex. Sunday	Daily	Daily					Daily	Daily	Daily Ex. Sunday	Daily Ex. Sunday					
				547	529	217	49					42	216	548	528					

The time of Nos. 42 and 49 applies at passenger station Warsaw.

ACL's line from Contentnea to Wilmington hosted four scheduled trains in the Richmond Division employee timetable No. 3 of December 16, 1965. All trains except locals Nos. 547-548 originated or terminated at Rocky Mount, 19 miles farther north from the junction at Contentnea. This route was originally the historic Wilmington & Raleigh (later Wilmington & Weldon), ACL's original predecessor and corporate parent. —Larry Goolsby collection



point for the second side trip we'll make, this time to Wilmington. We're aware of the 20-minute stop in Florence, including some gentle nudges as the sleeper and café-lounge are switched out, but shortly (now as No. 78) we are again retracing our original travel segment on ACL's north-south mainline. We rest well as the six-wheel trucks give us a smooth and quiet ride.

A Ride on the W&W

Too soon, it seems, the conductor is rousing passengers getting off at Rocky Mount, and we sleepily detrain at the large brick station. Our southbound Wilmington connecting train is already lined up on a parallel track, having come in northbound before midnight. A single E7 leads several head-end cars, two coaches, and another of ACL's *County*-series 10-6 sleepers that was dropped off by the southbound *Palmetto* over an hour ago. ACL holds the train a while at Rocky Mount to afford connections with the northbound *Palmetto* as well, and a few other passengers join us as we climb on

board. Once more, our coach is one of ACL's semi-streamlined rebuilds; ACL rosters 25 of the cars, and they stay busy holding down secondary runs like this one as well as overflow needs on the streamliners.

We leave at 2:45AM, running again over the rails we just covered a bit earlier as far as Contentnea, a junction 19 miles from Rocky Mount and just south of Wilson. Here we take the high-speed turnout that points us directly south toward Wilmington, 105 miles away. This nearly straight route was built by ACL's original predecessor and corporate parent, the Wilmington & Weldon (first named the Wilmington & Raleigh until 1855), which began construction northward out of Wilmington in 1834. ACL's north-south mainline went through Wilmington, and then turned west to Florence, until the present mainline cutoff was opened through Fayetteville in 1893. ACL kept its corporate headquarters in Wilmington all the way until 1960, when they were moved to Jacksonville.

Although we're dozing again as soon as we leave Rocky Mount, the train makes

numerous full and flag stops at the string of small and medium towns along this historic route. Together with just a 50 m.p.h. speed limit on this non-signaled line, our total scheduled time to Wilmington stretches out to four hours 45 minutes over the 121 miles. It starts to get light about the time we pause at Warsaw at 5:35AM, which has a large brick station and evidence of agriculture-based freight business like we've seen many other times in our travels. Wallace has a similar station.

Just before 7:00 we near Castle Hayne, where we cross a river on a large swing span. This is the Northeast Cape Fear River, one of several busy drawbridge crossings in the Wilmington area. The river traffic is symbolic of the substantial port activity at Wilmington, which while not quite in the league of other ports further south on the Atlantic coast, nevertheless provides many import and export carloads for the ACL as well as the Seaboard's line from Wilmington to Hamlet, North Carolina. As we stop at the small wood Castle Hayne station, we see a northbound



Left: Georgia Railroad's Train 2 from Atlanta is arriving at Augusta Union Station behind FP7 1002 on the afternoon of August 10, 1960. At left is ACL café-lounge *Goldsboro* on the rear of ACL No. 50, ready to leave soon for Florence. A similar scene could be witnessed well into the later 1960s. The *Goldsboro* is still in ACL's aluminum and purple scheme in this view; the car was later repainted into the solid Pullman green scheme that began replacing purple about 1958. —W.F. Beckum Jr. photo



Above: Café-lounge *Augusta* was one of two similar cars that ACL rostered to serve light meals on secondary trains, making the cars well suited for the Florence–Augusta run and other assignments on other secondary trains in the Carolinas. The car had 24 dining seats and 20 lounge seats, and is seen here in its namesake city about 1966. —R.H. Hanson collection

local freight in the siding; this is No. 548, which works the line as far as Magnolia, then heads back to Wilmington as No. 547.

ACL's Original Headquarters City

As we get into the outskirts of Wilmington, we see more evidence of industrial activity out our coach window, with rail service to many of them. Additional tracks appear as we pass by Smith Creek Yard, which still has a number of freight cars in it even though ACL also uses newer yards on its line to Florence. At the sound end of Smith's Creek Yard we get glimpses of the junctions for the line to New Bern going east plus the line to Florence (actually Pee Dee, where the line joins the north-south main) going west. ACL also has a branch to Fayetteville that springs from the Pee Dee line not far west from where we are. Finally, Seaboard has trackage rights over a few miles of this line to reach its downtown terminal.

We run the wye at this junction and then back the last half mile into ACL's stub-end

Below: No. 1084 was one of 25 class A-15 heavyweight coaches ACL extensively rebuilt in the early 1950s from cars originally delivered in the 1920s. They had interiors equivalent to Coast Line's lightweight cars and were common sights on secondary runs. The car was photographed at Augusta during April 1969. —A.M. Langley Jr. photo



Wilmington station at N. Third Street, just a few blocks from the industrialized Cape Fear riverfront. As we leave the train we can see several vintage buildings that were once part of Coast Line's original headquarters before the 1960 move to Jacksonville. Although the station building and its long

concourse over some industrial spurs to the waterfront remain in service, other buildings stand empty, including some shop buildings to our north; all these were deeded to the city of Wilmington. Even with the headquarters gone, the confluence of four ACL lines (from Contentnea, New Bern, Fayetteville,

and Pee Dee) keeps Wilmington a busy point on the system.

We have an all-day layover in Wilmington ahead of us, so after grabbing some breakfast we take in the many railroad sights around the downtown area at our leisure. We also catch some of the city's other historic offerings such as fine old homes dating from the 1700s and 1800s and the battleship USS *North Carolina* on display. By evening we're ready to get a final bite to eat and climb aboard the roomette we've reserved on northbound Train 42, due out at 7:15PM. Not long after we're on the way back north, we ask the porter to make up our bed, and in no time we're asleep as our train returns to Rocky Mount and continues north toward Richmond in the night hours.

The next thing we know the porter is at our door again, waking us for our 4:05AM arrival back in Richmond. It's still dark but we got nearly eight hours of good sleep under our belt, and are happy to have had this chance to sample all of ACL's passenger service prior to the upcoming merger. Many of these trains will last into the SCL years, but with Amtrak all will be gone except the most popular streamliners. It's been a rewarding tour of the system that will provide a photographic record and memories for years to come.



Above: Baggage-coach 666 was assigned to Atomic Energy Commission service between the Savannah River Plant near Augusta and Rocky Flats, Colo., carrying material to manufacture nuclear weapons. The car's interior was rebuilt to accommodate lead-lined containers and dormitory space for armed guards. This circa mid-1960s photo shows it in Chicago. —*Jay Williams collection*





Above: SCL continued the connecting Florence–Augusta service until April 1970. In this night scene at Florence just before the train’s discontinuance, SCL E7 525 has a short train (numbered 52 in the SCL system) that has come in from Augusta. The train by this time connected with the *Champion*; the northbound *Champion* is on the track at left. The Augusta train had also lost its sleeper at the end, as well as its through coach, and passengers had to walk across the platform if they were continuing north. —A.M. Langley Jr. photo

Left and above: These coming and going views of eastbound No. 50 on April 24, 1966, show it crossing the Savannah River into South Carolina just after leaving Augusta. E6 515 running solo is sufficient for the six-car train of two head-end cars and four passenger cars. Visible in the passenger consist are an ACL rebuilt semi-streamlined coach, an RF&P coach, a C&O sleeper, and the edge of one of ACL’s two heavyweight café-lounge cars. C&O sleepers, as well as yellow Union Pacific Pullmans, showed up at times on the train. —J.W. Parker photos

The author thanks Al Langley and Buddy Hill for their assistance with this article.

W&A Texas, Other CSX Predecessor Locomotives Highlighted at Spencer

Photos by Harvey George

During the weekend of April 28-30, the North Carolina Transportation Museum at Spencer rolled out the refurbished Western & Atlantic 4-4-0 locomotive No. 12, *Texas*, in the company of other CSX predecessor locomotives. The *Texas*, of Civil War Great Locomotive Chase fame, had resided at the Cyclorama in Atlanta for decades but was recently transferred to the Atlanta History Center. As part of that process, the *Texas* was excavated from its basement display location and first sent to the Spencer museum for a complete cosmetic restoration (to its 1880s freight service appearance) before coming back to its new home in Atlanta. The state-owned W&A was later leased to the Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis, which

Right: The North Carolina Transportation Museum presented this lineup of CSX predecessor locomotives when it rolled out the cosmetically restored Western & Atlantic *Texas*. From left on April 29, 2017, they are CSX 2702, C&O 8016, ACL 501, SAL 544, ACL 1031, and the *Texas*.

Below: The weekend's three featured steam locomotives pose together on April 29. The *Texas*, by far the senior member of the group, was built in 1856 by Danforth, Cooke & Co. Seaboard 544 is a 1918 Brooks product, while Baldwin turned out ACL 1031 in 1913.

Facing page bottom: This solo view of the *Texas* showcases the 1880s freight service scheme the locomotive wore after its celebrity role in the Great Locomotive Chase. That event saw another W&A 4-4-0, the *General*, stolen by Union raiders at Kennesaw, Georgia, in April 1862 with the *Texas* successfully catching it. The *General* is displayed at the Southern Museum of Civil War and Locomotive History in Kennesaw.







Above: CSX gave GP38-2 2702 fresh paint and sent it to Spencer for the weekend's events, where it posed on April 28. No. 2702 was delivered as Georgia Railroad 6051 in 1980, and was one of the final two Georgia locomotives purchased before that road went into Seaboard System. The 6051 was named *Franklin M. Garrett* during its Georgia days, and the *Spirit of Atlanta* name was added later.

in 1957 was merged into the Louisville & Nashville.

The museum brought out locomotives in its own collection from CSX predecessors, Atlantic Coast Line E3 501 and 4-6-0 1031 and Seaboard 2-10-0 544. Locomotives brought in for the occasion included an F7 painted as Chesapeake & Ohio 8016, originally Clinchfield 800, and freshly repainted CSX GP38-2 2702, named for Franklin M. Garrett (1906-2000), Atlanta's only official historian and a railroad enthusiast. The 2702 was delivered in March 1980 as Georgia Railroad 6051 and was named for Mr. Garrett at that time.

Below: The Spencer museum added lighting to Seaboard Decapod 544, allowing photographers to capture this classic night scene.

Facing page: Among other NCTM holdings rolled out for the occasion was SAL caboose 5458, shown in this outdoor appearance on April 28. The museum also has ACL and SCL M-5 steel cabooses in its collection.





OBITUARIES

Dr. William J. "Bill" Husa Jr., of Cochran, Georgia, passed away March 4 at age 89. Bill was noted in our circles for his extensive photographic coverage of lesser known railroad subjects in central Georgia and central Florida (where he maintained another home), and his work has appeared in numerous publications including *LINES SOUTH*. He retired as Chairman of the Science and Physical Department at Middle Georgia College in Cochran, and is interred

at his family plot in Gainesville, Florida.

William J. "Bill" Nalewaik, of Winter Haven, Florida, passed away April 28 at age 79. Bill was a long-time ACL & SAL HS member and contributed to *LINES SOUTH*, for example his article "Mr. EMD, An ACL Geep Please!" in the July 1989 issue. Bill was born in Connecticut, attended college in Minnesota, and after Air Force service in Vietnam made Florida his home. In addition to his railroad hobby interests (he was a member of the Ridge Model

Train Club), Bill was an active member of St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Winter Haven and a member of the Daedalians Pilot Association. He also enjoyed tennis and painting. More details are available at http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/theledger/obituary.aspx?n=william-joseph-nalewaik&pid=185241951&eid=sp_shareobit#sthash.kAMkbyO2.dpuf.

A.A. "Gus" Karle passed away on May 7. We will include a full obituary in the Third Quarter issue.

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