



Railway & Locomotive Historical Society, Inc.

Southeast Chapter

Newsletter No. 117 – February 2010

A Father and Son's Love

ON A PLUPERFECT MIAMI SUNDAY – SETH BRAMSON

(This is an updated and slightly revised article by Seth H. Bramson which originally appeared as a frontispiece in Trains Magazine in the 1970's)

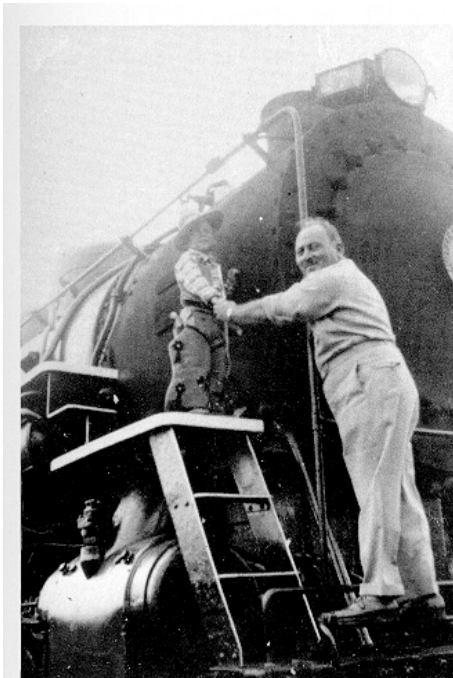
We turned into the FEC's Buena Vista Yard from Northeast 36th Street. It was a pluperfect Miami Sunday, warm and breezy, with soft clouds scudding by overhead as I literally quivered with excitement.

Daddy turned the wheel and pulled in, and there they were. They were big and black, and oh Lord, how I loved them. Daddy opened the car door for me and I ran toward them. It seemed to me, innocent and open and just 3 1/2 years old, that they were waiting for me, as happy and excited to see me as I was to see them. I knew them as friends, and I ran joyfully from one to another.

Daddy, loving and gentle as always, smiled warmly as the apple of his eye, his then one-and-only son, climbed over and under and around those great and incredible engines. They were never too big for me, or too busy, or too anything. They were, and always would be, patiently waiting to see me.

The 270 didn't even mind when Daddy climbed on her for a picture. And 431: oh my dear 431. Look at her, so regal and stately and grand. The engines were understanding about a little boy who loved them: they *knew* he loved them, they could feel it inside, they just had to know it, as that boy joyously scampered about, touching, holding, feeling. Look at the face of that little boy--*that* is sheer joy!

And now--suddenly--it is almost 63 years later. The engines, my dear, beloved engines, are gone. The yard, Buena Vista Yard, my favorite, is gone. My father, tender and kind and good, is gone. But in my heart and in my memories and in my photographs and my very being, you will all live on and on and on. Continued on page 2.



Daddy with Seth at Buena Vista, 1948.



Mom with Bennett at FEC Miami Station, June 1962.

Photographs from author Seth Bramson's *Speedway to Sunshine* 2nd edition.

Southeast Limited

(Editor's 2010 update) Seth Bramson, Mr. F. E. C., has had a love affair with the Florida East Coast Railway ever since his dad began bringing him to Buena Vista Yard in 1947, the year after his family moved to Miami. He began collecting in 1957 and today is the senior collector of FEC Railway, Florida transportation memorabilia, Miami memorabilia and Floridiana in America.

In 1996, for the FEC/City of Miami joint Centennial celebration, then FEC president Carl Zellers officially named Seth as the FEC's Company Historian, a position which has been re-affirmed by each succeeding FEC president; today he is one of only two people in the country who bears that official title with an American railroad. His legendary collections have resulted in his having written three books on the FEC as well as co-authoring, with Prof. Gregg Turner, the book on the great commercial ventures of Florida's number two Henry, Henry Plant. Additionally Seth has written thirteen other books dealing with the histories of the villages, towns, cities and people of South Florida and he is currently working on the history of Hallandale Beach.

His collecting continues unabated, and as he likes to say, "Most people, as they get older, begin to lose interest in their collecting--but not me! Indeed, I get more hysterical, more maniacal and more fanatical about preserving our historic memorabilia every day!"

His collections reflect that statement. Today, the Bramson Archive is the largest collection of FEC Railway and Florida transportation memorabilia in the world: it is larger than the state museum's collection and larger than the Flagler Museum's collection. In addition, it is the largest private collection--private as opposed to the museums--of Miami memorabilia and Floridiana in America.

In addition to his 17 books, Seth has authored more than 80 articles on Florida transportation and South Florida local history, three of them in refereed or juried publications. Along with his duties as FEC Company Historian, he is Adjunct Professor of History and Historian in Residence at Barry University and Adjunct Professor of History at Florida International University. He teaches all of the University's South Florida and Florida history courses as well as two courses for which he originated and wrote the syllabi - "Florida and the Three Henrys," which deals with the great achievements and accomplishment of the three great Henrys who built Florida, and "History of American Railroads." F I U is the only college or university in the state of Florida which offers either of those two courses.

For tours of The Bramson Archive, members, when they are in South Florida, are invited to call Seth at (305) 757-1016. As everybody who has been there says, and the editor confirms, "it has to be seen to be believed!" Bennett, who is in the picture with Seth's mother, is Seth's brother and only sibling.

Railroad trivia – Celestials, Orientals & Occidentals:

In order to conquer the storm-wracked Sierra Nevada crest, the most challenging section of America's first transcontinental railroad, Central Pacific hired thousands of Chinese laborers to dig and blast their way through the obdurate granite. The Chinese immigrants were sometimes called "Celestials" because they referred to their native land as the Celestial Kingdom. Contracted from China specifically to build Central Pacific's railroad, the men were paid \$30 to \$35 per month. Orient has the meaning of "towards the east". To orient oneself is to become aligned, or oriented. Orientated is not a correct word. The opposite of orient is occident, west, as in Pacific & Occidental.

Announcements:

Our regular meetings are the 2nd Thursday of the month @ 6:30 PM, in the CSX Bldg., 500 Water St. Jacksonville, FL.

February 20, 2010 - Jacksonville Model Train & Railroadiana Show at the Prime Osborn Convention Center.

April 3, 2010 - Volusia County Fairgrounds, Lawrence Arena - DeLand, Florida.

March 11th, next monthly meeting at the CSX building.

SOUTHEAST CHAPTER OFFICERS

W. Reid Adams,	Chairman	904-400-4680
Jim Smith	Vice-Chairman	904-276-2972
Paul Newtson	Secretary	
Robert Van Nest	Treasurer	

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Southeast Chapter Banquet and 2010 Elections

Our annual banquet was held on January 14, 2010 at Copeland's Restaurant in Jacksonville, FL. During a brief business meeting, the following members were appointed to our four officer positions: Reid Adams - Chairman, Jim Smith - Vice Chairman, Paul Newtonson - Secretary, and Robert Van Nest - Treasurer. Since only four members applied for the four positions, the officer slate was elected by "Acclimation by Proclamation".

Meeting of December 10, 2009

The meeting of the Southeast Chapter of the Railway & Locomotive Historical Society was called to order at 6:45 pm by member Jim Smith. There were 7 members present.

Secretary's Report: The minutes for the November meeting were read and approved by the members present.

Treasurers Report: Robert Van Nest handed out a treasurer's report showing the balances. There is \$8,841 in our account. The CD has made \$.73 since last month. The treasurer's report was approved by the members present. A motion was approved to re-purchase a \$5,000 CD for a year or more.

Committee Reports:

- Newsletter: The December newsletter has been sent. John Leynes needs articles submitted for future newsletters.

Old Business:

- Bill Howes reported that the Jacksonville City Council voted to designate the ACL 1504 a Jacksonville historic landmark. A state grant, matched locally, may be available to support the cost of restoration. CSX & the Convention Center have been approached to assist with cash grant matching. Bill Howes proposes that we pledge \$2,500 as a group to support the grant for restoration. Bill has \$2,000 in pledges already. A motion passed for the R&LHS SEC to pledge \$1,000 from the treasury. Bill is working on drafting a letter to send to members asking for a donation for this purpose.
- The chapter is not planning to participate in the January Deland train show. The chapter plans to get a few tables at the upcoming Jacksonville train show.

New Business:

- The chapter will look into submitting Richard's book collection to a new Jacksonville library archives.
- Upcoming Programs:
 - February 11: Cliff Vander Yacht on steam locomotives. Bill Howes on CSX/Amtrak video.
 - March 11: Paul Newtonson will present in March.

Announcements:

- Banquet January 14.

Respectfully Submitted,

Paul Newtonson

YARD OFFICE RAMBLES - By Henry H. Deutch, FEBRUARY 2010

The following article was first published in the New York Chapter's newsletter, *THE RUNNING LIGHT*, Tommy Meehan, Editor. As information, Henry Deutch is a member of both the New York and Southeast Chapters of the R&LHS. - Editor John Leynes.

RAIL NEWS FROM FLORIDA

In mid December, the Florida Legislature met in Special Session to take on three railroad related items.

The primary item was the Central Florida Commuter Rail Project. This Writer has reported on the project that is supposed to provide commuter rail service to the Orlando Metropolitan Area for the past few years. Former Governor Jeb Bush made an agreement with CSX Transportation (CSXT) in which the former Atlantic Coast Line (ACL) mainline would serve Orlando Area commuters between DeLand to the north and Poinciana to the south. Amtrak would continue to use the former ACL route. Through freight would go via the former Seaboard Airline (SAL) route via Lakeland to a new distribution facility (yard) in Winter Haven. CSXT would continue track maintenance and dispatching. As part of the agreement, CSXT would not be liable for anything happening to passenger trains even if it was their (CSXT's) fault. Some members of the Legislature claimed that a governor could not make such an agreement without legislative approval. An action was filed by legislators and the Courts agreed. The legislature approved the plan with minor revision, but eliminated CSXT's blanket freedom of liability involving passenger trains. State Senator Paula Dockery requested all correspondence relative to this matter. The day after the vote Florida DOT presented to her over 3,000 letters, and memos.

The Central Florida Rail Project is now referred to as "SunRail". On 22 January, Amtrak came out with a request to have their liability potential reduced within the State to the same level as that of CSXT. The following is from pages B1 and B2 of the Lakeland Ledger of Saturday, 23 January 2010.

Amtrak threatened to derail recently approved legislation to allow for the proposed Orlando commuter train SunRail unless the state gave it a similar liability provision.

State transportation officials, who said they blindsided by the request, disputed whether the nation's passenger rail service could upend the SunRail deal, which was finally approved by lawmakers in a December special session after a two year push.

Amtrak said that it was terminating a 2008 agreement with the Florida Department of Transportation about the Central Florida rail service within 30 days because the indemnity language of the bill violated the deal.

"FDOT was aware when it entered into the MOU (memorandum of understanding) that Amtrak would not agree to assume additional liability exposure that is attributable solely to SunRail commuter operations," Amtrak President Joseph Boardman wrote Friday to Transportation Secretary Stephanie Kopelousos. "FDOT also knew that, under Section 4.1 of the 1999 Amtrak-CSX Agreement, Amtrak's consent is required before CSX can sell the Central Florida Corridor to FDOT."

The letter went on to state, "When FDOT entered into the MOU, it knew that – as Section VI of the MOU specifically states – "issues relating to sovereign immunity, indemnity, insurance [and] legislation...remain unresolved."

Boardman further noted to Kopelousos that the FDOT had been warned of this in November, days before the department appeared before committees in the special session of the Florida Legislature to urge for passage of SunRail legislation that is now unacceptable to Amtrak.

But Transportation Assistant Secretary for Engineering and Operations Kevin Thibault said the department's agreement with Amtrak in the SunRail corridor is based on its deal for South Florida's Tri-Rail.

"It is very confusing to us why they feel like they need to have this provision in Central Florida when they don't have it for Tri-Rail," Thibault told the News Service in a telephone interview. "We have an operating agreement with them there, and it's worked very well." Thibault said state transportation leaders are "scratching our heads" over Amtrak's request, saying "at the end of the day, all we basically need to work with Amtrak on is the schedule."

State Sen. Paula Dockery, R-Lakeland, who fought against the CSX-FDOT deal for two years warning that the state's liability for CSX accidents on the track was the issue, said Thibault is wrong because it goes far beyond scheduling. "It goes down to liability, which the FDOT chooses to ignore. The rail purchase (of the CSX track for SunRail) cannot go forward without Amtrak agreeing," Dockery said.

The second item was an increase in State funding for Tri-Rail the commuter service between Miami and West Palm Beach. The Legislature approved additional funding in order to keep Tri-Rail operating.

The final item was legislative approval of a proposal for High Speed Rail between Tampa and Orlando. The State of Florida has applied for \$2.8 billion to construct a High Speed Rail line between downtown Tampa and Orlando International Airport. At present there are two intermediate stops planned. One at U. S. highway 98 in Lakeland and the other just north of U. S. highway 192 in Kissimmee to serve Walt Disney World. Eventually the High Speed Rail is to continue to Miami.

State Senator Dockery's husband Doc Dockery proposed an amendment to the Florida Constitution ten years ago requiring the State to construct a High Speed Rail Line connecting the five most populous cities in the State. The electorate approved the amendment. Jeb Bush upon assuming the governorship looked for items that could be eliminated to save money. High Speed Rail was one such item. At the next election, the electorate voted to repeal the High Speed Rail Amendment.

The original plan was for a "T" shaped system with the head going between Miami and Jacksonville, passing thru Fort Lauderdale, West Palm Beach, Orlando, and St Augustine. The stem would connect Tampa to the head in Orlando. The present plan is shaped more like a boomerang with one side going from Tampa to Orlando, and the other side going between Orlando and Miami. Mention has been made for a third leg between Orlando and Jacksonville.

The Northeast Florida Live Steamers & Railroaders Inc. held their 2010 Winter meet over February 4th – 7th, at their site near Bostwick, Florida. Property owner Regg Weller, at the throttle here, runs his two foot gauge 2-6-2 Prairie. Their West Tocoï & Bostwick RR also features 7 ½ inch gauge tracks. Their website can be found at: <http://www.neflsri.com> for more information. Photo by John Leynes



The editor has been conducting some research on the history of events of World War Two. During the research, the following two articles were found in the VJ Day issue of the New York Times, 15 August 1945, presented irbelow as image copies. Additionally a brief text explanation of a time term, EWT, that the editor had never seen

ALL FREIGHT BOUND FOR PORTS HALTED

Railroads Will Unload Army and Navy Supplies and Store Them for Orders

WASHINGTON, Aug. 14 (U.P.)—All freight en route to United States ports was halted at 7:33 o'clock, Eastern war time, tonight, the Association of American Railroads announced, and easing of the redeployment transportation crisis appeared to be near.

All Army and Navy freight will be unloaded at storage depots and will remain there until the services determine what to do with it, an AAR spokesman said. Most of it will continue to its destination, be returned to the manufacturer or remain in the depot for later use. Some will be sold as surplus property.

Troop Trains Continue Runs

The spokesman said that all troop trains continued to their destinations. An average of 10,000 men a day have been arriving recently in West Coast embarkation ports.

A spokesman for the Office of Defense Transportation declared that the travel situation would remain tight for a while, but that the end of the war made the picture "much more optimistic."

He said that most travel restriction would remain for the time being, since the Army has not yet announced anything definite on changes in its redeployment schedules.

Four-Day Adjustment Task

The AAR spokesman estimated that it would take railroad workers four days to adjust freight schedules and return trains to normal runs.

One of the most beneficial results of peace for transportation is the expected prompt release of experienced railroad workers from the armed forces. J. Monroe Johnson, ODT director, warned several weeks ago that 75,000 men were needed immediately to keep the trains running.

The Army is expected to speed the discharge of men to fill the labor needs of the railroads as well as meet the needs of other industries.

The North American Eastern War Time Zone (abbreviated EWT) was a geographic region that kept time by subtracting four hours from Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) resulting in GMT-4. It was used in place of Eastern Standard Time during World War II from February 9, 1942 until September 30, 1945. It was equivalent to year-round Eastern Daylight Time.



NEW, IMPROVED ERIE COACH SERVICE HELPS YOU OUT!

EFFECTIVE SUNDAY, AUGUST 5, the following late afternoon departures will be inaugurated. This has been done to help replace the overnight sleeping car service between Jersey City and Southern Tier points, which was recently temporarily discontinued to provide more comfortable accommodations for Servicemen.

AS A FURTHER CONVENIENCE, reserved seats in air-conditioned coaches may be obtained without additional charge for travel from Jersey City to Southern Tier stations and return, up to 5 days in advance. Dining car service available.

NEW SCHEDULES

(Eastern Standard (War) Time)

TRAIN No. 27 (Westbound)		TRAIN No. 8 (Eastbound)	
Leave New York		Leave Hornell	3:48 PM
Rockefeller Center		Addison	4:23 PM
Motor Coach Term.	3:25 PM	Corning	4:39 PM
Chambers St. Sta.	3:40 PM	Elmira	5:02 PM
Jersey City Station	4:00 PM	Waverly	5:23 PM
Arrive Binghamton	9:30 PM	Endicott	5:59 PM
Endicott	9:39 PM	Binghamton	6:13 PM
Waverly	10:46 PM	Arrive New York	
Elmira	11:02 PM	Jersey City Station	11:30 PM
Corning	11:50 PM	Chambers St. Sta.	11:51 PM
Addison	12:27 AM	Rockefeller Center	
Hornell	1:05 AM	Motor Coach Term.	11:59 PM

TRAIN No. 10 (Eastbound) will be discontinued.

Consult Your Erie Ticket Agent for Further Information

17 John Street, 11 Rockefeller Plaza, Chambers Street Station

PHONE—BARCLAY 7-6500

Erie Railroad 