

Lines South and the Society: Then and Now

By Ted Strickland

[From the Third Quarter 1998 issue of *Lines South*]

The current issue of *Lines South* marks the fifteenth anniversary of the publication of the first issue of *Lines South*, in July 1983. Since then, this magazine has been the principal communication vehicle of our Society. The history of the Society is reflected in the content and development of the magazine, so to some degree, any review of the history of *Lines South* is a history of the Society. Let's take a look back at the origins and development of *Lines South* and the Society.

With 37 charter members, \$375 in the bank, and Joe Oates's promise not to use the money for his layout, the Southeastern Railroad Technical Society (SERTS), predecessor to the ACL & SAL HS, was formed in 1983. The first issue of *Lines South* was mailed in July 1983 and consisted of 16 pages of text, photos, and diagrams. J. L. was the editor and Warren Calloway, the contributing editor. Warren had actually raised the idea of an ACL-SAL group via an ad in an issue of *Extra 2200 South*, the diesel locomotive newsmagazine, the year before.

That issue's feature article dealt with the history of the SAL and predecessor railroads in the Tampa area. There were also columns entitled "Looking for Answers" and "Did You Know." Larry Goolsby was added as a contributing editor for the second issue, published in October 1983. His feature article on ACL Conventional Steel Coaches dominated this issue and helped expand it to 20 pages.

SERTS was in its infancy, but word was beginning to spread and membership rapidly grew, reaching 140 by August 1984. *Lines South* was to be published four times a year and SERTS membership was \$10 a year. With each issue *Lines South* continued to grow and develop. Featured authors and photographers in the early days included Warren Calloway, Bob Hanson, Charles Castner, Joe Oates, Larry Goolsby, Bill Cogswell, Ken Ardinger, Phil Cross, Joe Welsh, Bill Lenoir, and Fred Frostick, to name a few. The page count varied from 16 to 24, depending on article availability.

By mid-1985 (Vol. 3), a number of changes including a postage increase and improved printing and photo reproduction necessitated an increase in annual dues to \$12. The "Coal, Cinders, and Sand" column became a regular feature as a clearing house for tidbits of valuable information. Along with the "Looking for Answers" and "Rail Mail" columns, these "regulars" supplemented feature articles and editorials.

In the September 1987 issue (Vol. 5, No. 2), the magazine underwent its first major format overhaul. The new format included an updated cover page and stylized headings. *Lines South* was averaging about 16 pages per issue. These were the "beef" years—referring to the large number of articles dealing with prototype equipment. A succession of articles was published including ACL cabooses (Parts 1 and 2), SAL Budd cars, SAL box cars (Parts 1 and 2), SAL and ACL SDP35s, and ACL switchers among others. Although *Lines South* continues to produce excellent articles about prototype railroad equipment, these early classic articles are standouts. This is one of the main reasons the Society decided to reprint the first 10 years of *Lines South*. A list of all issues of *Lines South*, including the main topics, is given below.

The first Society gathering was held in Florence, S.C., May 28-29, 1988. This was an informal meeting with no set schedules or agenda—just a gathering of friends sharing a common interest. It would be almost a year and a half before the next meeting, which was held in Conway, S.C., on October 7-8, 1989. This meeting was held in conjunction with the Waccamaw Coast Line Railroad's railfan weekend. This would be the last meeting until the regular annual Society meetings, held in Jacksonville, Fla., were established in February 1993.

During this period, a movement began to rename the Society and formalize operations. SERTS had grown by leaps and bounds and many members felt a change was needed to better reflect the Society's mission. As announced in the October 1988 issue of *Lines South*, the organization name was changed to the Atlantic Coast Line and Seaboard Air Line Historical Society (ACL & SAL HS).

The Society was officially organized during meetings held in Jacksonville in February 1993. Interim officers were appointed until elections could be held: Gary Riccio, President; John Edwards, Vice President; and Larry Goolsby, Secretary-Treasurer. By-laws were drafted and a Board of Directors was established. Notable members aiding in the organizational tasks included Leon Butler, Sid Linton, John Cruz, and Larry Brennan. A slate of seven board members, including the officers, was elected by acclamation. The Society applied for and was granted tax exempt status as a 501 (c) (3) organization. At this time there were about 250 active members and by late 1995 that number had grown to over 500. The official organization of the Society coincided with the Tenth Anniversary of the publication of *Lines South*. A list of Society meeting dates is given below.

The format of *Lines South*, as we have come to know and love it, was initiated with in the middle of the eighth volume. The stylized headings and page headers were added, as well as the new type font, to give "*Lines*" a very professional look. In 1992 (Vol. 9), five issues of *Lines South* were published to bring the publication schedule in line with the calendar year. Vol. 10 (1993) saw the addition of some color to the front cover. The "Lines for Members" newsletter, begun in 1994, was a separate publication inserted loose into the magazine up until Vol. 13 (1996), when it became an intergral part of the magazine. Issues of *Lines South* have grown to 28-32 pages including 8-12 pages of "Lines for Members." Articles, Editorials, Rail Mail, Questions and Answers, Recent Publications, Member Classified Ads, and Society product news are just some of the goodies served up each quarter.

The Society and *Lines South* have continued to grow and expand. Coverage of other affiliated roads, including Georgia, the West Point Route, MD&S, and AB&C, to name a few, has been featured in recent issues. The Annual meetings average at least 100 members and current Society membership is approaching 850. Our product line of books, reprints, and custom model products includes over 100 items, and also continues to expand. Original Society offerings include the *Orange Blossom Special* book, Reference Index, bound volumes of *Lines South's* first 10 years, a full-color calendar, custom paint, decals, and data book reprints among others. We even have a web site that has received good reviews. The current issue of *Lines South*, which marks the 15th anniversary of the Society and magazine, has for the first time added full-color covers and totals over 40 pages. So to use several clichés, "full steam ahead" and we'll "keep it on the rails!"

Society Membership Meetings

May 28-29, 1988	Florence, SC
October 7-8, 1989	Conway, SC
February 12-14, 1993	Jacksonville, FL
February 18-19, 1994	Jacksonville, FL
February 17-19, 1995	Jacksonville, FL
February 18-20, 1996	Jacksonville, FL
August 16-18, 1996	Richmond, VA
February 13-16, 1997	Jacksonville, FL
August 15-17, 1997	Southern Pines, NC
February 19-22, 1998	Jacksonville, FL

Table of *Lines South* Issues and Main Topics

Volume and Number	Date	Main topic(s)
1 1	July 1983	SAL Paint Diagrams.
1 2	October 1983	ACL Heavyweight Coaches, Part 1
1 3	January 1984	ACL Heavyweight Coaches, Part 2
1 4	March 1984	SAL & ACL E Units
2 1	June 1984	SAL/ACL/SCL Renumbering
2 2	September 1984	SAL Boxcars, SAL at Hamlet
2 3	December 1984	Where are Those "Ex" Units
2 4	March 1985	Then & Now, Changes in Units
3 1	June 1985	ACL Head End Cars, Part 1
3 2	September 1985	ACL Head End Cars, Part 2
3 3	December 1985	SAL Doodlebugs
3 4	March 1986	ACL M-5 Cabooses; Stations
4 1	June 1986	SAL Head-end Cars; Phosphate Cars.
4 2	September 1986	ACL Head-end Cars Part 3; Phosphate
4 3	December 1986	ACL Head-end Cars, Part 4
4 4	March 1987	SAL Hamlet Yard Part 1, SAL Budd Cars.
5 1	June 1987	Hamlet Part 2.
5 2	September 1987	ACL Wood Cabooses
5 3	January 1988	ACL & SAL Pulpwood Cars
5 4	April 1988	Charlotte Harbor & Northern
(A)6 1	July 1988	SAL Boxcars of the 1960s
(B)6 2	October 1988	SAL SDP35s
6 3	January 1989	SAL Cabooses
6 4	April 1989	ACL Ventilated Boxcars
7 1	July 1989	ACL GP7s
7 2	October 1989	ACL USRA Boxcars and Copies
7 3	January 1990	1939 Meteor Consist
7 4	Spring 1990	ACL K-7 Low-side Gondolas
(C)8 1	Summer 1990	SAL GP7s, ACL W-4 Pulpwood Cars.
8 2	Fall 1990	ACL Steam Locos, ACL Gon Painting Guide
8 3	Spring 1991	I Remember Gary Shops.
8 4	Summer 1991	SCL "Anatomy of a Merger"
9 1	Fall 1991	A Look at the SCL
9 2	1st Quarter 1992	ACL Painting & Drawing Specs
9 3	2nd Quarter 1992	Memories of the Seaboard
9 4	3rd Quarter 1992	ACL Wood Cabooses
(D)9 5	4th Quarter 1992	ACL Camp Cars

10 1	1st Quarter 1993	The Railroad Comes to Lakeland
10 2	2nd Quarter 1993	Books and Periodicals on ACL/SAL
10 3	3rd Quarter 1993	ACL Whopper Hopper (10th Anniv.)
10 4	4th Quarter 1993	Wrecks, Wreckers, and Other Tales
(E)11 1	1st Quarter 1994	SAL Class R-5 Wood Racks.
11 2	2nd Quarter 1994	All in the Family, GaRR and West Pt. Rte.
11 3	3rd Quarter 1994	Standard Steel Co. Freight Cars
11 4	4th Quarter 1994	Photo Essay, More Cabooses
12 1	1st Quarter 1995	The Palmland—Florida's Night Train
12 2	2nd Quarter 1995	Richmond's Triple Crossing
12 3	3rd Quarter 1995	CRR & SCL SD45-2s
12 4	4th Quarter 1995	Early SCL Passenger Consists
13 1	1st Quarter 1996	The AB&C, Fifty Years Gone
13 2	2nd Quarter 1996	On the Color Purple; GA and WPR diesels
13 3	3rd Quarter 1996	Wilmington: HQ for the Coast Line
13 4	4th Quarter 1996	Iron Men vs. A Lady; George Votava Sampler
14 1	1 st Quarter 1997	Florida Triangle
14 2	2 nd Quarter 1997	The Tidewater, SAL Nos. 17-18
14 3	3 rd Quarter 1997	SCL Merger, Creedmore Creeper
14 4	4 th Quarter 1997	ACL No. 2 Depots, SAL-CRR Run-throughs
15 1	1 st Quarter 1998	Georgia Mixed Trains
15 2	2 nd Quarter 1998	ACL 1031; Running on Train Orders

NOTES:

(A) Marked "Volume 5, Number 4, April 1988"

(B) Marked "Volume 6, Number 5, October 1988"

(C) Marked "Volume 7, Number 4, Summer 1990"

(D) Volume 9 has 5 issues to bring current with calendar year

(E) Marked "Volume 11, Number 5, 1st Quarter 1994"