



# THE Lantern

April 2021

Volume 26 Number 4

## June 26-27 Show & Sale: Steady Flow of Commitments from Vendors, Exhibiting Modelers

A dozen model train vendors have committed for the BBMRA's 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Show & Sale June 26-27, including several large sellers who have helped anchor our shows in the past. Several others requested vendor registration packets and we expect a rush of confirmations before May 15, when table rental fees go from \$30 to \$35. It is likely we will sell all or most of our vendor space.



Several vendors paid for tables for the 2020 Tallahassee event, which we had to cancel because of COVID, but allowed the club to keep their table fees to tie down space for the 2021, 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary show. Todd Tait, Pell Brown and Terry Tucker will be participating in the June show. Tom Lacher of Crusader Hobbies in Suwannee, GA, did notify us he is not yet comfortable doing large public shows and is unable to participate this year.

Here are vendors who either have registered for tables for the June 26-27 show or said they would be registering.

**All About Toy Trains, Richard Adelberg, Melbourne.** Richard sold at our 2019 show and is a regular at most Florida train shows, including Jacksonville and Tampa. He sells all scales of used merchandise. He is expected to have six tables.

**Henry "Pell" Brown, Mobile, AL.** Pell registered last year and allowed the club to keep his money toward the 2021 show. "I have toy trains to sell, Pre- and Post- war Lionel, American Flyer and HO," Pell says. "I will also have railroad and steamship memorabilia (silver, china, and paper)." This is Pell's first Tallahassee event.

Continued on page three.

## Boulder Creek Engineering CEO Speaking Via Zoom April 20

Boulder Creek Engineering President/CEO Jim Ferenc is the presenter for our April program. Jim is doing a two-part program. The first is an overview of his HO layout. He will present a photo tour of his C&S Ry Northern Division layout. He will then present a Boulder Creek Engineering Product Overview. Those products can be viewed here <https://www.bouldercreekengineering.com/>.

**April 20, 2021, 7:30 p.m.:** "Third Tuesday" BBMRA Meeting. Zoom.  
Program: Boulder Creek Engineering.

**May 4, 2021, 7:30 p.m.:** "First Tuesday" Special/Trivia Night, Zoom.

**BBMRA Zoom: Go to Zoom Program or Internet site and use these codes.**

Meeting ID: 873 5905 5848,  
Password:162465

## Florida Central & Peninsular RR/Seaboard Air Lines

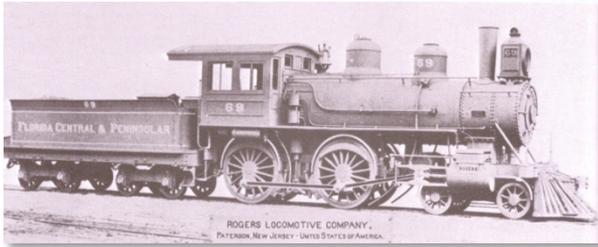
Part three of Bill Bell's three-part history of Tallahassee area railroading. Photos from Wikipedia and Floridastateparks.com.

By: Bill Bell

### Florida Central & Peninsular RR

The Florida Central and Peninsular Railroad was the final name of a system of railroads throughout Florida that became part of the Seaboard Air Line Railway in 1900. This system, including some of the first railroads in Florida, stretched from Jacksonville west through Tallahassee and south to Tampa.

The Tallahassee Railroad (See Part 1 in *The Lantern*, February 2021) was first organized in 1832 as the Leon Railway. After changing its name in 1834, it opened in 1837, connecting Tallahassee to the Gulf of Mexico port of St. Marks. This was the second steam railroad in Florida, opening just a year after the Lake Wimico and St. Joseph Canal and Railroad.



The Florida, Atlantic and Gulf Central Railroad was chartered January 24, 1851 to build west from Jacksonville, and construction began in 1857. The Pensacola and Georgia Railroad was chartered January 8, 1852 to build east from Pensacola but started at Tallahassee. The two lines met at Lake City in 1860, and the latter also built from Tallahassee west to four miles short of Quincy, stopping in 1863.

In 1855 the Pensacola and Georgia bought the Tallahassee. In 1869 the two merged to form the Jacksonville, Pensacola and

Mobile Railroad, which obtained trackage rights over the Florida Central Railroad, the 1868 reorganization of the Florida, Atlantic and Gulf. The railroad eventually was built west to Chattahoochee, a major junction with the Pensacola and Atlantic Railroad continuing west and the Chattahoochee and East Pass Railroad running northeast. In 1882 the Jacksonville, Pensacola and Mobile was reorganized as the Florida Central and Western Railroad, absorbing the Florida Central in 1884.

The Florida Railroad was incorporated January 8, 1853 to build a line across the state, from Fernandina (north of Jacksonville) southwest to Cedar Key. The first train ran in 1861, but the line failed, and the company was reorganized in 1866. In 1872 it was reorganized again as the Atlantic, Gulf and West India Transit Company. The Florida Transit Railroad was the result of another reorganization in 1881.

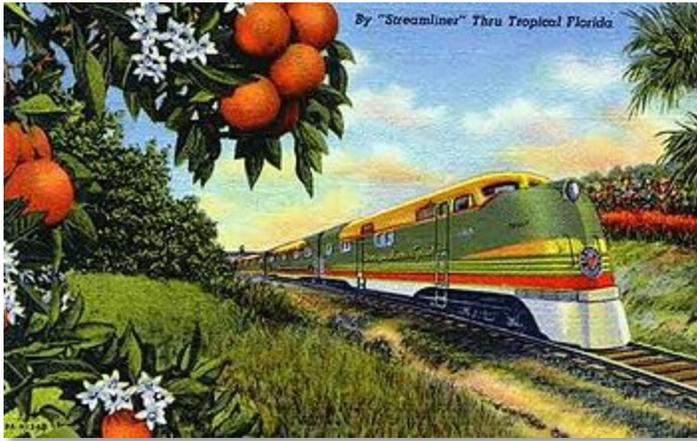
On January 3, 1883, the Florida Transit merged with two un-built companies, the Peninsula Railroad and Tropical Florida Railroad, organized to build lines respectively from the Florida Transit at Waldo to Ocala and beyond to Tampa. This new company was named the Florida Transit and Peninsular Railroad. On January 9, 1885, that company merged with the Florida Central and Western Railroad to form the Florida Railway and Navigation Company. Also included in that consolidation were the Fernandina and Jacksonville Railroad, a connection in the Jacksonville area, and the Leesburg and Indian River Railroad, a line being built across central Florida.

In November of 1885, the FR&N entered receivership but continued to expand, adding lines in the Jacksonville area and a connector to Plant City. In 1888 financier W. Bayard Cutting and other investors purchased the FR&N. On May 1, 1889, the company was reorganized again, as the Florida Central and Peninsular Railway.

The new company, which operated tracks from the Atlantic at Fernandina to the Gulf coast at Cedar Key and St. Marks, quickly expanded south to Tampa and other areas of central Florida. It also began looking north to Georgia and beyond.

In 1892-93, the FC&P arranged a lease of the brand new South Bound Railroad, a 136-mile line between Savannah and Columbia, S.C. completed in 1891. To connect this line with its Florida system, the FC&P built a new 138-mile Savannah-Jacksonville line through Georgia's coastal counties. When it opened in January 1894, a 274-mile line from Jacksonville to Columbia was created.





In addition to the two main lines - Jacksonville to Chattahoochee (Western Division) and Fernandina to Cedar Key (Southern Division) - and the original line from Tallahassee to St. Marks, the FC&P had many other lines including the Monticello Branch which ran from the Western Division at Drifton north to Monticello.

In 1899, the Williams and Middendorf group of Richmond and Baltimore purchased the FC&P and made it part of their Seaboard Air Line. It was merged into the Seaboard Air Line Railway Co. in 1903.

**Photos from Wikipedia and Carolina.com (State of South Carolina) For more information see Georgia's Railroad History and Heritage - Florida Central & Peninsular.**

## 2021 Show Vendors

**Here are additional vendors who either have registered for tables for the June 26-27 show or said they would be registering.**

**JLD Trains, Atlanta:** Jonathan sells and repairs Lionel engines and rolling stock. He has a good supply of Lionel parts. He has appeared in our shows in the past. He will be bringing his test tracks so he should be in the building without the BBMRA test tracks. This would mean – and we could promote it – test tracks in both buildings.

**Kettel's Toy Emporium, Bob Kettel, Dahlonga, GA:** He has paid for four tables. Bob's daughter lives in Killbuck in Tallahassee and he has sold at several of our shows, combining them with visits to family. He has die-cast airplanes, some vintage O Gauge and usually some Mr. Christmas carnival rides.

**Chris Lucibello, Tampa:** American Flyers trains, five tables. Chris has been with us for years. Sadly, his wife, Karen, has passed away since the last show in 2019.

**Memory Station, Lewis Collier, Watkinsonville, GA:** Eight tables. Lewis is a regular with us and a vendor at most train shows in the South. He sells Lionel, MTH and other O Gauge. Sadly, his wife, too, has died since our 2019 show.

**Sam Miller, Tallahassee/George Allen, Eastpoint:** Six tables. George has vintage Lionel O Gauge. Sam has some O, but mainly used HO trains and accessories. This year, for the first time, Sam will also be selling factory-new Bachman HO items. Sam also will be offering trains from the collection of our late friend Bill O'Rourke.

**Joe Ray, Wilsonville, AL:** All scales, new and used, 10 tables. Joe is a regular at the Tallahassee show and other area shows.

**Bill Shaw, Rincon, GA:** Five tables. Bill will be attending his first Tallahassee show. He has used and vintage merchandise of all scales. He also will be conducting workshops at his set-up.

**Todd Tait, HO, Hahira, GA:** Two tables, HO and N Scale used items. Todd also is one of the Georgia, Alabama, Florida N Scale T-Trak group.

**Bill Thompson, Commerce, GA:** Selling used HO and O Gauge. Bill is a former member of BBMRA and has done artwork for DeVoe Moore's Antique Car Museum. (Bill hopes to come. He was a vendor during our 2019 show.

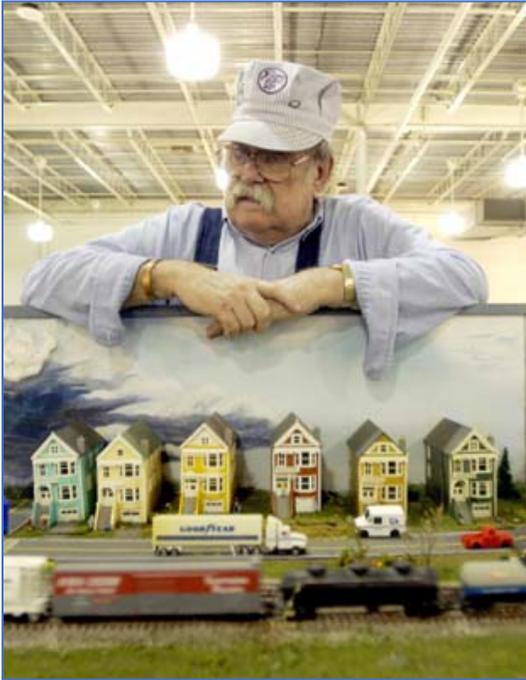
**Tuckers Train Supply, Pensacola:** Ten tables. Terry Tucker's new merchandise of most scales has helped anchor the Tallahassee Show and Sale for years.

**Larry Weigel, Homestead:** Four tables, used HO and N. Larry has been selling with us for a long time. He also is active in NMRA Sunshine Region shows.

## Dan King, a Railroader's Railroader

By: David Brazell

(This wonderful piece from David is another in the series on BBMRA members and friends who have passed away. Contact Neal or Sam if you will write a tribute to a departed member who was a special friend to you.)



In October of 2000, the BBMRA set up a four- corner display at the restored Tallahassee Depot as a part of its grand opening. I heard the announcement on the radio as I went to work. I worked a half a day that day (it was a Friday), so, I decided to check it out. I remember seeing Sam Miller there and there was an older gentleman looking at a picture of a locomotive on the wall. It was an Atlantic Coast Line steam locomotive. He said the locomotive was a 1942 locomotive. I asked him how he knew that. He said the tender had an emblem on it and he knew that these were only made in the early 40s. I was amazed.

This was no other than Dan King. He invited me to the next club meeting, and we exchanged phone numbers. Then he kept calling me the day of each meeting. I was hesitant because I didn't have a layout and had no room in the house for one. After several months of these calls, I came to the meeting. I went ahead and joined, a decision I've never regretted. I used to tell people I had to join so that this guy would quit calling me. Little did I know we would become the closest friends.

After high school, Dan enlisted in the Army and served with distinction as a paratrooper. He saw action in Korea. I'm always thankful to

people like him that not only served but served in a war zone.

Dan King was an excellent modeler, but his real expertise was with the real thing. He worked for the Atlantic Coast Line for almost 10 years. He was a fireman but later in his career he worked in the signal division. I miss not being able to ask him questions about something I see on the road. We often would find a static display somewhere and he would ask me if I knew what a certain piece of equipment was on the locomotive. Of Course, I did not know so he would tell me what it was and what it did.

Dan knew railroads. We would travel places and he could talk to the railroaders. He spoke their language. He also knew people and people knew him. I recall going over to Folkston with just him and me and there was one guy on the platform. He also worked in the signal division of the ACL and had gotten there six months after Dan had left. They spent the next five hours sharing about people and experiences. I thought, is there anyone that doesn't know Dan.

He was an active member of the ACL/SAL Historical society. He looked forward to their yearly meeting in Jacksonville. He was a continually active member of the BBMRA. You could always depend on him to attend meeting and when there were activities, setups for the public, county fairs, train shows, etc. He was always there providing help and sound advice.



One of the pictures in this article was him at a Jacksonville Train Show in 2003 manning our layout. This picture appeared in the Florida Times Union in Jacksonville. I guess they agreed with me that he just looked like a train man, and he was.



**David Brazell, center; Dan is on his right. On his left is Larry Benson, another beloved departed member.**

I learned a lot from him about the hobby. I finally decided the way I was going to participate in this hobby was buy my own stuff and run it on the club layout. So, I had a dozen or so cars and a few locomotives and took them to the fair to run them on the club layout. They ran terrible. I couldn't figure it out until Dan asked me if I checked my coupler height. I said, "My what?" After he explained it and I fixed them, they ran beautifully. That is only one small example of how much he helped me (and anyone needing it) with this hobby.

I miss him every day, especially when I go to Folkston or have a BBMRA event such as the show. He was an invaluable member of this club. God called him home on the 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2015. I guess God needed help with his layout.

## **BBMRA Important Events in 2021!!**

We are including Internet links with major events. Before you drive somewhere, make sure the show or other activity is still scheduled. We will be updating and expanding this as we can. Help us by sending calendar items to [sammiller61113@outlook.com](mailto:sammiller61113@outlook.com)

**BBMRA meetings are still through Zoom and on the first and third Tuesday of each month. Trivia or other special programs are the first Tuesday. The regular meeting is on the third Tuesday.**

**BBMRA Zoom: Go to Zoom Program or Internet site and use these codes.**

**Meeting ID: 873 5905 5848, Password:162465**

Lionel Interest Group Operating Sessions: Sunday afternoons at Sam Miller's house in Woodgate. Only if weather permits for staying outside and socially distanced. Call 850-459-3012 for more information. Please bring a mask.

June 26-27, 2021: 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Tallahassee Model Train Show & Sale, North Florida Fairgrounds, Tallahassee. Set-up is Friday, June 25. <https://www.facebook.com/events/745873359647741>

July 10, 2021: One-Florida Rail Fair, Golden Spike Enterprises, Volusia County Fairgrounds, Deland, FL. <http://www.gserr.com/shows.htm>

September 18-19, 2021: Wiregrass Annual Model Railroad Show & Sale, National Peanut Festival and Fairgrounds, Dothan, AL.

## Randy's Rail Bits – Amtrak, Phantom Engineer, Taiwan Disaster

By: Randy Lombardo

### Amtrak Celebrates the Big 50

May 1, 2021 is a huge milestone for Amtrak, its 50<sup>th</sup> birthday. Celebrations closest to Tallahassee would be in Jacksonville or New Orleans, and what will be going on hasn't been listed on Amtrak's Website yet.

(<https://www.amtrak.com/home.html>) There is the 50th Anniversary merchandise and be sure and check that out.

The Sunset Limited last called on Tallahassee in 2005 & The Floridian last called on Thomasville in 1979. (Speaking of Thomasville, they recently lost Greyhound service for the second time that I can recall.)

Lionel will release in O Gauge an Amtrak 50th Anniversary Boxcar sometime this year. Menards ([menards.com/Trains](http://menards.com/Trains)) has released a 12 x 8-inch illuminated Amtrak station for \$ 59.99. Amtrak's Coast Limited - an O Gauge Set produced by Lionel for Hobby Lobby In 2005, with a nice depiction of Grand Central Terminal in New York – is going to make its debut at our June 26-27 show. I just got it. (Amtrak actually operates out of Penn Station in New York).

Here is more from [railcolornew.com](http://railcolornew.com)



Happy birthday Amtrak! This year, the national passenger operator in the United States celebrates its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. During this special year, Amtrak will release six locomotives in a special heritage design.

Five of them will be P42 diesel locomotives, predominantly used for state and cross-country services. The sixth machine will be Siemens Charger no. 301, a brand new one which is part of Amtrak's order for 'long-distance' Charger locomotives. Photos from [railcolornew.com](http://railcolornew.com)

### Taking Railfanning a Little Too Far

Sometime between March 24 and March 28, an unknown individual broke into a cab of a parked GP 18 (originally manufactured by the Electromotive Division of General Motors), in Newberry, on shortline Florida Northern. This is one of three central shortlines owned by Regional Rail LLC. The phantom engineer moved the diesel through two switches, causing \$30,000 damage to each switch. As soon as the vandalism was discovered, the Alachua County Sheriff was contacted. The Sheriff's Office is asking the public for tips on the perpetrator who decided to take railfanning a little bit too far.



Originally published in [Trains Digest March 31, 2021](#)

### Thomas & Friends Won't Appear in Hot Wheels 2021 Line-up

Mattel, manufacture of Hot Wheels, released the 2021 version of Loco Motorin', as part of the X-Raycers Series in Copper with more see-through detail. Much to the disappointment of collectors, there are no Thomas the Tank Engine items in this new lineup.

### Disaster in Taiwan

A train carrying 494 people at the start of a long holiday weekend, smashed into a construction truck, killing 50 people and injuring 178, including one American, Taiwan's Central News Agency reported. The crash occurred just before the train approached a tunnel. The truck's emergency brake was not properly set. An arrest warrant was issued. The district court allowed the truck owner to post bail in the amount of \$17,500, but he must stay in the county and avoid contact with any witnesses. The investigation is ongoing.

Original Story in the [April 4, 2021 Tallahassee Democrat](#)

# BILLBOARD REEFERS OUT OF THE PAST

By: Neal Meadows, Ed.D.

## Onalaska Pickle and Canning Company

These cars are 40' double sheathed wood ice reefers that shipped produce to and from the Onalaska Pickle and Canning Company in Onalaska, Wisconsin. The model cars are very detailed and have nice Micro-Trains Line couplers installed. They are smooth running and brightly colored with a bright gold and brown paint scheme. The first three are N Scale from Intermountain Railway and the fourth one is HO Scale from Walthers. I have the N Scale 8201 in my collection.



Intermountain Railway 67725-01  
Reporting Marks OPKX 8200  
40' Double Sheathed Wood Ice Reefer  
Truck mounted MTL couplers  
Originally sold for \$19.95 and was released July 1, 2009.

This picture from Trovestar



Intermountain Railway 67725-01  
Reporting Marks OPKX 8201

This picture from my collection.



67725-03 reporting marks OPKX 8202

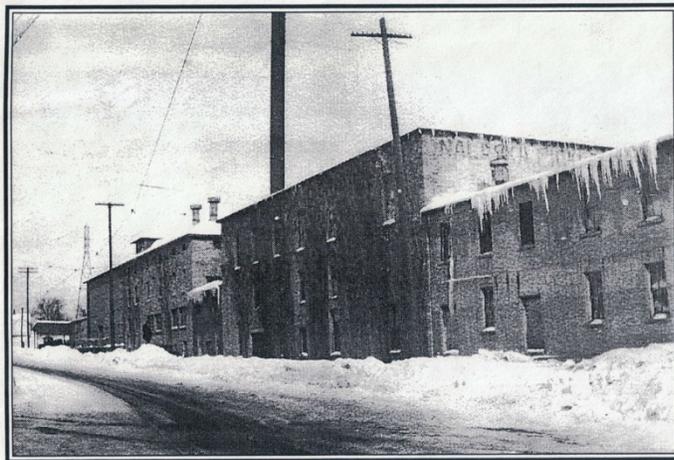
This picture from N Scale Supply



Walther's 40' Wood Reefer Kit  
HO Scale Cannery Reefer 3-Pack  
No 932-9092 1993 Release \$29.99

This set included: Vincennes Packing (yellow);  
Onalaska Pickle & Canning (yellow); and Otoe Food  
Products (creme).

References for this article: Pass the Peas, Please: Wisconsin's Canning History, Recollection Wisconsin; Historical & Architectural Resources Survey, City of Onalaska, WI; New Museum Exhibit, LaCrosse Tribune, June 24, 2005; LaCrosse River Valley Heritage Corridor, LaCrosse, WI.

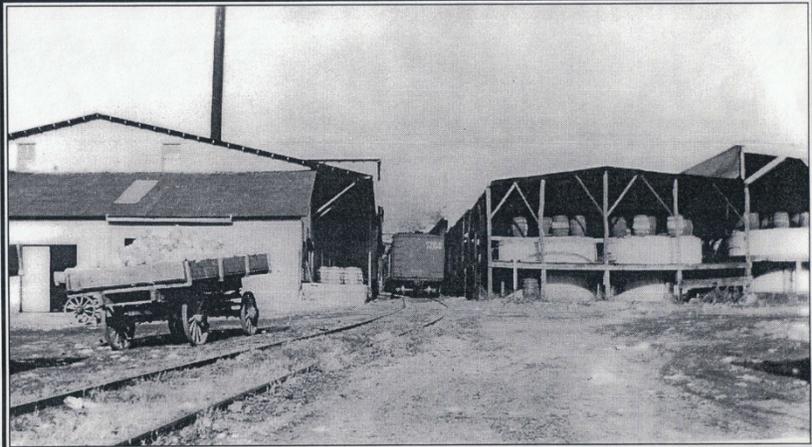


# Onalaska Pickle & Canning Co.

800 Block of Second Avenue S.W.

OPERATED FROM 1906 TO 1957-58.

BRINE TANKS USED FOR  
PICKLES AND SAUERKRAUT.  
NOTE CABBAGE WAGON ON LEFT.



The Onalaska Pickle and Canning Company AKA OPPACCO operated from 1906 to 1958. The building which started as a brewery- still stands on the 800 block of Second Avenue Southwest on the city's south side. These days it is used for storage; but back in 1901 the building was purchased by J. S. Gedney Pickle Company for use as a pickling and canning operation. The company sunk thousands of dollars into remodeling and revamping the former brewery building and in the first year canned 1200 cases of peas, 2,000 bushels of pickles, and three tons of sauerkraut, as well as canning tomatoes according to the research conducted for the Onalaska Pickle and Canning Company display now housed in the Onalaska Public Library.

In November 1906, however the Gedneys decided to move on, and the Onalaska Pickle and Canning Co. was born in its place. OPPACCO offered seasonal employment every year for countless Onalaskans, whether it was husking corn for a penny a bushel in the early days, tending boilers that blanched the peas before canning, or manning the cutting stations that turned 100 acres of cabbage a year into sauerkraut.

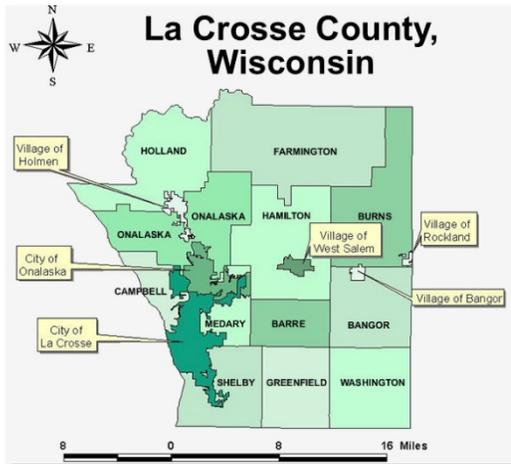
## Influence of the Railroad

The success of agriculture in the La Crosse River Valley was aided by the introduction of the railroad. Dairy products such as butter and cheese, as well as livestock had to be shipped to a viable market. The railroad provided a way for the farmers of rural La Crosse County to reach the markets of large cities like La Crosse, Milwaukee, and St. Paul. In 1858 with the opening of a tunnel at Tomah, the Milwaukee Road railroad began to reach towns in the La Crosse River Valley. The railroad had been operating on a regular schedule from Milwaukee to New Lisbon since 1857, but the rail did not reach West Salem until 1874 (Leonard's Dream:22).



During this time, the condition of roads, where they did exist, was very poor. The railroad was the only reliable means of transportation. The agricultural industry heavily relied on the

railways to transport crops and produce to distant markets. The practice of raising livestock for sale was greatly influenced by the availability of markets. In addition to livestock, the railroad hauled freight such as wheat, flour, vegetables, livestock, dairy products, and farm implements (Memoirs: 73). The influence of the railroad and the prosperity it brought with it was so great that towns often relocated to be in the path of a railroad. The towns of West Salem, Bangor, and Rockland were all established along of the railroad lines.



The establishment of La Crosse County can be attributed to the lumber industry; however, it was agriculture that provided a stable yet productive economy for the county. La Crosse County was able to find profit in agriculture during its early stages of settlement from wheat production, but it was the adaptation of livestock production and then dairying that continued the economic growth of the county. Agriculture spawned the growth of other industries such the manufacturing of agricultural machinery, creameries, cheese factories, milling, and railroads.

The canning industry of Wisconsin produced a variety of canned fruits and vegetables, with corn, peas, and beets being the most profitable. Peas were first canned in Wisconsin in 1887, but the crop became established between 1897 and 1920. Pea production was aided by the

development of new machinery which increased the amount of peas that could be processed. Before 1920 Wisconsin was responsible for producing one third of the nation's total production of peas. After 1920 the amount of peas produced in Wisconsin amounted to over fifty percent.

### About the Brewery and the Building

A series of five buildings comprise what was, at its peak, the Onalaska Pickle & Canning Company complex. Four buildings line 2nd Avenue SW just north of the railroad tracks, while a fifth building is located at the rear (east). Of the four connected street-side buildings, the two center limestone structures are the oldest and date to 1884.

The subject stone buildings were built in 1884 and originally served as the Onalaska Brewery. Onalaska brewing history, however, began in the 1850s, with the arrival of the Gabriel Knecht family. At the age of sixteen, Gabriel Knecht immigrated to the United States with his family from Germany in 1846. While in Newark, New Jersey, he wed German-born Wilhelmina Hemel and in 1852 they moved to Wisconsin. The first record of Gabriel as residing in Onalaska is the 1860 census, which enumerates him, his wife and their five-year-old son Adolph as residing there. Gabriel is identified as a brewer. He died on 12 January 1866. Secondary accounts indicate that his wife (who is identified throughout her lifetime by various nicknames for Wilhelmina, such as Helen, Mena, Minnie, and Amelia) ran the brewery, in association with a bar, restaurant and a hotel, which was managed by Milford G. Moore.

Milford G. Moore was born in Maine in 1829 and, as of the 1860 census, was still recorded as living in his home state, where he worked as a farmer. After moving to Onalaska, he wed Wilhelmina Knecht in August 1867. As of the 1870 census, Milford is identified as both a hotel keeper and brewer, while "Mena" is noted as simply "keeping house." In addition to her two children with Gabriel, she and Milford had a son, Frank, who was born in 1868. Little is known regarding actual beer production numbers for the brewery; however, as of 1879 (and prior to the subject facility being built), it is recorded as having produced/sold 660 barrels out of the total recorded 625,284 barrels produced in the state. Notably, of the total 218 breweries in the state in 1879, over half produced less than 500 barrels. As of 1880, Gabriel's son Adolph was also working in the brewery, with fifty-one-year-old Milford continuing as brewer. Milford and Wilhelmina had also by then adopted a daughter, Pearl (age 12).

Based on secondary accounts, it is believed that Milford continued to serve as brewer through the early 1880s. However, by 1885, an ad in the La Crosse City Directory, identifies Adolph as proprietor brewer and shipper of lager beer at the Onalaska Brewery. That directory also identifies La Crosse contractor and builder Joseph Burgermeister as responsible for the construction of the stone buildings. Adolph is also credited as having excavated the beer caves in the bluff, located east about one mile from the city, in Sand Lake Coulee (they remain extant). The brewery appears to have continued in operation under Knecht until sometime between 1888 and 1893. An 1891 Sanborn map indicates

that the capacity of the brewery was 40 barrels. After briefly sitting idle, the brewery started up once again as of 1894, this time under the name of the Onalaska Brewing Company. Five La Crosse men, including C. Hafner, Emil Kohn, William Wuttke, Emil Bittner, and Fred Schnell, ran the firm until its bankruptcy in 1899. The brewery had been associated with five Onalaska and La Crosse area saloons, the fixtures of which were being sold to pay off the brewery's creditors.



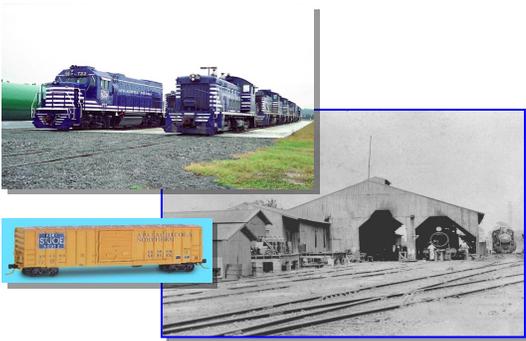
### The Pickle Company

The J.S. Gedney Pickle Company, which was headquartered in Minneapolis, Minnesota, would purchase the former brewery buildings in 1901. Onalaska is noted as having been chosen for three reasons: good transportation facilities; the high quality of area vegetable crops; and the significant yield of area crops. The firm is identified as doing extensive remodeling to the buildings and installed machinery that was noted as worth \$15,000. The first year of operation, the factory canned 1,200 cases of peas, 2,000 bushels of pickles, 3 tons of sauerkraut, along with some tomatoes. After five years of operation,

the Gedneys pulled out of the firm and the company was renamed Onalaska Pickle and Canning Company, with Franklin L. Pierce serving as the new firm president (until his death in 1931).

As of 1910, the total number of workers at the plant numbered 102, twenty-eight of which were women and two were under sixteen years of age. Improvements made to the facility by either Gedney, or the Onalaska Pickle firm include the additions to both the north and south ends of the stone structures, as well as the one-story brick building that is located behind (east of) the original stone facility. They were completed because of the factory's expanding canning operations, which were a result of expanding the territory from which they could get vegetables. It is noted that the original radius, covered by horse-drawn wagons, was approximately seven miles. Following the use of motorized trucks, that area was expanded to include the bulk of La Crosse County and into surrounding counties, as well as Minnesota. In addition to the purchase of produce from area farmers, the firm also operated (until 1952) their own farm east of Onalaska. The company reorganized in 1945 but continued operations until closing in 1957, at which time the company president was John Westerhouse.

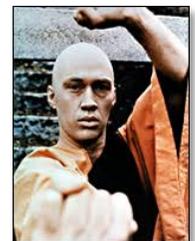
Despite closing, the property remained in the possession of the Onalaska Pickle & Canning Company into the 1980s. In 1963, the buildings were designated as one of two buildings in the city that were identified by the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers as fallout shelters, in the case of a warning or attack. Currently, the property is owned by D&M Recycling.



### Article Series on the Apalachicola Northern Railroad

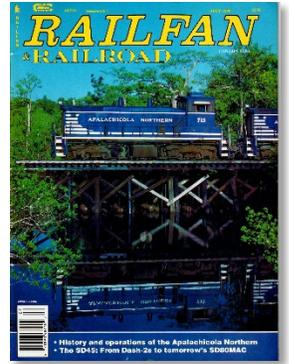
By: Neal Meadows Ed.D.

Last month I mentioned that Sam Miller and I have recently discovered we both have an interest in the Apalachicola Northern Railroad. We decided to develop a series of articles to share what we have found in our quest for knowledge and understanding. Oh! maybe I am thinking of the Kung Fu TV Series – “You will learn Grasshopper!”



On a recent trip to Port St. Joe for the weekend, my wife and I traveled around the area looking at the changes made since Hurricane Michael blasted through that area. A fair amount of new construction is underway so there is growth in

the area. I drove around the areas that housed the Apalachicola Railroad offices and took some pictures to go with ones that I had taken previously. That same weekend Sam and a friend had traveled to the area and hiked the railroad itself taking pictures. Seeing the current state of affairs reminded me of earlier visits to the ANRR headquarters and talking with local ANRR historian Billy Howell. I shared these thoughts with Sam and an idea was born.



We have enough information to fill several articles over the next few months. Much of the history that will be shared will be from a collection of articles, copies of documents, pictures, and magazine articles. One in particular, is an article that appeared in the July 1993 Issue of the Railfan Magazine. The article was written by James Gunning and W. H. "Billy" Howell. I asked for permission to reprint the article in segments adding our own pictures and narrative to the mix for our Lantern newsletters. Kevin EuDaly, President and Publisher of White River Productions, current owner of Railfan & Railroad has given permission to reprint the article (3/10/2021).

The article covers many years from the start of the railroad to present day, that was 1993 when the article was published. We hope to bring you from the beginning to present day 2021 by adding our own information to the series. Hopefully, you will find it interesting. If you have any information you would like for us to include in the article series or any photos, documents, railroadiana, and stories that could enhance the experience, please contact Sam Miller or Neal Meadows.



### The History and Operations of the Apalachicola Northern Railroad (July 1, 1993)

By: James Gunning

Not much in Lowry, Florida. Just a few houses and a sign for Scooter's Acres" near the Route 65 grade crossing with the Apalachicola Northern. There is a road sign to identify the place, and it's a good thing, since it would be impossible to find Lowry otherwise.

Darned afternoon thunderstorms have been ganging up on me trying to blot out the sun. Won't be much of a shot here if the train doesn't hurry up. The crew said they didn't have any work north of Telogia, so I expect them any time now.

I've been hearing the engines for a while, and the sound is getting louder by the minute, but where is the train? They whistled for the Route 20 crossing in Hosford ten minutes ago. Lowry is only three miles out of Hosford -they should have been here by now.

Finally, a headlight, then the tremendous roar of five EMD 645s in Run 8 bursts around the curve. Train speed is down to a crawl. For non-Alco power, the SW1500s are throwing out a very impressive smoke plume. A steep grade in Florida? Never would have thought that. It takes another two minutes for the lead locomotive to reach my location. One by one the SWs howl by at walking speed, carbody doors vibrating, sand swirling around their trucks, well into their short-time rating. The noise is deafening. I watch them for a few minutes until the sound fades into the distance. As I turn to leave, 150 cars worth of chip hoppers, pulpwood racks and boxcars are slowly clunking over the grade crossing.



What a performance! I certainly never expected a grade like this on a Florida short line I had assumed was totally flat. A 150-car train isn't much like a typical short line, either. This reminds me more of Sand Patch or Soldier Summit than the Florida panhandle! Lowry Hill extends from Milepost 71 to Milepost 74 and is the ruling grade northbound at 1 %. But even this is not the steepest on the AN. Chattahoochee Hill, southbound from Milepost 93 to Milepost 89, is 1.5%.

A main line length train roaring up Lowry Hill isn't the only surprise the Apalachicola Norther (it's pronounced APP-ah-latch-ah-cola) has in store for visitors. The roster is all EMD and quite modern, with only the SW9s built before 1969. However, the paint scheme is the original one designed by the La Grange styling section in 1947 for the first diesels on the AN. How many railroads today are using one of the classic EMD paint designs, let alone the same one delivered on its first diesels?

In addition to the classic paint job, the AN roster includes a rare trio of GP15Ts. This type is not common on Class 1s and is even more unusual on a short line.

Paper and wood products have been the primary business of the AN for many years. The line is hundreds of miles from the nearest coal mine in one of the last places you would expect to see much coal traffic. Regardless, since 1982 the AN has been operating unit coal trains and is currently hauling 3.2 million tons of coal a year.

## **The "Panama Route"**

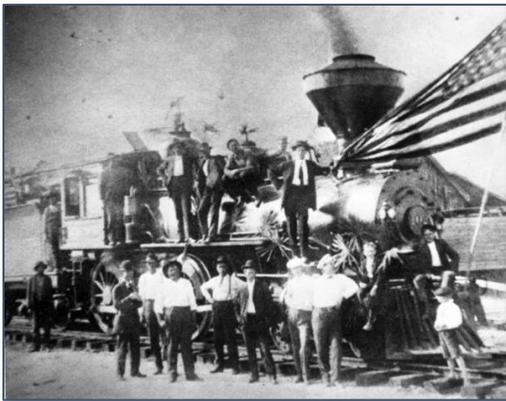
During the Nineteenth Century, Apalachicola, Florida, was of much greater importance as a seaport than it is now. There were few roads and extraordinarily little rail service available in the Florida panhandle. Water transportation on the rivers and along the Gulf of Mexico was the only easy means of travel in the region. Although "Peoples Line" (Plant System) steamboat service on the Apalachicola River was available as far inland as Bainbridge, Georgia, it wasn't always reliable due to seasonally changing water levels.

The Apalachicola Northern was conceived as part of a transportation system linking Atlanta and the southeast United States with shipping via the Panama Canal to ports worldwide. As evidence of this plan, early photos of AN 4-4-0s 101 and 102 show their tenders emblazoned with large "PANAMA ROUTE" lettering. The railroad's backers advertised that shipping through Apalachicola would save hundreds of miles and many hours of transit time over any other Southeast port. The AN would provide reliable year-around rail service unaffected by the weather changes that interrupted riverboat traffic. Secondary to this were any extensions the stockholders desired to build, plus owning and operating floating equipment.

Tapping the abundant forest resources, which are a primary source of revenue for the present day AN, was a major factor in locating and building the railroad. Surveys done prior to construction estimated the area 15 miles on either side of the projected route of the AN to contain between four and five billion board feet of marketable yellow pine.

The Apalachicola Northern was incorporated to build a railroad from Apalachicola to River Junction, (Chattahoochee) Florida. A charter was issued by the State of Florida on April 7, 1903, with initial authorized capital of \$500,000.

Construction began at River Junction on March 21, 1905. The first 30 miles of track construction were comparatively easy with the roadbed on soil that provided good stability and drainage. Unfortunately, the next 49.5 miles were another story. The easy terrain gave way to swampland, making construction much more difficult. The biggest hurdle was crossing the Apalachicola River and its surrounding swamp. Nearly five miles of trestle were required to bridge the swamp. Today, a total of 17,350 feet of bridges and trestlework still remains. The cost of conquering the Apalachicola swamp helped put the AN into receivership even before construction was finished.



Portions of the line were built by the Morey Construction Company and the remainder by the railroad's own crews. Track reached Apalachicola on April 30, 1907. The first train to arrive that day was a work extra powered by No.101, a Baldwin 4-4-0, with engineer George Johnson at the throttle and C.C. Williams, conductor. The AN wasted no time in establishing service. Later the same day, a second train arrived with the first passengers. Another 4-4-0, No.102, with engineer F. Campbell and conductor Thomas McPhaul in charge, pulled the first revenue move.

Connections were made at River Junction with the Louisville & Nashville, Atlantic Coast Line and Seaboard Air Line Railroads and at Apalachicola with the Coastwise Steamboat Lines.

As sawmills and turpentine stills were established along the right-of-way, the AN began hauling some of the forest products (lumber and naval stores) that would be so important in later years. Other traffic was generated by oyster, shrimp, and fish canneries in Apalachicola.

***Next month we continue with the Port St. Joseph Extension***

## Minutes for the BBMRA's March 16, 2021 Meeting

**President** Andy Zimmerman called the meeting, held on March 16, to order via Zoom at 7:31 p.m. There were 22 participants present, according to the Zoom record.

**Minutes** – A motion to accept the minutes from the November meeting was forwarded and subsequently seconded by Neal Meadows. The motion was accepted and passed without objection.

**Treasurer's Report** – Drew Hackmeyer presented the report online using the WebMeeting functionality. We had some expenditures related to the trailer purchase and we received some dues. We are still in the black and looking good. Drew mentioned that several members are paid up until 2022 and we have had three new members join since the last report. As of the meeting date, we then had 50 paid members. There was then some discussion on logistics of payment for a few members. The Treasurer's report was moved by Phil Weston, seconded by Ed Schroeder and accepted without objection.

### Division Reports

**Large Scale** – Sam Miller stated that the Large-Scale group is starting to plan for the T-Traks and incorporation of the trailer in normal club operations. He also mentioned that testing in his driveway may be a possibility for the T-Traks before the show in June. He finally mentioned that with increasing vaccination of members, more folks are joining his regular Sunday group and he is welcoming all who are comfortable to participate.

**HO** – Phil Weston, the HO coordinator, mentioned that HO continued to prepare for the show and should be mostly set. The HO group is not likely to add to the layout footprint. There was then general discussion about the vaccine effects on members that have gotten the shots.

**Small Scale** – Garth mentioned that there will be a work party on the 27<sup>th</sup> of March and then another on the 10<sup>th</sup> of April. Bob asked to confirm the work party dates.

**Switching Layout** – Joe had nothing to add.

**Good of the Group** – There was a question regarding whether we should aim to meet in person now that folks are starting to receive their shots. President Andy mentioned that he is looking into it. David Brazell mentioned Train Fest in Folkston which is planned to be held on April 10<sup>th</sup> this year. There was then general discussion of train watching activity in various locations throughout the country including by President Andy in Texas with trains heading down to Mexico.

The business portion of the meeting was then concluded at 7:57 PM following which President Andy proceeded to invite an official from Intermountain Railway to present.

**Presented by: Sheldon Harrison.**



This Lantern issue, like a train consist, was assembled by Sam Miller and Neal Meadows as the news flowed to us like the cars on a staging yard with many tracks. We ended up with an express news train!



**JUST FOR TRIVIA**

**Rare Newspaper Printed on Board a Transcontinental train....**



June 30, 1870

Transcontinental, Burlington, Iowa

*First Transcontinental Railroad "Overland Route."*

*Very first excursion published newspaper (#11)*

This is a very fascinating newspaper, borne in the ingenious mind of a publisher who decided to take a small printing press on board the first transcontinental railroad excursion and publish 6 issues westbound and 6 issues eastbound. Printed on a Gordon press in the baggage car, it is considered the very first newspaper composed, printed, & published on a train.

This is issue number 11,

published when the train was at Burlington, Iowa. Each issue recorded the process of the journey with the sights and events along the way. Each issue carries the dateline of a different city: Niagara Falls, Omaha, Cheyenne, Ogden, Utah; Salt Lake City, Utah; Summit Sierra Nevadas, San Francisco, Promontory Point, Utah; Laramie, Wyoming, Grand Island Nebraska, Burlington, Iowa; and Boston.

The front page is mostly taken up with a review of the various sights seen the last several days, noting: "...the fertile prairies, the vast stretch of wilderness, the strange rock forms of Wyoming & the mighty cliffs of the Sierras..." and much more. There is also mention that: "The editor of this sheet, having accomplished the remarkable feat of composing, printing & publishing a paper on a railroad train going at 40 miles an hour, is not ready...to publish a paper in a balloon..." (see). Pages 2 & 3 have more interesting, observational reports on the journey including items headed "Old and New" "Our route Through Iowa" "Chicago" and more.

Four pages, great masthead, 7 by 9 3/4 inches, very nice, clean condition. A very rare opportunity for a fascinating & rare newspaper.

Originally described by: Timothy Hughes – Rare & Early Newspapers

