



# THE Lantern

February 2011

Volume 16 Number 2

## February 15<sup>th</sup> Meeting at the old Tallahassee Antique Car Museum

The old Tallahassee Antique Car Museum is located on Mahan Drive just east of the intersection of Capital Circle and Mahan Drive (across from the McDonalds in the Wal-Mart parking lot). The meeting will begin at 7:30 pm.

## 2011 Membership Dues

2011 membership dues are now due. Currently the BBMRA only has one dues category: an all inclusive category covering you and your family. Membership dues are \$20. Members will default their membership if their dues are not paid by March 31<sup>st</sup>.

## February Meeting: a model contest: Modular Building and a Andy Zimmerman demonstration:

The program for February is a model contest. The rules are to start with a Design Preservation kit or similar (such as a Walthers Modular kit). Build it with any changes or modifications that you want. Tell what you started with and what you did to the kit.

## Board of Directors to meet at 7 pm on February 15<sup>th</sup>

A Board of Directors meeting has been called for February 15<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm at the old Tallahassee Antique Car Museum to discuss the 2011 BBMRA budget.

## CHILDREN'S DAY 2011 By R. M. Lombardo, Large Scale Chief

**The Day Begins** - On a sunny cool morning, I arrived around 9:30 am expecting to meet fellow club Member Joe Haley and not anticipating to be the first one there. Sometime later, Farley Light, another fellow club member walks in and tells me that Joe asked him to help with assembling the switching layout. We start a conversation and observe yet another fellow club member Mark Van Hoeij is also present but, doesn't approach us. Meanwhile, taking place outside, The Junior Air force ROTC from a local high school is learning how to perform the protocol of taking down, folding and raising our United States of America Flag. Events are happening inside too! Many people enter the doors as historical figures or have periodicals from Florida's past centuries between Hernando De Soto and the present. I also have a glance at some documents, photos and a 1906 railroad book, opened to a page that listed accidents and injuries in The State of Florida Archives.

**A Layout for Children & Adults** - When nobody else made their presence shown, Farley and I started the assembly shortly after 11 am; already several children and adults gathered around the two tables placed side-by-side. The plan was to build an outer passing loop using Lionel Fastrack O 36 however, a gap was the result when nearing completion and after a quick conversion to an inner passing loop we were ready to roll! And, Farley reminded me to order a 1 3/8 inch piece of straight track for future operation. Thomas, The Tank Engine was the star of the show for this event along with the passenger coaches Annie and Clarabel and The Troublesome Trucks (Gondolas to Farley). Though Percy and Diesel are still in the shop, there were plenty of accessories to delight all including, a green Reading or yellow Chessie System Caboose that kids could place at the end of train, a cardboard Tunnel with lifelike photos of snow & rocks given by fellow club member Richard Schmitt, a gas station given by former member Eric Taylor, rural railroad crossings and Union Station given by fellow member Ken Brock. New this year was the Left & Right remote switches. Sir Topham Hatt (The Boss of The Railroad) popped his head out of The Gateman Shack, which wasn't connected but that didn't stop the kids from opening and closing the door. He was also spotted at the station supervising Thomas' Driver (Engineer) and conductor. Many vehicles were placed around the various areas plus America's Flag to finish the scene. My new Flip Camera joined dozens of digital technology that appeared after new and returning kids took their turns from "Engineer Farley" or myself; we hardly got a break! I didn't realize that Mark was downstairs until a volunteer with The Museum of Florida History asked me about handing him a lunch ticket so, I told my partner in the operation where I would go for a couple of minutes.

**Did You Know About Lego Trains?** - Perhaps, the best way to describe Lego's entry into toy trains is they were more popular in Europe than The United States because most of the sets were based on trains that were common there but interest sparked here when those railroads familiar to us appeared. Mark has a modern train and a Steam Train based on Harry Potter that would travel in European Countries. And, the most recognized Amtrak Superliner Passenger Train and Burlington Northern/Santa Fe Freight (operates mostly in the Western United States) seen in many photos throughout railroad magazines. The Math whiz tells me this is a sub-set and through my camera, I observe three looping tracks with some switches and one leads to a small yard. Later, the modern European set enters the small yard and the Steam train comes out of the yard with two men in a Rail-car (Flatcar with handles on both sides similar to a see-saw) trying to outrun the engine. You have to see this feature! Other accessories include a small roadway, tanker truck and small suburban station.

**Epilogue** - As the day weaned on, those who answered several questions about Thomas & Friends were awarded prizes, they were excited about and fliers with activities for the children and about our train show were handed out. Fellow member Barrett Johnson stopped by briefly, was he expecting the HO Switching Layout? "Engineer Farley" designated the Inner Loop taking Thomas through town and the main drag went through the tunnel and into the mountains. I was surprised to see Mark packed and ready to leave around 3:00 pm. Mark's son, Max appeared in A Tallahassee Democrat Photo the next day. I went on-line and unfortunately, none were taken of Thomas & Friends. "Engineer Farley" noticed that Thomas labored intensively and the gears were squealing meaning replacement or servicing and I noticed he was warm. Around 4:10 pm we were done!

We would like to thank the members & volunteers of the museum for inviting us to participate.

## Minutes of January 2011 BBMRA Annual Business Meeting

The January 18, 2011 Membership Meeting was called to order by President John Sullenberger at 7:30 p.m. in the Banquet Room of the old Antique Car Museum.

**First:** Thanks were given to Sam and Linda Miller for their hospitality during their annual Christmas Open House last December.

**Raffle:** No raffle held due to lack of interest.

**Minutes:** The minutes of the November 2010 meeting as published in the Lantern were accepted.

**Treasurer's Report:** Bill reported a plus balance.

**Visitors:** Ken Rouse (has an LGB starter set), Charlie Allen (has 1950 Lionel running outside in shed with G scale and HO layouts) and Richard Simmons (HO scale). Richard joined the BBMRA tonight.

### Division Reports:

**Small Scale:** work session February 5 – location TBD – 3 projects

**HO Scale:** no report

**Large Scale:** plans for Tropicana juice train and 2 new trucks for Thomas

**NMRA:** Barrett reports that for the model contest in February, it only takes a little more work for AP judging, see him or Sam for assistance.

**Veteran's Memorial – Bristol:** the Christmas runs went well

**Switching Layout:** ready to attend Children's Day at the RA Grey Building on January 29<sup>th</sup>.

**New Business:** Rex Taylor asked if there is any interest in putting train sets together to give to children this coming Christmas.

**Good of the Group Comments:** David Brazell has DVD's of club events for past year: Disk 1 is of the NMRA event, March open house and the train show and Disk 2 is of the train show, Jingle Jubilee, Sam's open house and the Junior Museum. Each disk is available for \$7 each or both disks for \$10 (\$1 from each sale is to go to the BBMRA).

Flint River Model RR Club show this weekend in Albany – reciprocal agreement is in effect

Children's Day at the RA Gray Building is January 29 – Lego, Thomas and the switching layout will be present

Southeastern Railroadiana show in Jacksonville is February 5 & 6

**Antique Car Museum Update:** no report

**Elections:** Election of new officers were handled by Barrett Johnson – slate from nominating committee – John Sullenberger – President, Andy Zimmerman – Vice President, Larry Benson – Treasurer, Drew Hackmeyer – Secretary. Nominations were opened to the floor – Joe Haley was nominated for Vice President but declined the nomination. No other nominations were made. John Sykes moved to accept slate by acclamation, seconded by Dan King, passed without objection.

The Divisions met and elected coordinators – HO - Sam Miller, N - Garth Easton, Large Scale – Randy Lombardo.

**Program:** John Sykes presented "A quick kit-bash of a southeastern-style log trailer from a container chassis."

**Next Meeting:**

The next meeting will be at 7:30 pm, Tuesday, February 15, 2011, at the Old Antique Car Museum.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m. Respectfully submitted, Drew Hackmeyer, Secretary

## Christmas Train Sets

Some thoughts on Rex Taylor's idea/proposal of train sets for needy children this coming Christmas:

- We need an outside agency to select the recipients
- A 4 by 8 layout is big - most of those in need do not have extra space. Long term housing is not guaranteed and moving a layout of that size would be a hardship
- Giving a finished product might have a WOW! factor but doesn't help develop skills
- This will require an investment of time and effort in both building and fundraising/soliciting contributions
- A group setting (Boys and Girls Club, Lighthouse Children's Home, etc) might reach more kids on an ongoing basis. Start with the switching layout and those kids that show an interest, build a group layout and give individuals models to build

These are some starting points for discussion. Let those who have an interest form a committee. Call it the Outreach Division to give it some standing and a budget. Is anyone interested?

## From the desk of the Reverend Dr. Maurice Stone

January 25, 2011

To the BBMRA: This Fall I moved year-round to Asheville, North Carolina: Here, I have joined the Apple Valley Model Rail Road Club in Hendersonville.

I want to give a big "Thank You!" to all those who extended the warmth of their friendship over the last five years. I was made to feel extremely welcome by those who repaired my trains; those who took me to train shows and on train watching expeditions, and those whose good conversations around the tables made attending meetings something to look forward to.

I would welcome a call from any who might get to the Asheville area. I would get a kick out of showing off my pike, or introducing you to the Apple Valley's large and beautifully constructed layout.

Thanks again!

Maurice Stone - 55 Shady Ridge Lane Asheville, NC 28805

## Do You Believe There's A Frisco City? By Larry Benson (reprinted from August 2005)

Have you ever been asked the old question: "Do you believe there's an Easter Bunny, Santa Claus and Toledo?" To which one answers: "Well, I believe there's a Bunny and I think there's a Santa but I'm not too sure about Toledo!"

So, now I ask you: "Do you believe there's a Frisco City, Alabama?" Such a place is located 70 miles north of Pensacola. It's on Highway 21 about nine miles southwest of Monroeville, AL. Covering four square miles, the population of Frisco City in 2002 was 1,420 and the community even has its own web site at <http://www.friscocityalabama.com/>

According to the October 1971 Frisco RR System Timetable, Frisco City was on the main line running from Springfield, MO through Memphis and just above Birmingham, AL joined the Pensacola Sub – Southern Division at Amory, for the run to Pensacola. Four passenger trains a day, two south bound and two north bound, stopped daily in Frisco City. Two of the daily trains offered second class accommodations while the other two were third class. The third class must have been a slow "milk and newspaper" run because it took an hour and a half longer for the third class trains to cover the same distance as the first class trains. Yard limits ran from Cantonment, FL into Pensacola.

How did I discover Frisco City? Last fall, Shirley and I were at our annual antique car club auction on a farm near Havana, when we spotted several green hourglass shaped Coca-Cola bottles on the sale tables. Modern Coke bottles don't have city names imprinted on the bottom, but we could see these were older ones. Out of curiosity, I casually sorted through them and to my surprise one was stamped "Frisco City, ALA" on the bottom.

One club member at the auction collects all kinds of Coca-Cola memorabilia so I knew I would have to outbid her to get this "prize." She bought several Coke collectibles including all of the other bottles except one. When it came up for sale, she already had a box full of Coca-Cola items and didn't bother to bid above my offer of \$6. I held my breath until the auctioneer hammered it down. The Frisco City bottle was mine!

Why was I so excited to find a Frisco bottle? Most BBMRA members already know, along with the Rock Island my N-Scale layout features the Frisco Railroad.

## "The Pause That Refreshes" – But for 5 Years? By Larry Benson

For years on end Coca-Cola has used the slogan "The Pause That Refreshes" to describe its soft drink in commercials on radio and television and in advertisements in magazines and newspapers. My "pause" has been one of five years! Certainly longer than I had anticipated, but worth it.

What has my lengthy pause involved? Since the summer of 2005 I have looked at the bottom of every Coke bottle I found in shops and antique stores for one imprinted "Rock Island ILL". Rock Island is one of the railroads I model, as you know. I am aware these bottles exist because I have seen a few of them listed on E-bay. Over the years, those that have been offered realized final bid prices way beyond reason and my pocketbook. One sold for \$55! I drooled and chewed my bottom lip, but passed the high priced ones up. And I'm glad I did.



Although barely readable, the bottoms of the bottles have city markings.

Why have I been hunting a Rock Island Coke bottle? Most BBMRA members probably won't remember my article published on page four in the August 2005 issue of The Lantern. That article entitled "Do You Believe There's A Frisco City?" told how I happened to find an old Coca-Cola bottle with Frisco City ALA cast in the glass on the bottom. I was surprised to find out there's actually a small village in Alabama which has the same name as Frisco - my other N-Scale model railroad. At one time Frisco City was a mainline stop for four St. Louis & San Francisco (SL-SF) passenger trains a day.



Larry's Frisco City and Rock Island Coke bottles sit shoulder-to-shoulder.

The Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific RR was founded in Rock Island, Illinois in 1851 and was known then as the "Rock Island Line". The railroad was liquidated in bankruptcy action in 1980. The first railroad bridge built in 1856 across the Mississippi River was between Arsenal Island, Illinois, formerly named Rock Island, and the town of Davenport, Iowa to the northwest.

Located southwest of the original bridge, which burned after being rammed by a boat only months after opening, is Government Bridge completed in 1896 and which is notable for being one of two bridges in the world with two sets of railroad tracks above the car lanes.

Just for fun, in late April 2010 I checked E-bay again for a Rock Island Coke bottle. Much to my surprise listed on one of the very last pages was a "BUY NOW" offer for two vintage Coke bottles - one of which was Rock Island ILL. I couldn't believe the seller was asking less than \$5 bucks for both bottles. I snapped them up immediately!

The long sought after Rock Island ILL bottle now sits shoulder-to-shoulder beside my Frisco City ALA bottle. Sometimes in the quiet of the night I think I hear them chatting about fond memories of their railroading days. Then again, it may be my imagination!

"The LANTERN" is the official publication of the BIG BEND MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION, INC. and is published monthly just prior to each regularly scheduled meeting. Subscriptions are included in all members' dues. The deadline to submit materials for publication is the fifth (unless otherwise noted) day of each month sent in c/o BBMRA, Attn: Editor, PO Box 3392, Tallahassee, FL 32315-3392 or e-mailed to [sullyjws@aol.com](mailto:sullyjws@aol.com).