

# THE FLATWHEEL

The Official Monthly Publication of the Central Florida  
Railway Historical Society, Inc.



## February 2013

### February Meeting

Monday, February 11<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM  
Central Florida RR Museum  
101 S. Boyd St., Winter Garden, FL

**Program:** Dispatching on the ACL's  
Ocala District

**By:** Warren McFarland

**Refreshments Provided By:** Dan & Janet Crusie

### March Meeting

Monday, March 11<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM  
Central Florida RR Museum  
101 S. Boyd St., Winter Garden, FL

**Program:** Riverboats of Florida

**By:** Clayton Bishop

**Refreshments Provided By:** Irv Lipscomb

### Central Florida Railway Historical Society, Inc.

#### Central Florida RR Museum Host Duty Schedule — February 2013

DAY	DATE	HOURS	MUSEUM HOST
Saturday	2/2/12	1 P.M. – 5 P.M.	Jarrold Reynolds
Sunday	2/3/13	1 P.M. – 5 P.M.	Richard Bazzo
Saturday	2/9/13	1 P.M. – 5 P.M.	Allen Quinn
Sunday	2/10/13	1 P.M. – 5 P.M.	Mike Kelly
Saturday	2/16/13	1 P.M. – 5 P.M.	Jerry Honetor
Sunday	2/17/13	1 P.M. – 5 P.M.	Gary Dettman
Saturday	2/23/13	1 P.M. – 5 P.M.	Phil Baker
Sunday	2/24/13	1 P.M. – 5 P.M.	Richard Bazzo

### CFRHS Membership Statistics

Society Members	20
Society Century Members	7
Phil Cross	
Bill Dusenbury	
Chuck Hanus	
Jerry Honetor	
Frank Milmore	
Ken Murdock	
Jim Shoemaker	
Society Corporate Members	0
Society Friends	2
Society Family Members	9
Society Student Members	0
<b>Total Members</b>	<b>38</b>

### February Museum Work Session

Saturday, February 16, 2013  
8:30 AM to 3:30 PM

Please come out and help  
with the many chores that  
need to be done!!!!

### February Birthdays

David Rhea 2/4  
Dan Crusie 2/6  
Dan Martin 2/20  
Diane Hardwich 2/21  
Ken Murdock 2/27

# Al Pfeiffer's Photo Corner

This feature focuses on photos taken by our own Society Friend Al Pfeiffer. Over the years, Al has taken thousands of photos related to our favorite hobby and he would like to share some of them with us. Each month, three of Al's photos are featured.



Conrad Yelvington Alco S2 #239 at Wildwood, FL, 3/9/09  
1:40pm



Amtrak #187 Northbound at Marcy, FL, 9/26/10



Florida Central Railroad GP18 #59 at Ocoee FL, 10/3/09

## NMRA National Convention in Orlando in 2017??

The Sunshine Region of the National Model Railroad Association is thinking about hosting the NMRA's National Convention in 2017 in Orlando. The first meeting was held Jan 12th. We need to keep our ears open on this. If it comes to be, the museum could benefit by being open for one of the conventions tours. And if the steam train can be at the museum to offer an excursion, everyone could benefit.

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## Cannonball Christmas Express Ridership

### TAVARES, FLORIDA

Ridership on the Santa trains nearly tripled on the Tavares, Eustis & Gulf Railroad this past holiday season. In 2011, the Cannonball Christmas Express carried 2,494 guests. 2012 figures show ridership on the trains jumped to 7,342.

TE&G Operations Manager, Neil Bagaus, reported that a number of factors contributed to the gain. "We added an additional caboose to the train, scheduled extra runs, and upped our advertising budget. We expanded our advertising to include the area from Daytona Beach to Tampa. Rather than just throw cash at it, we picked our advertising spots and targeted our audience. The result was that we spent less than a \$1.00 in advertising for each guest we carried. In the end, all but 2 of the 59 scheduled trains operated at capacity and both those trains operated in November at 8:30 pm." Capacity was 125 seats. "We didn't charge for kids under 3 and we feel that really helped us with the family business. We are hoping to add at least one more 60 seat coach to our operation for 2013," Bagaus added.

The Tavares, Eustis & Gulf Railroad operates tourist trains out of Tavares, Florida on lines owned by the Florida Central Railroad.

Their website is [www.orangeblossomcannonball.com](http://www.orangeblossomcannonball.com).  
Phone number 352-742-7200.

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## Connor Murdock Working on the Railroad

Photo submitted by Society Members  
Ken Murdock and Bill Cogswell

### All aboard



Katie Naab/staff photographer  
In the conductor's hat is Connor Murdock, 10, who watches over his fathers' layout of model HO trains at the Golden Spike Rail Show on Saturday, Jan. 5th. More about the show's schedule can be found online at [www.gserr.com/shows.htm](http://www.gserr.com/shows.htm).

## Upcoming Events

**February 11, 2013 — Winter Garden, FL** — Monthly Meeting of the Central Florida Railway Historical Society at 7:00 PM in the Central Florida Railroad Museum, 101 South Boyd Street.

**February 16, 2013 — Jacksonville, FL** — 35<sup>th</sup> Jacksonville Rail Fair, Railroadiana and Model Train Show, 9:00 to 4:00. Admission \$7 (under 12 free), Prime Osborn Convention Center, 1000 Water Street (former Jacksonville Terminal). Details: Charlie Miller, 3106 N. Rochester St., Arlington, VA 22213-1348, (703) 536-2954, [rrshows@aol.com](mailto:rrshows@aol.com). Website: <http://www.gserr.com>.

**February 20-23, 2013** — Florida Flywheelers Antique Engine Club's 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Antique Engine & Tractor Show, 7000 Avon Park Cutoff Road, Ft. Meade, FL, 33841. Admission: \$7.00 per day. Call 863-285-9121. Website: <http://www.floridaflywheelers.org>.

**March 11, 2013** — Winter Garden, FL — Monthly Meeting of the Central Florida Railway Historical Society at 7:00 PM in the Central Florida Railroad Museum, 101 South Boyd Street.

**April 8, 2013** — Winter Garden, FL — Monthly Meeting of the Central Florida Railway Historical Society at 7:00 PM in the Central Florida Railroad Museum, 101 South Boyd Street.

**April 13, 2013 — Deland, FL** — 43<sup>rd</sup> Florida Rail Fair, Volusia County Fairgrounds, 3150 East New York Avenue, 9 am – 4 pm, Admission: Adults \$7.00, Under 12 Free. Contact: Charles Miller, 386-736-8185, [rrshows@aol.com](mailto:rrshows@aol.com). Website: <http://www.gserr.com>.

**May 11-12, 2013, The Villages, FL** — The Villages Spring Train Expo, at the Savannah Center, 9 am – 4 pm Saturday, 10 am – 3 pm Sunday. Contact: Alan Goldberg, 352-205-4322, [amgold15@hotmail.com](mailto:amgold15@hotmail.com), Website: <http://villagerailclubs.blogspot.com>.

**May 13, 2013** — Winter Garden, FL — Monthly Meeting of the Central Florida Railway Historical Society at 7:00 PM in the Central Florida Railroad Museum, 101 South Boyd Street.

**June 10, 2013** — Winter Garden, FL — Monthly Meeting of the Central Florida Railway Historical Society at 7:00 PM in the Central Florida Railroad Museum, 101 South Boyd Street.

**July 8, 2013** — Winter Garden, FL — Monthly Meeting of the Central Florida Railway Historical Society at 7:00 PM in the Central Florida Railroad Museum, 101 South Boyd Street.

**July 14-20 2013** — National Model Railroad Association's National Convention in Atlanta GA . More information at [nmra2013.org](http://nmra2013.org).

**August 12, 2013** — Winter Garden, FL — Monthly Meeting of the Central Florida Railway Historical Society at 7:00 PM in the Central Florida Railroad Museum, 101 South Boyd Street.

**August 17-18, 2013, The Villages, FL** — The Villages Summer Train Expo, at the Savannah Center, 9 am – 4 pm Saturday, 10 am – 3 pm Sunday. Contact: Alan Goldberg, 352-205-4322, [amgold15@hotmail.com](mailto:amgold15@hotmail.com), Website: <http://villagerailclubs.blogspot.com>.

### **Florida Live Steamers Winter Meet Dates**

West Toccoi & Bostwick	Jan. 31 - Feb. 3
Big Boots & Western	Feb. 4 - Feb. 10
Central Pasco & Gulf	Feb. 9 - Feb. 13
Largo Central	Feb. 14 - Feb. 17
Manatee Central	Feb. 17 - Feb. 20
Ridge Live Steamers	Feb. 21 - Feb. 24
Sebring System	Mar. 9 - Mar. 10

**The following story is courtesy of Society Member Warren McFarland.**

### **Annual Samuel Morse Birthday Party at the Central Florida RR Museum APRIL 27, 2013**

Florida Chapter members will gather at the Central Florida Railroad Museum, located at 101 South Boyd Street, Winter Garden, FL, a few miles west of Orlando, to commemorate the birthday of Samuel F. B. Morse, the developer of electromagnetic telegraphy as we know it. Members will display and demonstrate antique and replica telegraph instruments and equipment. In addition, using a special computer program which turns the Internet into multiple telegraph circuits, they will exchange telegraphic greetings with members of other Morse Telegraph Chapters throughout the United States and Canada, and also with interested participants from all around the world. For the benefit of visitors who are not telegraphers, the computer program will also translate and display those exchanges on the Museum's big screen TV which will be used as a computer monitor for the day. Admission is FREE (donation) and the public is invited. Hours 10AM-4PM.

**The following story is courtesy of Society Member Roger Wilson.**

The Friends of the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania is hosting a Catskills & Saratoga Springs Ramble, October 9 through 13, 2013. Featured on this customized trip to New York State during the colorful, fall foliage season are train rides on the Rip Van Winkle Dinner Train of the Delaware & Ulster Railroad, Catskill Railroad, Saratoga & North Creek Railway and Cooperstown & Charlotte Valley Railroad, as well as two trolley rides. Also featured are visits to the Kingston, New York Trolley Museum, Empire State Railway Museum, National Museum of Racing & Hall of Fame in Saratoga Springs, Train Station Museum, Adirondack Museum, Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, Electric City Trolley Museum and Steamtown National Historic Site. Four nights' hotel accommodations, four breakfasts, four lunches and five dinners are included. Register today, so you don't miss this great travel opportunity: <http://www.rrmuseumpa.org/membership/rambles/Catskills-Saratoga-Springs-Ramble-2013.pdf>.

**The following story was written and submitted by Society Member Lloyd Brown.**

## **The Greatest Train Robbery That Ever Happened in the United States**

On June 12, 1924 while Dad was still operating the Rondout Tower, the greatest train robbery that ever happened in the United States began to unfold. The robbers stole in the neighborhood of \$3-million in cash, bonds and jewels.

A Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul eleven car mail train stood, being load, in Chicago's Union Station. This train was made up of only mail and express cars, carrying bonds and currency from the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago to banks in the Northwest. A slender, young William Fahy of the city's postal inspectors, walked up to talk with two men in tattered overalls and holding railroad lanterns. The trio, Fahy, William Newton and Brent Glasscock spoke. No one at the time knew they were making last minute plans to ensure that the robbery came off perfectly. The two gang members who were in overalls slipped aboard, behind the tender and rode the train out of Chicago, northward along the main line for about 30 miles. When the train approached Rondout, and passed the tower, were it ran under the Chicago & Milwaukee Electric Railroad (North Shore Line) viaduct, the two bandits were alerted by the deafening roar of the railroad cars rolling through the viaduct tunnel. This was the signal they had been waiting for.

With their pistols out, Newton and Glasscock crawled quickly from the tender into the cab of the locomotive, and pushed their weapons into the backs of the engineer and fireman and ordered them to bring the eleven car train to a halt. The air brakes were applied, and the train groaned to a stop near the Buckley

Road crossing. Just two miles north of Rondout. Other members of the gang were waiting in automobiles and along the track. That is when Newton and Glasscock forced the engineer and fireman off the train and marched their prisoners toward the rear of train. Waiting along the track were four of the other robbers, Willis' three brothers, Willie, Jesse and Joseph, and Herbert Holliday.

Glasscock was using a flashlight to light their way along the tracks, and that is when they saw a figure half-hidden in the underbrush. The nervous robbers fired five shots in a rapid succession, almost without thinking, and the figure slumped over. They were heading down the tracks to the mail cars, which they knew

contained a fortune for the taking. Three or four of the robbers threw bottles of formaldehyde through the windows of the cars, blinding the guards and clerks. The robbers then forced the door in the first mail car. They were met with a rain

of bullets from the mail clerks and guards in the car, but they succeeded in overpowering them. One robber, however, was shot. His fellow robbers carried him along the track back to the automobiles and place him in one of the autos.

The robbers then forced their way into the second car and the third, but escaped unscathed from the rain of lead the guards and clerks fired on them, and they succeeded in overpowering the guards and clerks. The robbers did not go into any of the other cars, for they found forty pouches of registered mail in the first three cars. Two of the robbers unloaded the pouches which they knew were the ones they wanted. They carried them to four cars they had parked along Buckley road. Although there was a crew of seventy mail clerks and guards on the train, they were all locked in the other cars with instructions that in no event were they to open the doors.

The clerks and guards from the three cars were forced outside and lined up against the train. They were guarded by three of the robbers. As soon as the other two robbers were back to the mail cars, the three robbers guarding the train crew made them turn away from the road as they retreated towards their cars. Glasscock checked to see if all six were ready to leave. But only five were accounted for.

Now the robbers first mistake came to light. Glasscock had impulsively shot down one of his cohorts, Willie Newton, who apparently had disobeyed preliminary orders not to approach the front of the train. Looking for Newton, they found him where they had left him, in the underbrush, seriously wounded by bullets in the jaw, the shoulder, the right hand and side. He was carried to one of the cars and laid bleeding on an impromptu cot of mail sacks.

Fifteen minutes had passed since the crime had begun. It was all over quickly, and the robbers roared westward along Buckley road. It was obvious that the holdup had been well planned, and that the robbers knew exactly what was on board. The chief mail clerk in the second rail car said one of the robbers told him: "I want the Federal Reserve shipments to Milwaukee, Minneapolis, St. Paul, Helena, Butte, Seattle and Spokane." Then the robber added: "I also want, for my own special purposes, a sack you have consigned to Roundup, Montana."

Soon after the robbers had left, one of the plundered train's crewmen called into Chicago to report the holdup, and the machinery of crime solution quickly got into high gear. All available federal officers and railroad and express company detectives were dispatched to the scene, and they were soon joined by Lake County sheriff's deputies.

Larry Benson, general superintendent of police for the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul railroad was visiting at the home of Michael Hughes, chief of Chicago detectives. With Benson was his small daughter. Hearing of the daring almost unbelievable crime, Benson headed for the scene in a chauffeured Cadillac, his daughter with him. In the meantime, roadblocks were erected throughout northern Illinois. The robbers had headed west, toward, Libertyville. A dispatcher at Danville junction, about two miles from Rondout, reported seeing four automobiles speeding by in a westerly direction. He managed to get one of the license numbers, 657-616, but he did not get the state name.

The criminals made a "clean" getaway that night. The following morning, sheriff's deputies found two of the automobiles used by the robbers and abandoned mail sacks along the back roads leading to an area of dense forests and lakes in Crystal Lake. It looked as if the area was a pre-arranged hideaway at Crystal Lake.

Larry Benson got to the Buckley road crossing and scene of the crime about an hour after it all happened. He found Newton's blood trail, a pair of gas masks, Willie's gun and two quart bottles, one of formaldehyde gas, the other of nitroglycerin. But the latter was odorless, and Benson did not realize what it was. He tossed it into the back seat of the car, where his daughter slept.

Benson was at the scene of the robbery barely 20 minutes when postal inspector Fahy, in an old white truck driven by a Negro (black man), arrived there. Fahy and the driver between them, had just finished a fifth of whiskey.

When Benson left the crime scene, he and his daughter rode in the auto that he had put the evidence he had found earlier, often over bumpy roads, with the bottle of nitroglycerin aboard. Yet by some miracle the sensitive chemical was never jarred into a deadly explosion. While riding back to Chicago, Larry Benson realized that Fahy could not possibly have reached the Buckley road crossing before he did unless he had left before Benson did. They both arrived at the scene only minutes apart. Benson had traveled in a speedy Cadillac while Fahy had not been told about the train robbery. This proved to be the gang's second error, a mistake in timing and undoubtedly due to Fahy's drinking.

Larry Benson, began to suspect the answer to the holdup's basic question was, who had supplied the inside information which only postal officials knew about the size of that shipment? As it turned out, it had been Fahy. Larry Benson had no real proof to go on at this point. But he strongly suspected Fahy, despite the fact that he knew him personally and respected the postal inspector. The Chicago police refused to even consider Benson's theory, once he had revealed it, for Fahy was a man believed to be above suspicion.

After the County sheriff's deputies checked out the Crystal Lake area and finding no sign of the robbers, a report came in that a plane was seen to land about two miles from Rondout, and then immediately take off in the direction of Chicago. A check of local hangars revealed that no local planes were in the air at the time after the robbery. Still another possibility being considered was that the robbers had backtracked, headed east to Lake Michigan, and escaped by launch. This was proposed because of a report that early in the evening on the night of the robbery a launch had docked at Highland Park, and twenty men had come ashore, some of whom matched the descriptions of the robbers. Shortly thereafter, the two automobiles later abandoned by the robbers were found to be stolen.

Because of the size of the haul, Chicago police suspected that some of the city's major criminals might be involved, and a dozen arrests were made throughout the city. Those picked up included gangsters Dean O'Bannon, Louis Alterie, and Earl Weiss. Eventually, however, they all had to be released. It was later revealed that postal authorities had received a tip several days before the robbery that a gang of criminals from Philadelphia had joined up with Chicago gangsters for raids on the mails.

On Saturday evening, two days after the robbery a report circulated that Chicago police cruising the city found a man lying in the front yard of a west side home apparently severely injured. On examining him, they discovered that he was Willie Newton, and he had been shot five times. The police found a new \$1,000 bill and a new \$500 bill in his pockets, they placed him under arrest. Believing that he was about to enter the house when he collapsed, they knocked at the door. When they were refused entry, they raided the place by breaking down the doors and arrested the occupants. Two men and a woman, identified as Walter McComb, his wife, Catherine, and Paul Wade. Shortly thereafter, another man arrived at the house. Not seeing the police, he entered and was also arrested. He gave his name as James Mahoney. When Mahoney was searched, the police found three more new \$500 bills. The others were then searched, and over \$20,000 in bills were uncovered, most of it from Paul Wade.

At first, Wayne claimed he had been shot by a woman near Hammond, Indiana, but under further questioning of the kind Chicago police were famous for in the 1920, he confessed that he had been in on the Rondout robbery and that he had been shot by the leader of the gang for "disobeying orders."

Additional checking revealed that Wade and Mahoney generally matched descriptions of two of the robbers, and that Mahoney was actually James Murray, a former Chicago policeman, political boss and part owner of a local brewery before Prohibition. Further investigation revealed that Murray and the Newton's had at first conceived the robbery. But they lacked inside information about mail shipments. Murray talked to Fahy, apparently convincing him that crime could pay in this case, and the postal inspector threw in with the criminals.

By Sunday, police reported they had another suspect, James H. Watson. He had attempted to bribe several of the police officers to let him go, promising them \$20,000, which he said he could obtain from a friend in Milwaukee. The police also reported that Catherine McComb admitted knowing about the robbery, and soon thereafter her husband confessed to taking part in it.

The following Tuesday, June 17, an abandoned car was found near Joliet, Illinois. Inside were all but six of the stolen mail sacks. Most of the registered and insured mail was undisturbed; only the packages containing money were missing. About the same time, police picked up a Chicago gangster named Carlo Fontano and charged him with being in on the plot. Also, they said that two more of the Rondout robbers had been identified and were being sought.

They were Ernest Fontano, Carlo's brother and Anthony A. Kisano, also of Chicago. Then, on Wednesday the eighteenth, A. E. Germer, Chief Postal Inspector, and Chicago Police Chief Morgan A. Collins announced that they had discovered that the suspects Wayne, Wade, and Watson were really three brothers from Texas: Willie "Dock" Newton, Willis Newton, and Joe Newton. Furthermore, said Germer, the last of the Rondout robbers had now been identified. They were Samuel Grant and Blackie Wilcox, both escaped convicts from the Texas State Penitentiary at Huntsville.

Jessie Newton (it's not known whether he had originally been named after Jesse James) fled to Mexico when he heard that his three brothers had been arrested.

But police knew that the robber thought of himself as a rough-and-ready bronco buster. So, they circulated fictitious posters announcing a prize of \$500 to the rider who could break a certain wild horse at the Texas rodeo.

Jessie could not pass up this chance to prove his riding abilities. He bought a full cowboy outfit, crossed the border back into the United States and into Texas, where he was quickly arrested.

In the meantime, Fahy came under real suspicion by the Chicago police after another of the robbers had remarked, on seeing the postal inspector, "You ought to be in handcuffs yourself." Larry Benson's theory now came to be supported, but the police had to prove something definite. Billy Fahy was one of the foremost postal inspectors in the country. His arrest record for mail robbers was

the envy of the department and he had personally solved some of Chicago's biggest cases. At first his fellow inspectors could not believe the evidence that began to accumulate against him, such as the fact that he had been spending more than \$3,500 in one night at a Chicago speakeasy, an amount that equaled his entire year's salary. The Chicago police set a trap for Fahy when James Murray, deeply implicated by the Newton brothers, was released on bail. Murray's phone was tapped; a fake message was sent to Fahy, supposedly from Washington. Actually, it was Larry Benson who sent the note, which read, "Have information Murray involved in Rondout robbery." After getting the message, Fahy who was carefully trailed, went to a pay telephone booth and phoned Murray. His conversation was recorded as he told Murray about the note. Officials now had proof of the postal inspector's deep involvement in the holdup. Benson continued to work on the case himself until sufficient evidence was built up, and Fahy was finally arrested in August.

Background checks on the Newton brothers revealed that all four had been engaged in train and bank robberies in the West for at least ten years. Glasscock, too, was a professional criminal, and apparently was the leader at Rondout. Fahy, the others said, was the "inside man" who gave them the information on when and where to stage the holdup. James Murray was also involved, they said. Fahy and Murray insisted on their innocence and were tried.

Both were found guilty. Fahy got the longest sentence of all the Rondout gang. He received 25 years, at the Federal penitentiary in Atlanta. The rest of the gang pleaded guilty. All except for Herbert Holliday turned over their share of the loot and testified for the government. In return they received relatively light sentences. Holliday refused to cooperate and would not reveal where his share, \$100,000 was hidden. He also received twenty-five years.

I think Joe and Willis Newton each received 10 years at the Federal Prison in Atlanta, Georgia. Upon their release from prison they returned to Texas to live out their lives.

Larry Benson, my father's good friend went on to become Assistant to the President of the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad. Larry, during his career as a detective, was shot twice. Spending a total of 47 years in railroading, he once tracked the killer of his partner for 14 years before bringing him to justice. Larry Benson passed away in March 1961 at his home in Libertyville.

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## 2012 Annual Activities Report

By Society Historian Phil Cross

- **Phil Cross – President**
- Chapter meetings held at the Central Florida RR Museum.
- Chapter continued as Partner in Education with Lakeville Elementary School.
- Chapter membership for the year totaled 67 regular, family and local members.
- The Central Florida Railroad Museum had a record attendance of 7,602 visitors.
- Chapter members donated a total of 2,753.25 hours for the operation and maintenance of the Central Florida Railroad Museum.
- Monthly work sessions were held at the Central Florida Railroad Museum.
- The Central Florida Railroad Museum is operated under a cooperative agreement between the City of Winter Garden, the Winter Garden Heritage Foundation and the Central Florida Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society.

Feb. 18-19 The 40th Anniversary Amtrak Train was on display at Tampa's Union Station on February 18th and 19th. Admission was free. The public was invited to attend. Three Chapter members (Allen Quinn, Patrick Smith and Jim Benson) and three guests rode Amtrak to Tampa and toured the train on the 18<sup>th</sup>. The train exhibit was very well done. There were three exhibit cars with displays showing the history and development of Amtrak in chronological order. After they saw the train, they walked to the trolley stop and took the trolley to the port for a dinner. The train rides to and from Tampa were good. The train was on time southbound and about a half hour late northbound. It was a good outing.

Feb. 23-26 Several Chapter members and guests visited the Florida Live Steamers Annual Winter Meet at Dundee. A number of steam and diesel trains were operated throughout each day. The members and guests rode just about every one that was hauling passengers.

Feb. 22-25 Five Chapter members and two guests went on a Chapter field trip to the Florida Flywheelers' Annual Winter Show at Fort Meade on February 25<sup>th</sup>. They enjoyed the many events that went on throughout the day. The highlights of the day were the old-time sawmill operation and the tractor pulls. The site is very large (240 acres) and taking golf carts to ride made it much easier to get around the site.

Mar. 2-4 The North American Rail Car Operators Association (NARCOA) sponsored their annual motor car excursions on the Florida Central RR (Friday, March 2<sup>nd</sup> and Saturday, March 3<sup>rd</sup>) and Florida Northern RR (Sunday, March 4<sup>th</sup>). Friday's excursion was roundtrip from Eustis to Mt. Dora and return. The caravan stopped in Tavares enroute to Mt. Dora and rode the Orange Blossom Cannonball. Then they continued their excursion to Mt. Dora and then returned to

Eustis. There were 23 motor cars and 3 hi-railers and 2 Chapter members rode. Saturday's excursion was round-trip from Eustis to Winter Garden and return. There were 23 motor cars and 3 hi-railers and 2 Chapter members rode. Chapter members manned the Museum and hosted the group upon their arrival in Winter Garden. Sunday's excursion was from downtown Ocala south to Candler, north to Lowell, and then return to Ocala. There were 14 motor cars and 2 hi-railers and 1 Chapter member rode.

Mar. 5-May 31 "Down at the Depot," an exhibit of railroad paintings by Dan Crusie, was set up in the Central Florida Railroad Museum. A total of 23 paintings were exhibited. Prints made from the original paintings were for sale with a portion of the proceeds being donated to the Central Florida Chapter.

Apr. 14-15 The Central Florida Railroad Museum was open for the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Bloom & Grow *Spring Fever in the Garden* event in downtown Winter Garden. The Museum was open six hours on Saturday and four hours on Sunday. Three Chapter members manned the Museum on Saturday and three Chapter members manned the Museum on Sunday. Estimated attendance was 200 for Saturday and 100 for Sunday. The Greater Florida Lego Users Group (GFLUG) set up and manned two Lego displays in the Museum Meeting Room both days. Six members manned the display on Saturday and five members manned the display on Sunday. The Museum and Lego displays were a big hit with the attendees.

Apr. 28 The Florida Chapter of the Morse Telegraph Club held its Annual Morse Day Celebration at the Central Florida Railroad Museum between 10 AM and 4 PM in celebration of the birthday of Samuel B. Morse, the inventor of the telegraph and Morse Code. Club members displayed and demonstrated antique and replica telegraph instruments and equipment. Much interest was shown in a display prepared by Don Andrus that demonstrated an active replica of the radio room aboard the Titanic which sank in the North Atlantic on April 15, 1912, a century ago. Using modern technology and the Internet, telegraphic greetings were exchanged with other Morse Telegraph Club chapters throughout the U.S. and Canada. A computer program allowed the content of the telegraphic transmissions to be displayed on the Museum's 55-Inch TV set so that non-telegraphers were able to follow along. After lunch, they brought out the traditional "Happy Birthday, Samuel B. Morris" cake (on this occasion, two cakes) and everyone including visitors were invited to partake. Chapter members Clarence Hurt, Irv Lipscomb and Patrick Smith hosted the event.

Apr. 28 Chapter Member Roger Wilson and Chapter Friend Dwight Stoffel traveled to Folkston, Georgia on Saturday, April 28th for some railwatch activities at the "Folkston Funnel." They arrived at 10:15 AM and saw three trains in the first 20 minutes. Train activity remained steady until about 2:00 PM. They left around 4:00 PM to head home to Lake County.

May 12 National Train Day. Festivities in Tampa included the 100th Birthday Celebration for Tampa Union Station. The ACL-SAL Historical Society held their summer meeting in Plant City May 10<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup>. They had a large display at Tampa Union Station on the 12<sup>th</sup>. Several Chapter members attended the festivities in Tampa on the 12<sup>th</sup>. Fourteen Chapter members and guests came by Amtrak, one Chapter member came by car, and three Chapter members and their wives drove over from the ACL-SAL meeting.

July 3-4 Chapter Member Roger Wilson travelled to Spencer, NC for the special display of NS Heritage units and NS's 30th Anniversary celebration. Roger said the heat was terrible, but the train crews from the Piedmont Division of NS worked tirelessly through the heat to keep events rolling both days.

July 16 Work begins on the replacement of the railroad bridge over the Dora Canal in Tavares, the clearing of tree debris from the Dora Canal between Lakes Dora and Eustis, and the rebuilding of the track from just south of the bridge to the east end of Wooton Park in downtown Tavares. All work is expected to be complete in mid to late August. As a result of the work, the Tavares, Eustis & Gulf Railroad temporarily suspended operations on July 5<sup>th</sup>.

July 23-26 The Central Florida Railroad Museum complex and the Chapter's former Clinchfield RR caboose were tented and treated for termites. The Chapter paid for the tenting of the caboose and the City of Winter Garden paid for the tenting of the Museum complex.

August 4 **Following a lengthy two-hour discussion, the Chapter's Board of Directors voted to recommend to the Chapter membership the following four recommendations:** 1) withdraw as a Chapter from the NRHS and form a new organization; 2) the name of the new organization to be *The Central Florida Railway Historical Society*; 3) regular membership dues will be \$45 per year; and 4) all assets of the Central Florida Chapter NRHS to be transferred to *The Central Florida Railway Historical Society*.

August 13 **The Chapter's Board of Directors made a presentation to the Chapter membership in attendance regarding the future of the Central Florida Chapter. The Board presented the four recommendations approved at the August 4<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting/Retreat for consideration by the Chapter membership.**

- 1. Withdraw as a Chapter from the NRHS and form a new organization.**
- 2. Name of new organization to be The Central Florida Railway Historical Society.**
- 3. Regular membership dues will be \$45 per year.**
- 4. All assets of the Central Florida Chapter NRHS to be transferred to The Central Florida Railway Historical Society.**

**Following the presentation, a motion was made and seconded to approve the four recommendations together as a single motion. The motion passed. The changes will take effect January 1, 2013.**

- Sept. 10 All work complete on the replacement of the railroad bridge over the Dora Canal in Tavares, the clearing of tree debris from the Dora Canal between Lakes Dora and Eustis, and the rebuilding of the track from just south of the bridge to the east end of Wooton Park in downtown Tavares.
- Sept. 15 The Tavares, Eustis & Gulf Railroad resumes operations between Tavares and Lake Jem with steam locomotive # 2, a 1907 2-6-0 wood-burning engine, and its accompanying passenger train and red wooden driver's caboose.
- Oct. 5-7 Chapter members manned the Museum the evening of the 5<sup>th</sup>, all day on the 6<sup>th</sup> and the afternoon of the 7<sup>th</sup> in conjunction with the Winter Garden Heritage Foundation's Annual Music Fest. The Museum was open 4 hours on Friday evening, 8 hours on Saturday and 4 hours on Sunday. Three Chapter members manned the Museum on Friday, 5 Chapter members manned the Museum on Saturday, and 3 Chapter members manned the Museum on Sunday. Estimated attendance was 25 for Friday evening, 125 for Saturday and 50 for Sunday. Attendance was not as good as in past years. The Greater Florida Lego Users Group (GFLUG) set up and manned a nice Lego display of downtown Winter Garden (including both depots) in the Museum Meeting Room on Saturday and Sunday. Chapter Member Warren McFarland set up and manned a great telegraph display in the Museum Meeting Room on Saturday and Sunday. The Museum, Lego display and telegraph display were a big hit with the attendees.
- Nov. 17 Fourteen Chapter members, friends and guests went on a field trip to visit the ghost railroads around Sanford. Chapter members Ken Murdock and Frank Milmore hosted the tour. Attendees visited the various locations of several former railroads that once operated into or out of Sanford. The field trip followed the presentation that Ken and Frank gave at the Chapter's November monthly meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup> on the ghost railroads around Sanford.
- Dec. 1 **The 2012 Chapter Annual Banquet was held at the 801 City Grille in downtown Clermont.** A total of 34 members, spouses and guests attended and enjoyed the evening's activities and entertainment. Entertainment was provided by pianist Armando Velasquez. After dinner, the Central Florida Railway Historical Society, Inc. Officers for 2013 were sworn in by Lloyd Brown. Ken Murdock presented the Ken Murdock Glad Hand Award for 2012 to Jerry Honeter for his efforts in the cataloging of the library's collection of books, periodicals, tapes and DVDs.
- Dec. 16 Several Chapter members and guests attended the Annual Meeting and Volunteer Appreciation Night for the Winter Garden Heritage Foundation which was held at the Attic Door in downtown Winter Garden. Ken Murdock was recognized as the 2012 Railroad Museum Volunteer of the Year for his many contributions and hours of hard work.

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The following story is courtesy of Society Member Roger Wilson and Society Friend Addison Austin.

## Stolen Train Crashes Into Home in Sweden

By GUSTAV SANDSTROM



STOCKHOLM—A young woman charged with cleaning a commuter train instead appears to have stolen the empty train from a depot and driven it until it derailed and crashed into a house in a Stockholm suburb, local officials said.

An injured person was found by the train and sent to a hospital in an ambulance helicopter, local police said, adding the injured person was also detained for endangering the public. Police said it was unlikely that anybody except the driver was on the train at the time of the accident, and no other injuries were reported.

Local police received an alarm call around 2.30 a.m. that a derailed train had collided with a building in the suburb of Saltsjobaden.

Bertil Grandinson, 71 years old, who lives on the top floor of the three-story building, woke up in the middle of the night from the loud crash, Swedish daily Aftonbladet reported. "It sounded like an air-plane crash. I rushed to the window and then I saw the train," Aftonbladet quoted him as saying.

Tomas Hedenius, spokesman for train operator Arriva, said it remains unclear what the woman's intentions had been when the vehicle crashed at a speed of 80 kilometers per hour. He said the woman had been hired to clean the train and its depot.

"If you manage to get hold of the key, it isn't particularly difficult to get a train rolling," he said. It isn't any more difficult to stop a train than to start it, he added.

The Associated Press quoted Mr. Hedenius as saying that there had been three families inside the house, which held several apartments, when the train crashed into it, but that no one was injured.

"The police technicians have probably finalized the technical investigation," police spokesman Lars Bystrom told The Wall Street Journal. "Now that needs to be completed with witness hearings and other things so that we can sort out what happened and why."

By Tuesday afternoon, it still hadn't been possible to hear the injured person, Mr. Bystrom said. Incidents involving trains getting seized and crashed into buildings are practically unheard of. According to her colleagues at cleaning firm Caretia, the young woman, born in 1990, has been a well-liked coworker, Mr. Hedenius said. "You didn't see this coming," he said.

Photographs from the scene showed the crumpled front car of the train buried deep into the structure.



# January 2013 Museum Report

By Ken Murdock, Museum Curator

Our January 26<sup>th</sup> museum workday was very productive with 9 members participating. Phil Cross came on Friday to do his outside chores of weeding, picking up trash and blowing off the walks as he usually does monthly even if we don't have a scheduled workday. Then on Saturday Phil and Joe Lehmann took care of the inside housekeeping chores of mopping and vacuuming. Joe always removes all of the chairs in the meeting room to give it a thorough cleaning.

Allen Quinn was able to continue sandblasting and painting of the caboose stove since the weather was perfect. Allen is well over half finished and the stove is really looking good. Jerry and Ginger Honetor continued working on the inventory in the library. Our library holds a gold mine of information and Jerry makes new discoveries every day that he works in it.

Bill Dusenbury continued scanning the photo collection donated by Dick Kearns, a past member and Flat Wheel Editor before moving to New York. Debby Dusenbury came out and joined us for lunch since she and Bill were hosting the museum in the afternoon. After lunch Debby took care greeting visitors at the front desk so that Bill could continue with his scanning project. We really appreciate our ladies wanting to be involved.

Al Sharp and I worked with the collection all day rearranging items and grouping similar items that had been scattered in several different showcases. We installed the T&G "Ocoee" depot sign and the "American Railway Express" signs that Phil had donated and David Rhea has painstakingly restored at his home. This of course involved moving other things to make room for the signs. Al made an attractive wood mounting base at home for some Colorado mining railroad, narrow gauge spikes and we placed them back in the showcase with the light rail that they accompany. I too made a wood display case at home for the two brass luggage tags, one from the South Florida RR and the other from the Jacksonville, Tampa & Key West RR, that were donated by Bill Cogswell. We also placed this display in a showcase which required moving other items to fit them in.

Al and I worked on the 1880 vintage passenger car seat that sat to the right of the restroom entry way. Someone broke the arm off, probably by sitting on it. Our "do not sit on the seat" sign didn't mention the arm! In the process of repairing it and trying to make the "through-over" seat back mechanism work properly, we discovered more work need to be done, requiring tools that we didn't have at the museum. So we loaded it in Al's SUV and took it to my house where we will continue the repair.

Al hung the new "Past Presidents" plaque that Lloyd Brown had updated for us and it really looks good. Thanks Lloyd for the fine job that you did! Al also hung a display on the library door explaining how the railroad crossing signals were once operated manually by signal tenders in small towers spaced along the main line tracks passing through Orlando. Yes, all of this required moving other things to make room for the new items. We are out of space!

Once finished with their housekeeping chores, Phil and Joe set up their laptops and began working on the new Society website and the Flat Wheel. Joe has done an outstanding job with our new web site. Some sections are still under construction but it's very usable and worth checking out.

It was a very successful workday with many things accomplished and I want to thank everyone who participated. Please remember to log in your volunteer hours.

We had several donations in January. For those of you who weren't at our January meeting, Lloyd Brown donated two items that belonged to his father when he worked as an agent/telegrapher for the Milwaukee Road in Walworth, Wisconsin. One was his depot accounting ledger started in November 1917 and the other was a book entitled *The Telegrapher Instructor Manual* by G. M. Dodge that his father used to learn telegraphy. Another donation was 10 railroad and model railroad books plus 12 issues of Model Railroader magazines, January 1969 through December 1969, from Keith Mackey, our Ocala member. Our librarian, Jerry Honetor, thought that he was finished inventorying books! Thank you, Lloyd and Keith, for these fine donations. We also had a photo donated of J. F. Keller who was the T&G station agent in our depot. The photo was donated by a family member, Don Campbell of Ocoee.

We had four Wednesday museum workdays in January as we continue to whittle away at the inventory. Al Sharp and I have now completed the inventory in the front room and have begun in the last room, the T&G room. The two completed rooms include everything except photos and art work on the walls. These items will go into a separate category in the Past Perfect software, so they will be done later. Jerry Honetor and Ginger joined us on most Wednesdays and worked on the library inventory. Irv Lipscomb started back photographing the objects for the inventory. He got some help on January 30<sup>th</sup> from a friend of mine, David Grayson, a potential new member. Some of you may have seen David in the train department at Colonial Photo & Hobby before he retired. Thank you David for your help! This monumental task, that once seemed like it would take a lifetime to accomplish, is now beginning to look like it can be finished. However, there are many items yet to be inventoried (Root Items) in the Roper Building and many more at Lakeville Elementary School before we are totally complete.

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## Central Florida Railway Historical Society, Inc. Combined Board & Regular Meeting Central Florida RR Museum January 14, 2013

**Call to Order** – Phil Cross opened the meeting at 7:00 pm with 27 members present. Board Members present were Phil Cross, Jerry Honetor, Les Westlake, Joe Lehmann, David Rhea, Frank Milmore, and Ken Murdock.

**Meeting Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance** – David Rhea led the prayer and pledge.

**Recognition of Visitors** – Phil Cross recognized Mrs. Addison Austin.

**Recognition of Members/Friends Concerns** – Phil Cross

Roger Wilson's daughter Leah is home in Tampa and continuing her recovery.

Neil Bagaus's daughter Erin. No update.

Chuck Ansell. No update.

**Approval of November 12, 2012 Combined Board & Regular Meeting Minutes** – A motion was made by Jerry Honetor and seconded by David Rhea to approve the minutes. The vote to approve was unanimous.

**November & December 2012 Treasurer's Report** – David Rhea & Frank Milmore presented the treasurer's report. The report is available to members upon request.

### **Vice President of Membership & Programs Report – Jerry Honetor**

- Membership Report
  - ◆ Society Members = 12
  - ◆ Society Century Members = 5
  - ◆ Society Family Members = 3
  - ◆ Society Friends = 1
- Program providers are needed for June through November 2013.
- Refreshment providers are needed for May through November 2013.
- Chapter Events and Field Trips for 2013:
  - ◆ Trip to Colorado to ride the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic RR, the Durango & Silverton RR & the Rio Grande Scenic RR. Roger Wilson & Phil Cross are the coordinators. Tentatively scheduled for August/September 2013. More details soon.
  - ◆ Chapter field trip to Tavares to ride the Tavares, Eustis & Gulf RR. Clarence Hurt & Neil Bagaus are the coordinators. Spouses will be invited to come along. Either lunch before the train ride or dinner after the train ride has been suggested. This trip will be scheduled soon.
  - ◆ A one-day trip to the North Florida Railway Museum at Green Cove Springs, Clay County Historical & Railroad Museum at Green Cove Springs (Includes the Bud Hess Railroadiana Collection), and the Northeast Florida Live Steamers & Railroaders West Tocol & Bostwick Railroad located in the Green Cove Springs/Bostwick area – Phil Cross & Ken Murdock are the coordinators. Annual Winter Meet at Bostwick is scheduled for January 31<sup>st</sup> through February 3<sup>rd</sup>.
  - ◆ A trip to Tampa to visit the TECO trolley operation – Clarence Hurt is the Coordinator. This trip will be scheduled soon.
  - ◆ An Amtrak trip – Need a coordinator.
  - ◆ Trip to Savannah, GA to attend 2013 Railway Heritage Preservation Spring Conference – March 21-23. Cost for the trip is \$120 which includes a four day pass to the museum. Need a coordinator. Possibly combine with Number 5. <http://www.chsgeorgia.org/Society-Calendar/Date/2013-03-01/Event/617.html>

### **Museum Curator Report – Ken Murdock**

- December 2012 CFRR Museum Report – 645 visitors for December and 7,602 visitors for 2012. 142.5 volunteer hours donated by the membership during December and 2,753.25 hours donated for 2012.
- Library Committee Update – Jerry Honetor reported that the Library Committee continues to work on the cataloging of the books, periodicals and videos in the library. 1643 volumes, all books and manuals, are complete. The committee is reviewing the completed work for errors before starting on the periodicals.
- The Gladhand Award for 2012 was presented to Jerry and Ginger Honetor at the annual banquet in December.
- January 2013 Museum Work Session is scheduled for Saturday, January 26<sup>th</sup>, beginning at 8:30 AM.
- Recent Acquisitions & Donations – 2 brass luggage tags found near the Pico Hotel in Sanford (1 South Florida RR, 1 JT&KW Ry) were received from Bill Cogswell & family. Lloyd Brown donated his father's 1917 ledger book for payment of accounts from the Milwaukee Road's Walworth, Wisconsin depot and the book "The Telegraph Instructor" that he used in telegrapher school. Lloyd Brown presented an updated plaque with all the names of past NRHS presidents and a new accompanying plaque for the start of the CFRHS.

**Museum Host Schedule for February 2013** – Jerry Honetor (filling in for Irv Lipscomb) secured several volunteers for the museum host schedule for February.

### **President's Report – Phil Cross**

- **Winter Garden Heritage Foundation Board of Directors Activities for December** – Activities for December focused on fundraising activities for the construction of the new History Center complex.
- **Website Committee Update** –The new website for the Central Florida Railway Historical Society, Inc. went on line officially January 1<sup>st</sup>. Joe Lehmann is the webmaster. More updates to the site coming soon.
- **Repainting of RR Museum Sign** – The sign on the west end of the RR Museum has been taken down and taken to West Orange Photo & Digital for re-painting with the new name and logo.
- **Change-Out of T&G DVD Covers** – West Orange Photo & Digital is in the process of preparing new covers for the T&G DVD with the new name and logo.
- **Updating of the New Member Advertising** – West Orange Photo & Digital is in the process of updating the framed advertisement for new members for our organization with the new name and logo. They are also making a second copy for use away from the museum.
- **Updating Society and Museum Brochures** – Working on a 2-sided brochure. One side for the Society and the second side for the Museum.
- **Bank Account** – David Rhea questioned whether the bank account had been changed to the new organization. This has been done.
- **Physical Property** – Les Westlake asked if all the physical property has been turned over to the new organization. This has been done.

**FCRR, FMRR, FNRR & SunRail Update** (Including FCRR Track Upgrade Update) – Bill Dusenbury was not present.

**Tourist Train Operations on the Florida Central RR** – The tourist train conducted 59 trips during the holiday season with 7,342 riders. Only two trips were not sold-out.

**Items from the Board of Directors**

Les Westlake asked if the dates and routes for the speeder runs had been set. This information was not available. The Morse Code club is using the museum the last Saturday in April for the celebration of Samuel Morse's birthday.

**Items from the Membership –**

Clayton Bishop requested the return of his train lantern so that it may be displayed in the Lake County Historical Museum in Tavares. The lantern was returned to Clayton as requested.

**Tonight's Program –** The Valley RR, the African Queen and a Ford Tri-Motor presented by Addison Austin.

**Tonight's Refreshments** provided by Jerry & Ginger Honetor

**Meeting Adjournment –** Jerry Honetor made a motion to adjourn. It was seconded by David Rhea. The meeting was adjourned at 8:02 pm.

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**The following pictures are courtesy of Society Member Warren McFarland. This train wreck occurred on the CNJ at Laurel Run, PA on December 26, 1965, and tore up a lot of fairly new diesel units.**



## February Museum Work Session

Saturday, February 16, 2013  
8:30 AM to 3:30 PM

Please come out and help  
with the many chores that  
need to be done!!!!

## T&G DVD

The Whistle Blows No More....A History  
of the Tavares & Gulf Railroad 1881-1969

Available at the Railroad Museum for \$20.00  
Get your copy today!!

## Outline History of Central Florida's Railroads

By Ken Murdock

Available at the Railroad Museum for \$15.00  
Get your copy today!!

**The Flatwheel** is the official monthly publication of the Central Florida Railway Historical Society. Opinions and views expressed in this publication are those of the editor and contributors and do not necessarily reflect those of the members, officers or directors of the Society.

Material for the Flatwheel (including exchange newsletters) should be sent to the editor via e-mail at: [Crossrails@earthlink.net](mailto:Crossrails@earthlink.net).

**Please Note:** Material from The Flatwheel may be reprinted in other publications provided credit is given as to the source.

**The Central Florida Railroad Museum** is located at 101 South Boyd Street, Winter Garden, FL, 34787 (downtown Winter Garden, immediately north of the water tower).

The Museum is open daily from 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM (excluding selected holidays) or by special arrangements. Large groups are encouraged to contact the Museum at 407-656-0559 to arrange for their tour in advance.

The Central Florida Railroad Museum is operated under a cooperative agreement between the City of Winter Garden, the Winter Garden Heritage Foundation and the Central Florida Railway Historical Society, Inc..

**The Central Florida Railway Historical Society, Inc.** meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month at 7:00 PM at the **Central Florida Railroad Museum**. The Museum is located at 101 South Boyd Street in downtown Winter Garden immediately north of the water tower. Guests and visitors are welcome and encouraged to attend.

All correspondence and other materials for the Society should be mailed to:

Central Florida Railway Historical Society, Inc.  
PO Box 770567  
Winter Garden, FL 34777-0567

Or e-mailed to the Society at: [info@cfrhs.org](mailto:info@cfrhs.org)

Web page: [www.cfrhs.org](http://www.cfrhs.org)

**Mission:** The mission of the Central Florida Railway Historical Society, Inc. is to Promoting railway heritage and preservation; educating members and the public about rail transportation, its history and impact, with a focus on Central Florida.

**Purpose:** The purpose for which this Society is formed and the business or objects to be carried on and promoted by it are mainly historical, educational and not-for-profit. The more particular objects are:

- Preserve the historical materials of rail transportation of all kinds and issue publications relative to the subject.
- Acquire by donation, purchase, lease or otherwise, real or personal property, and to maintain, sell, lease, deed or otherwise manage in a manner appropriate for the Central Florida Railroad Museum and the above mentioned purposes.
- Plan and run a series of programs and events for Society members' education and participation.
- Work and support the activities of the Winter Garden Heritage Foundation. Assist in any and all group projects which benefit the goals and activities of the Society and the Winter Garden Heritage Foundation.

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