

# The Richmond Rag

24 October 2009

Richmond, Virginia

## Stepping back in time

Some places forget their history. Some places remember it. And some are imprisoned by it.

Richmond, Va., where I'm finishing my East Coast trip visiting my brother Lee and his family, struggles with how to remember its past as the South's capital during the Civil War without being trapped in that past.

It's possible to have conversations here about "the war" with people who aren't talking about Afghanistan or Iraq but about Appomattox.

But the struggle is most vividly illustrated along Monument Avenue, a street ranked by one city planning organization as one of America's 10 great streets.

When the Sons of Confederate Veterans march down the boulevard during Confederate History Month in April or on Robert E. Lee's



**Monument Avenue is draped in fall color as well as controversy** birthday, they parade past statues honoring Southern generals Lee,

**– Text continued on 3<sup>rd</sup> page**

# My East Coast itinerary

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
October 11	12	13	14	15	<b>16</b> Red-eye to NC	<b>17</b> Hamlet High 40 <sup>th</sup> class reunion
<b>18</b> With sister in Pinehurst	<b>19</b> Speak to school classes and library group	<b>20</b> Visit in-laws on way to mountains	<b>21</b> Great Smoky Mtns Natl Park	<b>22</b> Winston-Salem & Cary	<b>23</b> Travel to Richmond, Va.	<b>24</b> With brother in Richmond
<b>25</b> Fly home to California	26	27	28	29	30	31

## Stepping back in time



**Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee rides his horse south in the center of the Monument Avenue-Allen Avenue intersection. Arthur Ashe, a Richmond native – first black player to win a Grand Slam tennis title and human rights advocate – faces away from downtown and confederate hero statues on his pedestal at Monument and Rosemeath Road.**

*Text continued on next page*

# Stepping back in time

*Continued from first page*

Stonewall Jackson and J.E.B. Stuart, and Jefferson Davis, president of the Confederate States of America.

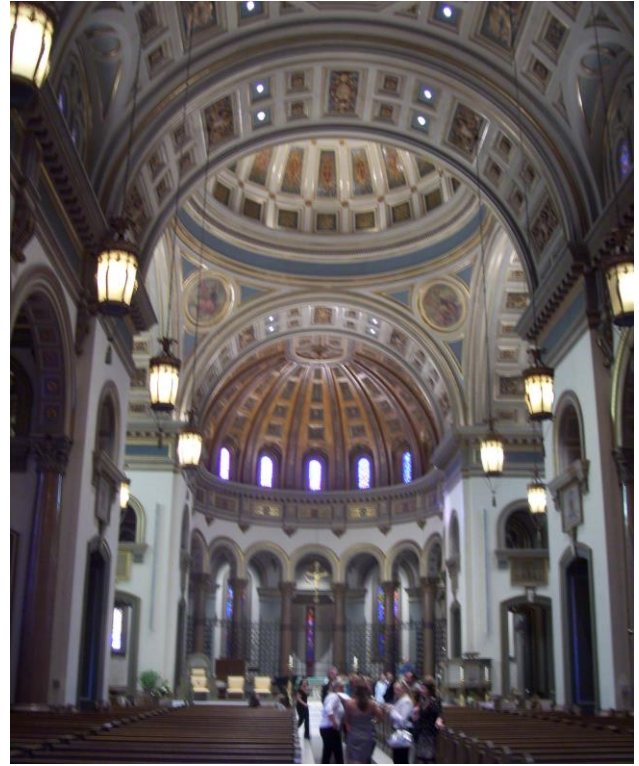
But the parades turn off Monument before they reach Ashe's statue, which was erected in 1996 after years of controversy about where to place a statue honoring a Richmond native who was not involved in the Civil War and was not white.

The controversy was not just about black and white, although race would have been enough. Many of the 170 people who testified at the seven-hour city council meeting in 1995 at which the final approval for Ashe's statue was unanimously given wore confederate uniforms. Many of the black opponents of Ashe's statue didn't want him remembered on a street that had been regarded as a shrine to the confederacy.

Places that erect monuments to heroes define by that act what their concept of what heroism is. Lee represented a definition that pervades Rome, Washington and Richmond – warrior on horseback.

As a black child, Ashe couldn't find tennis opponents in a segregated city against whom he could improve his game. As a tennis champion, he fought peacefully against racism in the United States and in South Africa.

In recognizing him, Richmond's definition of many things changed. It said more than that a black person can be a hero. It also said principles that don't recognize all human worth should be discarded, and a noble fight is about more than belligerence.



**The Catholic Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in downtown Richmond. My brother Lee married into a family of German Catholic immigrants, the Siewers, who arrived in Richmond in 1880 and began a family lumber business where Lee works today with his father-in-law and his wife's brothers.**

---

*Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us.*

***Hebrews 12:1  
Inscription on Arthur Ashe's  
statue***

---

# Real places from a story that didn't happen

My novel *Through the Heart of the South* takes place in the railroad town of Shortridge, N.C. There is a real town of Hamlet, N.C., founded by Englishman John Shortridge in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century, which provided the setting for many of the novel's scenes. Real life names are in (parentheses).



**Chris McAndrew and his football teammate Cam McCauley are swimming in Harvard Lake, the town swimming hole, in the novel's opening scene. By Chris' next visit to the lake, it has been drained dry. (Boyd Lake is slowly refilling now that a beaver family has begun patching over a decades-old breach in its earthen dam.)**



**<<< Dr. Gordon, pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Shortridge, has taken his family to Harvard Lake on the day of the opening scene as well. He leads the Shortridge High football team in the Lord's prayer before games and conducts a funeral service later in the story. (First Presbyterian Church)**





Rufus Montgomery Jr., is the Pullman porter in the Sun Lounge car on the *Silver Meteor*, which runs between New York and Miami and stops in Shortridge. He tends bar in this lounge and makes the berths in the car's five double bedrooms. They are behind the camera in this view from a Seaboard Air Line Railroad postcard from the 1950s. Rufus Junior's daughter, Claryce, will be Chris' classmate when Shortridge High is racially integrated in the fall.

Chris likes to eat at the Witch's Hat, the café in the Seaboard depot in Shortridge. Rufus Junior waits out a thunderstorm in the café before boarding the *Silver Meteor* on one of his trips. This is where the Booster Special train to Shortridge High's season-opening football game departs as well as the school's glee club on its concert trip to New York. (Hamlet's restored depot is an Amtrak stop and home to one of the town's two railroad museums.)





**Chris' girlfriend, Susan Marks, lives in the mansion above on Capitol Hill behind these closed gates (Land house). Her father Wade runs the Pit Stop on an exit off I-95, a good place for Yankees driving to Florida to stop for a hamburger and load up on tax-free cigarettes. It's odd that the gates are closed, but then so is the wedding Chris and Cam are attending across Pine Cone Drive at the home, below, of N.C. Rep. Lee McCaslin, a lawyer, and his wife Frances. (Lindsey house)**





**Chris and Susan were both born at Shortridge Hospital, and it's also where Dr. Moncrief sews up Chris' father's head after he gets bashed with a liquor bottle at the Shortridge-Northampton football game. (Opening of the Negro Wing of Hamlet Hospital, 1954.)**

**Chris took walks with his grandparents to Town Cemetery (Mary Love Cemetery) for picnics among the tombstones as a young boy. In the novel's final scene, he visits the grave of Monteenia, his family maid and mother of one his new teammates from Booker T. Washington High, Malachi Stevens.**



# Condensed Seaboard Air Line Railroad passenger schedules at the time of the novel in the late 1960s

Southbound		Silver Star		Sunland	Silver Comet	Silver Meteor		Palmland	
Southbound Read down		No. 21		No. 7	No. 33	No. 57		No. 9	
New York	PRR	Lv 9:30a	At Willwood, 2 sleepers, 1 coach and 1 diner separate from Miami section for Tampa	At Tampa, 1 sleeper separate from St. Petersburg section for Sarasota	Lv 12:45p	Lv 2:50p	At Willwood, 3 sleepers, 3 coach and 1 diner separate from Miami section for Tampa	At Tampa, 1 sleeper and 1 coach separate from St. Petersburg section for Venice	Lv 7:30p
Philadelphia		Lv 11:10a			Lv 2:30p	Lv 4:30p			Lv 9:06p
Baltimore		Lv 12:48p			Lv 4:03p	Lv 6:00p			Lv 10:40p
Washington		Lv 2:00p			Lv 5:10p	Lv 7:05p			Lv 12:15a
Richmond Va		RF&P Lv 4:30p			Lv 7:58p	Lv 9:25p			Lv 2:45a
Raleigh NC	Lv 7:25p	Lv 10:50p			Lv 12:20a	Lv 6:25a			
<b>Hamlet NC</b>	<b>Lv 9:20p</b>	<b>Lv 12:50a ←</b>			<b>Lv 12:45a</b>	<b>Lv 2:15a</b>			<b>Lv 8:30a</b>
Atlanta	↓				Lv 7:55a EST				
Birmingham					Ar 10:45a CST				
Columbia SC	Lv 11:20p	Lv 2:20a			1 sleeper, 1 coach from Portsmouth, Va. (not shown) are joined to the Silver Comet in Raleigh	Lv 4:10a			Lv 11:55a
Savannah Ga	Lv 1:45a	Ar 5:15a	Lv 6:20a	Lv 2:55p					
Jacksonville Fla	-	Ar 8:20a	Lv 9:00a	Lv 6:15p					
Wildwood	Lv 7:00a → Lv 7:05a	Lv 12:30p	Lv 11:25a → Lv 11:30a	Lv 10:14p					
Tampa	↓	Lv 9:30a → Lv 12:01p	↓	Lv 1:35p → Lv 1:35p	↓				
St Petersburg		Ar 11:15a		Ar 3:05p					
Sarasota			Ar 1:55p		Lv 3:45p				
Venice					Ar 4:30p				
West Palm Beach	Lv 9:50a		Lv 4:55p	Lv 2:50p	Lv 2:35a				
Fort Lauderdale	Lv 10:45a		Lv 6:10p	Lv 3:45p	Lv 3:35a				
Miami	Ar 11:55a		Ar 7:30p	Ar 4:45p	Ar 4:55a				

## Northbound

Northbound		Silver Meteor	Sunland	Silver Comet	Silver Star	Palmland			
Northbound Read down		No. 58		No. 8	No. 34	No. 22		No. 10	
Miami	Seaboard Air Line Railroad	Lv 9:00a		Lv 9:40a	1 coach, 1 sleeper from the Silver Comet are removed at Portsmouth, Va. (not shown)	Lv 4:25p	At Willwood, 2 sleepers, 1 coach, 1 sleeper from Tampa joins the Miami section	At Tampa, 1 sleeper from Sarasota joins to the St. Petersburg section	Lv 9:30p
Fort Lauderdale		Lv 9:40a		Lv 10:45a		Lv 5:05p			Lv 10:15p
West Palm Beach		Lv 10:28a		Lv 12:05p		Lv 5:53p			Lv 11:05p
Venice			Lv 8:20a						
Sarasota			Lv 9:05a						Lv 2:30p
St Petersburg		↓	Lv 9:50a	↓					Lv 5:15p
Tampa		Lv 11:35 ← Ar 11:15a				Lv 6:55p			Ar 4:15p
Wildwood		Lv 1:50p ← Ar 1:35p		Lv 4:35p		Lv 7:57p			Ar 7:42p
Jacksonville Fla		Lv 4:15p	At Willwood, 3 sleepers, 3 coaches, 1 sleeper from Tampa joins the Miami section	Lv 8:30p		-			
Savannah Ga		Lv 6:30p		Lv 10:55p		Lv 1:10a			Lv 8:35a
Columbia SC	Lv 8:45p	Lv 2:05a		Lv 3:35a	Lv 11:20a				
Birmingham					Lv 2:25p				
Atlanta				Lv 1:35p CST					
				Lv 6:40p EST					
<b>Hamlet NC</b>	<b>Lv 10:40p</b>	<b>Lv 4:01a</b>		<b>Lv 2:00a</b>	<b>Lv 5:40a</b>	<b>Lv 5:50p</b>			
Raleigh NC	Lv 12:30a	Lv 7:20a		Lv 4:15a	Lv 7:35a	Lv 8:02p			
Richmond Va	RF&P Lv 3:40a	Lv 11:25a		Lv 7:05a	Lv 11:00a	Lv 12:15a			
Washington	Lv 6:00a	Lv 2:25p		Lv 9:20a	Lv 1:20p	Lv 3:00a			
Baltimore	Lv 7:11a	Lv 3:41p	Lv 10:45a	Lv 2:30p	Lv 4:32a				
Philadelphia	Lv 8:43a	Lv 5:09p	Lv 12:16p	Lv 4:10p	Lv 6:12a				
New York	Ar 10:25a	Ar 6:45p	Ar 2:05p	Ar 5:50p	Ar 8:00a				

Seaboard Air Line Railroad passenger trains were handled by the Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac Railroad (RF&P) between Richmond and Washington and by the Pennsylvania Railroad (PRR) between Washington and New York. Connections at New York to/from Boston via the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad (New Haven). All or parts of these railroads are now CSX.



# Seaboard Silver Fleet passenger train consists (winter 1966-'67)

Cars listed in order beginning at head end

<i>Silver Meteor</i>		<i>Silver Star</i>		<i>Silver Comet</i>	
Car	Between	Car	Between	Car	Between
Sleeping Car ◆10 roomettes, 6 double bedrooms	Wash-Miami	Tavern-Observation	Wash-Miami	Coach (52 seats)	Wash-Atlanta
Sleeping Car ◆10 roomettes, 6 double bedrooms	NYC-Miami	Coach (52 seats)	NYC-Miami	Coach (52 seats)	NYC-Atlanta
Sleeping Car ◆5 double bedrooms, 2 compartments, 2 drawing rooms	NYC-Miami	Coach (52 seats)	NYC-Miami	Coach-Tavern (30 seats)	NYC-Atlanta
Sleeping Car ◆10 roomettes, 6 double bedrooms	NYC-Miami	Coach (52 seats)	NYC-Miami	Coach (52 seats)	NYC-Birmingham
Sleeping Car ◆5 double bedrooms, Sun Lounge	NYC-Miami	Coach (52 seats)	NYC-Miami	Sleeping Car ◆10 roomettes, 6 double bedrooms	NYC-Birmingham
Sleeping Car ◆11 double bedrooms	NYC-StPete	Coach (52 seats)	NYC-StPete	Dining Car (48 seats)	Wash-Birmingham
Dining Car (48 seats)	NYC-StPete	Dining Car (48 seats)	NYC-StPete	Sleeping Car ◆10 roomettes, 6 double bedrooms	Richmond-Atlanta
Sleeping Car ◆10 roomettes, 6 double bedrooms	NYC-Venice	Sleeping Car ◆4 sections, 4 roomettes, 5 double bedrooms, 1 compartment	NYC-StPete	Sleeping Car ◆12 roomettes, 4 double bedrooms	Raleigh-Atlanta (originates / terminates in Portsmouth, Va. on <i>The Tidewater</i> )
Sleeping Car ◆10 roomettes, 6 double bedrooms	NYC-StPete	Sleeping Car ◆10 roomettes, 6 double bedrooms	NYC-Sarasota	Coach (52 seats)	Raleigh-Atlanta (originates / terminates in Portsmouth, Va. on <i>The Tidewater</i> )
Coach (52 seats)	NYC-StPete	Dining Car (48 seats)	NYC-Miami	<b>Additional trains:</b> The Seaboard operated the New Orleans-Jacksonville <i>Gulf Wind</i> with the Louisville & Nashville RR and handled the Atlantic Coast Line's New York-Miami <i>Champion</i> between Wildwood and Miami, and the Chicago-Miami trains of the Illinois Central ( <i>City of Miami</i> ) and Pennsylvania RR ( <i>South Wind</i> ) between Jacksonville and Miami. All these trains survived the Seaboard-Atlantic Coast Line merger July 1, 1967 and, except for the <i>Silver Comet</i> , which was discontinued in June 1969, lasted until they were turned over to Amtrak on May 1, 1971.	
Coach (52 seats)	NYC-Venice	Sleeping Car ◆10 roomettes, 6 double bedrooms	NYC-Miami		
Coach (52 seats)	NYC-StPete	Sleeping Car ◆6 double bedrooms, Buffet-lounge	NYC-Miami		
Dining Car (48 seats)	NYC-Miami	Sleeping Car ◆11 double bedrooms	NYC-Miami		
Coach (52 seats)	NYC-Miami	Sleeping Car ◆10 roomettes, 6 double bedrooms	NYC-Miami		
Coach (52 seats)	NYC-Miami	Sleeping Car ◆10 roomettes, 6 double bedrooms	Wash-Miami		
Coach (52 seats)	NYC-Miami	Sleeping Car ◆4 sections, 4 roomettes, 5 double bedrooms, 1 compartment	Richmond-Miami		
Tavern-Observation	NYC-Miami				
<b>Capacity:</b> 452 passengers (140 berths), 5 operating crew, 22 passenger service crew		<b>Capacity:</b> 430 passengers (170 berths), 5 operating crew, 21 passenger service crew		<b>Capacity:</b> 302 passengers (64 berths), 5 operating crew, 15 passenger service crew	

### Seaboard sleeping car accommodations:

- **Roomette** – seat for one, converts to single berth with foldaway toilet and sink.
- **Double bedroom** – seats for two with bathroom, converts to upper and lower berths. Rooms can be joined ensuite.
- **Compartment** – slightly larger than double bedroom with seating and berths for two plus bathroom.
- **Drawing room** – seats for three with bathroom, converts to 2 lower and 1 upper berth.
- **Sections** – not private rooms but facing seats that convert to upper and lower berths with curtains for privacy.

### Today's Amtrak *Silver Meteor* and *Silver Star*:

2-3 Viewliner sleepers, each with 2 deluxe bedrooms (can be joined ensuite) and 1 handicapped bedroom with upper and lower berth, bathroom and shower, 12 double bedrooms with foldaway toilet and sink, 1 Dining Car, 1 Café-Lounge and 4 coaches. No cars are added or removed enroute; trains do not divide or join sections. Only the *Silver Star* goes through Hamlet. The *Silver Meteor* now follows the former Atlantic Coast Line RR route through North and South Carolina.