

South Florida Railroad Museum

Note: The museum was closed when we first visited it.

A brief overview was put on acuri.net-Florida and specifically on [South Florida's railroad museum](#).

This photo program focuses on the railroad museum. It also includes six other photo programs from our experience at the museum.

They are [Army Hospital Car](#), [California Zephyr](#), [Ferdinand Magellan](#), [Jim Crow Era](#), [Naval Air Station](#), and [Railroad Appliances](#).

Location: Zoo Miami Entrance 12450 SW 152nd St. Miami, FL 33177-1402 (305)253-0063

History of Gold Coast Railroad Museum (GCRM)

The museum's beginnings are attributed to a student at the University of Miami in 1956, who presented an idea to the University's President who was a railroad fan. The land was at the University's south campus. The land in question was a former WWII blimp airship Naval Air Station Richmond in Dade County. The result was the beginning of the Gold Coast Railroad Museum. Several organizations besides the University of Miami became partners in developing the museum. Since 1957, the GCRM went through several changes during its history.

You are encouraged to go to: <https://www.goldcoastrailroadmuseum.org/about-qcrm> learn about the museum's development, including the 1960's when the C.I.A. wanted the former air station as 'listening post'. It also details the closing of the Fort Lauderdale Museum due to interstate highway construction in 1983.

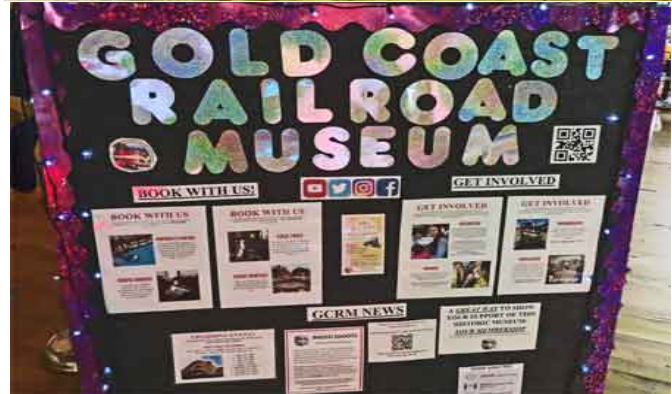
The Miami Railroad Historical Society was created in 1957 under the University of Miami's purview. The Society named the museum operations the 'Gold Coast Railroad'. The museum opened to the public and in 1961 the train called the 'Gold Coast Special' was run with passengers. Many interesting educational trains and train cars were added, including the history of the air station and specifics about many railroad operations, railroad cars and trains.

The Gold Coast Railroad Museum is one of three official railroad museums in Florida. In 1982 it received its statutory recognition from the Florida Legislature. Several hurricanes have caused much damage to the museum. In 1988, the museum was officially named the Gold Coast Railroad Museum, Inc. to reflect its educational goals. With the expansion of the MetroZoo, the local community highly approved of the changes. The museum holds 40 different types of railroad memorabilia including special cars, locomotive, freight cars, and other associate rail cars and equipment.



In 1992 Hurricane Andrew caused millions of dollars of damage to GCRM. The shed roofs fell. Below are the rebuilt sheds.





Prior to 2017, at the entrance of the museum there used to be the caboose below.



The caboose was destroyed in 2017 by Hurricane Irma. According to Alex, Executive Director, the roof was blown off and to prevent any accidents from people crossing the fence in a public area, GCRM dismantled it. Another hurricane loss.



Museum's Railroad Historical Artifacts inside the sheds and outside



Fire Extinguisher
1920s



24. Fairmont S-2 Motor
Car or speeder.
Approximately
mid 1940's.

Case Steam Traction Engine



The Case Steam Traction Engine (Farm Tractor) was built in 1909. This is the oldest steam powered equipment in the museum's collection. These traction engines powered large threshing machine and pulled large plows, helping to open new land for farmers. This tractor was found rusting away in Springfield, Kentucky.

The Case Steam Traction Engine was purchased, restored, and donated in 1968 by museum founder William Godfrey. It is currently not operational but on display for visitor viewing.



American LaFrance Fire Truck 700 Series Pumpers & Aerials



The American LaFrance Fire Truck 700 Series fire engines were delivered to fire departments in March of 1947. By the end of 1950, American LaFrance had delivered more than 1400 of these cab-forward wonders. With continuous improvements, the spectacularly successful 700 Series remained in production for 12 years. In 1955, the company introduced a trio of new economy-model 700 Series pumpers named the Ranger, Crusader and Protector.

These plain-looking, discontented 700s sported painted bumpers, a cut-down windshield header, cab doors with no side glass and compartmented rear fenders. These new economy model pumpers were powered by Continental engines instead of the usual ALF V-12s. More than 3,000 of these classic cab-forward fire fighters were delivered before the last one was built in 1959.

The American LaFrance Fire Truck was donated to the museum in the late 1980's. It is currently not operational but on display for visitor viewing.



Kerosene Motor Oil Dispensing Tank



Early Pull Grader type, Road Grader, Caterpillar No. 3 Built 1925-1928.



Railroad maintenance car called a Speeder



MiamiDade Metromover

Railroad trains and cars inside the shed

NOTE: The President's Car 'Ferdinand Magellan' and the 'California Zephyr' are on [Florida acuri.net](http://Floridaacuri.net) photo programs.



Florida East Coast Railway Steam Locomotive #113



- Built in 1913 by The American Locomotive Company. (ALCO)
- Wheel Arrangement 4-6-2 "Light Pacific" type Locomotive.
- Fuel: Heavy oil (Bunker C)
- Driving wheels: 68-inch Diameter.
- Tractive effort: 29,600 Lbs.

- In service on The Florida East Coast Railway from Jacksonville to Key West.
- It pulled both passenger and freight trains.
- Sold to U.S Sugar Corporation for use in their operations.
- Donated to the Museum by U.S Sugar Corporation in 1969.





Sources: <https://www.goldcoastrailroadmuseum.org/about-gcrm>, <http://www.rgusrail.com/flgcrm.html>, <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/museumday/venues/museum/gold-coast-railroad-museum/>, <https://fecrwy.com/>, <https://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/35837>, <https://www.americanheritage.com/content/gold-coast-railroad-museum>, <https://www.thejaxsonmag.com/article/visiting-the-gold-coast-railroad-museum/>, <https://www.miamidade.gov/global/transportation/home.page>, <https://www.miamiandbeaches.com/thing-to-do/arts-culture/gold-coast-railroad-museum/2719>, <https://www.goldcoastrailroadmuseum.org/our-railcars>, <https://www.directac123.com/blog/p.161130028/10-most-extreme-weather-events-in-south-floridas-history/>, and <http://www.doyouseedeadpeople.org/149/Gold-Coast-Railroad-Museum-Miami-FL.html>.

This educational museum has enabled acuri.net to develop seven photo programs from our visit. They are found on acuri.net-Florida: [GoldCoastRRMuseum](#) (this article); [GCRMArmyHospitalCar](#); [GCRMCaiforniaZephyr](#); [GCRMFerdinandMagellan](#); [GCRMJimCrowEra](#); [GCRMNavalAirStation](#); and [GCRMRRAppliances](#).

acuri.net John R. Vincenti Gold Coast Railroad Museum