

Gold Coast Railroad Is Making Expansion Plans

Miami-UPD—In an era when other railroads are singing the financial blues and talking of mergers, a prosperous Miami railroad with only four miles of track is making expansion plans.

The Gold Coast Railroad has only one engine and five cars, none of them less than 30 years old. It hasn't a single salaried employee.

But traffic is steadily increasing at its one-room station at Richmond, 15 miles south of here. Behind the success story is a long line of little reasons.

The reasons are children, many of them bug-eyed and most of them smiling. For the Gold Coast Railroad's engine is an old time steam locomotive, as rare on the nation's rails these days as bison on the western plains.

Come ride, says the railroad in a small brown brochure, "behind a real live steam locomotive, listen to the sounds of its melodious chime whistle and staccato exhaust, experience again the thrill of the clackety-clack of steel wheels over rail joints and switch points, enjoy the smell of hot valve oil, an aroma of

the lost age of steam."

Since last summer, the first time the Gold Coast started keeping count of tickets sold, about 20,000 persons have accepted that colorful invitation. For 50 cents they rode the full four-mile circuit on the Gold Coast, a living museum of the way things used to be on the nation's railroads before diesels swept steam away.

It is a motley train they ride. The jet-black engine, built in 1922, was formerly on the Florida East Coast Railroad (FEC).

Behind it is an olive drab, 1913 combination baggage-passenger car, formerly of the Seaboard Air Line Railroad. Then comes a slate blue chair car, another FEC veteran, vintage 1925.

Trailing will be one of two cabooses, depending on the whim of the operators, one from the Atlantic Coast Line, built in 1923, the other an alumnus of the Apalachicola Northern, built in 1917.

On a siding, rarely pulled because of its great weight, is the majestic Ferdinand Magellan, the armor-plated presi-

dential car used by Roosevelt, Truman and Eisenhower. It was from its rear platform that Harry Truman "gave 'em hell" in his noted whistle-stop campaign against Thomas E. Dewey in 1948.

All of the cars, except for the Ferdinand Magellan, were donated to the Miami Railroad Historical Society, operators of the Gold Coast. By way of thanks, the society maintains the original color, numbering and lettering of each car.

The society got the Ferdinand Magellan when it was declared surplus by the federal government in 1959. The society's token bid of \$100 was the only bid received for the massive car.

The beginning of the Gold Coast and the society, now a thriving organization of more than 100 members, was almost as casual.

In 1957, the U.S. Sugar Corp. at Clewiston, Fla., which had been using seven steam engines to haul cane from its fields, began replacing them with diesels. A railroad buff named William Godfrey Jr., then a law student at the University of Miami, approached the president of the university on the possibility of getting one of the discarded steam engines.

Engine Donated
The university queried the sugar company, the company donated to the university an engine it had bought from the FEC, and Godfrey and eight other charter members of the non-profit society were empowered by the university to operate the equipment on its behalf.

By chance, four miles of track were readily available. The track led around the U.S. Navy's Richmond Air Base, a blimp installation destroyed by a hurricane in 1945. The track, utilized by the Navy to service blimps and adjoining warehouses, had not been in use since the Navy abandoned the base after the disastrous storm.

The 12-wheel engine was set up there and other cars followed as the society successfully appealed to Florida railroads for additional equipment.

One of the society's big needs now is a box car, with an express car also ranking high.

"We'd like to have all the different railroads in the United States represented down here in one way or another," said the society secretary, Mrs. Lois Beekman of Fort Lauderdale, wife of a retired railroad fireman. "Right now we only have equipment from Florida railroads."

The society has several feelers out to various carriers now and has high hopes of getting the box car.

The Gold Coast, authentic down to the last detail, already has the hobo to go with it.

"He sneaks a ride every now and then," reported Mrs. Beekman.

Cancer of Liver In Fish No Hazard To Public Health

Olympia, Wash. — UPD — Washington fishermen were concerned today over a newspaper report concerning cancer of the liver found in many rainbow trout, but Game Director John Biggs said the situation constitutes "no known hazard to public health."

Biggs said his office had received a great many inquiries since the appearance Sunday of an article in a Tacoma newspaper discussing research projects being undertaken to study cases of the disease.

A 10-day suspension of trout planting was imposed last July, Biggs said, when a fish pathologist advised the Game Department of the incidence of hepatoma (liver tumor) in rainbow trout.

Suspension Lifted
But after intensive research and a conference with other fish and game officials, as well as state and federal health officers, the suspension was lifted, he said.

Biggs said the matter received little publicity at the time, but that no attempt was made to either "cover up" the situation or to publicize it. "We did not at that time, and have not since found any instance of cancer in fish we are planting in the waters of the state, nor have we found any instance of it in 'wild' fish in the state," he added.

Biggs said he had been told by competent authority that cancer of the liver was common in many animals, including cattle, hogs, sheep and chickens, and that it was no surprise to find it in trout.



NAMES GAZELLE—Mrs. Habib Bourguiba, wife of the president of Tunisia, is shown at the Washington National Zoo where she is cuddling a baby Dorcas gazelle which she named "Reem", Arabic for "Little Gazelle." The gazelle is the first born to a pair of gazelles given to President Eisenhower by President Bourguiba in 1959.

(UPI Telephoto)

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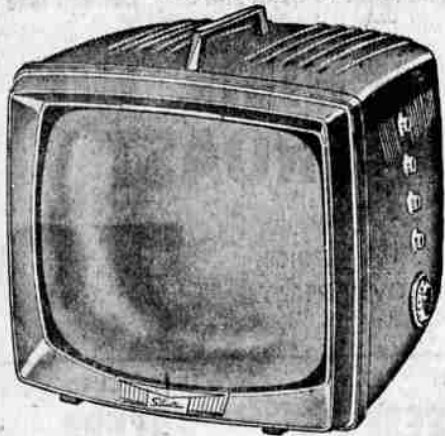
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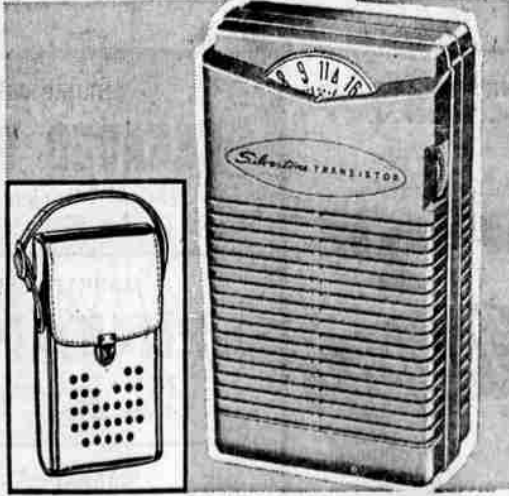


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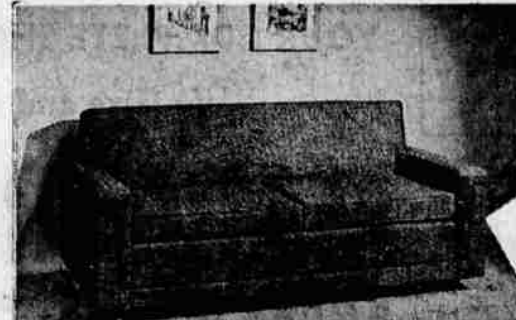
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