

“DEPOT ROW”

E.L. Greenway Welcome Center *National Historic Site*



The E.L. Greenway Welcome Center is located at 99 Armed Forces Blvd, North, in Warner Robins, just across Hwy 247 from Robins Air Force Base. The first train went through Wellston in 1889 when Georgia Southern & Florida Railroad opened between Macon and Perry, Georgia. Though this is the second depot in the City of Warner Robins, the original Wellston depot was donated by the Southern Railway to Rev. Dorsey Ellis. It was moved in 1944 and is now part of the First Presbyterian Church on Watson Boulevard located near Davis Drive. Replacing the smaller wooden structure located on what was once a dairy farm and now Robins Air Force Base, the Warner Robins Depot, now used as the City's Welcome Center, was built during World War II in 1944 as the city flourished.

Though the depot has not been used for railroad purposes since 1970, much history has taken place during the life of this depot. As you walk into the main door in today's welcome center, you will step back in time to the original paint colors, light fixtures, pictures, and even original benches from the time period. This remarkable structure was designated a National Historic Site in 2008 and with the assistance of the staff you will receive more information on history of the E.L. Greenway Welcome Center and the City of Warner Robins.

X556 Caboose

Use of the caboose began in the 1830's when railroads housed the crew in structures built on top of flatcars. In 1863, lookout posts were designed on top of the caboose for a much easier view of the entire train; this was called a Cupola. The caboose provided an office for the conductor and minimal living quarters during long trips that were decorated for their home away from home. Times prior to air brakes, a flagman and brakeman were aboard in order to keep watch and warn the front of the train of "hotboxes", or overheated wheels on cars.

The X556 Caboose was built in 1971 by Southern Railway and donated to the City of Warner Robins in 2000 by Norfolk Southern. Known as a "Bay Window" caboose, this model eliminated the risk of the crew falling while in the cupola and the need for additional clearances in tunnels and overpasses.

This model has two sets of bay windows, on each side of the structure allowing the view of each side of the train. The bay window caboose was tested in 1923-1930 on the west coast and seemed more safe and effective than traditional cabooses until technology improved and the length of trains began to grow in late 1900's. Cabooses were then replaced by "End of Train Devices" in 1984 that electronically monitored the manual work of the traditional train crew.



WARNER ROBINS CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

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