United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

other names/site number The Historical Society Museum 8HG	G 686
2. Location	
street & number 19 Park Avenue, West	N/A not for publication
city or townLake Placid	N/A □ vicinity
stateFlorida codeFL countyHighlands	code <u>055</u> zip code <u>33852</u>
3. State/Federal Agency Certification	
Signature of certifying official/Title Date Date Date Date Date Date Date Dat	storical Resources
Signature of certifying official/Title Date	
State or Federal agency and bureau	
I. National Park Service Certification	
hereby cortify that the property is: Signature of the Keepers	Date of Action Date of Action Date of Action Date of Action Date of Action
determined not eligible for the	
removed from the National	
Register.	

OMB No. 10024-0018

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NATIONAL REGISTER

Old Lake Placid A.C.L.	Railroad Depot
Name of Property	

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Highlands, Florida County and State

5. Classification				
Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)	Category of Property (Check only one box)	Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)		r count.)
IX private ☐ public-local ☐ public-State	⊠ building(s) □ district □ site	Contributing	Noncontributing	
public-Federal	☐ structure ☐ object		3	sites structures
		1	3	objects Total
Name of related multiple p (Enter "N/A" if property is not part	roperty listing of a multiple property listing.)	Number of cor in the National	ntributing resources pre	eviously listed
N/A			0	
6. Function or Use				
Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)		Current Functions (Enter categories from		
Train Depot		Museum		
· · · ·	······			
7. Description				
Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)	itectural Classification		instructions)	
No Style/Masonry Ver	nacular	foundation Conci	rete	
		wallsStuce	20	
		roof Asbes	stos Shingle	
		other <u>Mason</u>		

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

01d	Lake	Placid	A.C.L.	Railroad	Depot
Name	of Prope	erty			

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- □ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- □ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- □ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- □ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- □ **B** removed from its original location.
- \Box **C** a birthplace or grave.
- \Box **D** a cemetery.
- **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- **F** a commemorative property.
- □ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibilography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- □ previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- □ designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey
 # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Highlands, Florida

County and State

Transpo	rtation
e	
Period of Si	
	1926
Significant [Dates
•	1926
Significant F	Person
(Complete if Cri	terion B is marked above)
	N/A
Cultural Affi	liation
	N/A
A	11-1
Architect/Bu	
Architect/Bu	ilder Unknown
Architect/Bu	
Architect/Bu	
Architect/Bu	

Primary location of additional data:

- X State Historic Preservation Office
- □ Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Old Lake Placid A.C.L. Railroad Depot Name of Property	Highlands, Florida County and State
10. Geographical Data	
Acreage of Property Less than one	
UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)	
$ \begin{array}{c ccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccc$	3 Zone Easting Northing 4 ⊡ See continuation sheet
Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)	
Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)	
11. Form Prepared By	
name/titleCarl Shiver, Historic Sites Specialis	t
organization Bureau of Historic Preservation	date <u>November 23, 1992</u>
street & number 500 S. Bronough Street	telephone <u>(904)</u> 487-2333
rity or townTallahassee	stateFloridazip code <u>32399-0250</u>
Additional Documentation	

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner				
(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)				
name <u>Historical Society of Greater Lake Placid</u>	l, Inc.			
street & number 19 Park Avenue, West	telephone	(813) 465-	-5519	
city or town Lake Placid	state Florida	zip code _	33852	

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Description

Summary Description

The Old Atlantic Coast Line Railroad Depot in Lake Placid is a one-story, masonry vernacular building constructed in 1926. The basically rectangular structure was designed to provide passenger and baggage facilities for regular railroad traffic passing through the city of Lake Placid. The building is covered by a gable roof and is distinguished by a loggia on three elevations. Although a number of changes have been made to the building, the depot still retains many of its original and distinctive features.

Supporting Narrative

The depot is located at the foot of Park Avenue West, just off Main Street in downtown Lake Placid. The structure still occupies its original site, being situated in the middle of the property next to a railroad siding parallel to the main track. The depot was active until July 15, 1975. The buildings is in excellent condition both inside and out and has been undergoing restoration supervised by the Historical Society of Greater Lake Placid since 1983.

The depot is 80 feet long by 25 feet wide, not including the 10 foot wide loggia found on three of its elevations. The building has four major rooms. Because of the policy of racial segregation, which existed when the station was constructed, there are two waiting rooms (one white and one black), a ticket agent's room, and a baggage room. There were also originally four rest rooms. The two in the former white waiting rooms have been renovated, and the two in the former black waiting room are presently being used for storage.

The exterior reinforced concrete walls are stuccoed, and the interior wall in the waiting rooms and ticket agent's room are composed of plaster board with a wooden wainscoting. All of the windows are original double hung wood sashes with 6/6 lights, the window frames measuring 7 feet by 3-1/2 feet. Most of the windows are paired. The interior doors are solid wood 7 feet in height, but the outside doors have 8 lights and glass transoms. The transoms have 6 small panes of glass and can be opened. The ceiling height of the waiting and agent's rooms is 15 feet, while that of the other interior spaces is 13 feet. The loggia ceiling is 12 feet. The join between the walls and

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Description

ceiling in the three major rooms is fitted with a narrow wooden cornice. This molding, the wainscotting, and wooden finishes in the interior of the building have been painted brown in contrast to the walls are light beige.

The waiting rooms and agent's room have a four foot high wainscoting on all walls, whereas in the baggage room it is found only in the southwest corner. The floors are concrete in all the rooms, except the agent's room where it hard wood that has been refinished a left its natural color.

The white waiting room has windows on the north, east, and west walls and outside doors with transoms on the west and east. The room is 28 feet by 25 feet. The two bathrooms are 5 feet by 7 feet and are found in the northeast and southeast corners of the room. The two chimneys that served the wood burning stoves that heated the depot are found at the walls separating the station agent's office from the waiting rooms.

The agent's room is 12' X 29'. The west side of the room has a small bay that extends a few feet into the loggia. This bay was used to observed the tracks and contained controls to operate the semaphore on the roof of the building. The semaphore is still in place. The black waiting room is 25' X 19' with two 5' X 7' storage closets in the northeast and southeast corners of the room. These were originally restrooms. The baggage room to the south is now used as a meeting room. The area was formerly 25' X 20' but has been subdivided to include a small kitchen and work room.

The present roof is covered with asbestos shingles that replaced the original clay tiles when the roof was damaged by a hurricane. The historical society plans to resurface the roof with clay tiles emulating the original material as soon as funds become available. Three noncontributing structures are found on the railroad depot property. A onestory, hip roof picnic pavilion is found just southeast of the depot. Immediately south of the depot is a late 1940s vintage caboose purchased from the CSX Corporation in 1987. West of the caboose is jail cell or cage, built in the 1920s, that was used by the Highlands County Sheriff's Department to hold prisoners until they could be taken to the county jail in Sebring.

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Description

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The exhibits and artifacts found in the depot have been acquired from a variety of sources and are not in all cases associated directly with the history of the depot, railroading in Florida, or the heritage of Lake Placid or Highlands County. However, most of the exhibits were acquired locally.

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List of Photographs

1. Old Lake Placid A.C.L Railroad Depot 2. 19 Park Avenue West (Highlands County), Lake Placid 3. Bettes V. Lamb 4. 1930 (Copy) 5. Historical Society of Greater Lake Placid, Inc. South and East Elevations, Looking Northwest 6. Photo No. 1 of 27 7. 1. Old Lake Placid A.C.L Railroad Depot 19 Park Avenue West (Highlands County), Lake Placid 2. Bettes V. Lamb 3. 4. 1992 Historical Society of Greater Lake Placid, Inc. 5. 6. East Facade, Looking West 7. Photo No. 2 of 27 Old Lake Placid A.C.L Railroad Depot 1. 19 Park Avenue West (Highlands County), Lake Placid 2. Bettes V. Lamb 3. 4. 1992 5. Historical Society of Greater Lake Placid, Inc. 6. East Loggia, Looking Southeast Photo No. 3 of 27 7. 1. Old Lake Placid A.C.L Railroad Depot 2. 19 Park Avenue West (Highlands County), Lake Placid 3. Bettes V. Lamb 4. 1992 5. Historical Society of Greater Lake Placid, Inc. 6. North Elevation and West Facade, Looking Southeast 7. Photo No. 4 of 27 1. Old Lake Placid A.C.L Railroad Depot 2. 19 Park Avenue West (Highlands County), Lake Placid Bettes V. Lamb 3. 4. 1992 5. Historical Society of Greater Lake Placid, Inc. 6. South Elevation, Looking North 7. Photo No. 5 of 27

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Significance

Summary Statement

The Old Atlantic Coast Line Railroad Depot in Lake Placid fulfills criterion A for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Built in 1926, the former passenger depot has local significance in the area of Transportation for its association with the economic development of Lake Placid and as a visible reflection of the contribution that the creation of Florida's railroad network made to the growth of citrus culture and tourism in the city of Lake Placid and Highlands County. The building is representative of the type of passenger facility constructed in small communities by the railroad companies and is among one of the historic resource types that are endangered in Florida. Although the depot incorporates some minor features of the Mediterranean Revival style typical of architecture in Florida during the 1920s, the building is basically a masonry vernacular structure.

<u>Historical Context</u>

Lake Placid is the southernmost city in Highlands County and is known as the "Caladium Capital of the World" since over 75 percent of the world's caladiums are grown there. The city lies 170 feet above sea level. Lake Placid's major visual landmark is the "Happiness Tower" a 240 feet high structure that can be seen for miles around. It towers over the gently rolling hills of citrus groves, vegetable and melon farms, cattle ranches, and acres of caladiums, the ornamental shrub famous for its large and fragrant blossoms. There are 27 spring fed lakes in the Lake Placid area.

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The city of Lake Placid is a community of 15,000 residents nestled in the hills of central Highlands County, located just 10 miles southeast of the city of Sebring. Lake Placid was originally part of the lands that were set aside for the Seminole Indian Nation after the end of the Second Seminole War in 1842, but white settlers began to enter the area in the second half of the nineteenth century. A few homesteads were established in the vicinity of the body of water now called Lake Placid, known previously by the various names of Lake Buck, Lake June, and Lake Stearns. A small settlement named Lake Stearns had been founded on the shore of the lake by the first decade of the 20th century, but with the advent of the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad in 1917, the name of the community was changed to Weco, because it was the railroad's official name for the train stop. The name Lake Stearns was reinstated in 1924 when the settlement became part of

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a land and citrus development enterprise promoted by businessmen A.H. DeVane, E.E. Stewart, and Ernest Morrow. .

In 1921 Highlands County was one of five new counties created from portions of DeSoto County. The town of Sebring was made the seat of the new county. In 1927, the development of Lake Placid was undertaken by a cooperative association led by Dr. Melvil Dewey, the librarian and literary expert best remembered as the originator of the Dewey Decimal System of classifying library books. He was active in the spelling reform movement also, and advocated the systematic restructuring and abbreviating many words in the English language. His influence in this regard is seen today in the unusual spelling of the names of some landmarks in the Lake Placid area.

In 1893, Dr. Melvil Dewey and his wife formed the Lake Placid Club, a cooperative association that had its headquarters at Lake Placid, New York, the famous winter resort community located in the Adirondack Mountains. The association eventually decided to establish a branch of the group in Florida. They selected Lake Stearns in 1927 because the rolling hills of Highlands County reminded them of their New York area. The association coaxed the city officials into changing the town's name to Lake Placid. The town thrived briefly, but development slowed dramatically with the beginning of the Great Depression in the 1930s.

The Coming of the Railroad

The Atlantic Coast Line Railroad Company acquired land in the area of Lake Placid (Weco) in 1912. The company began laying track south from Haines City in Polk County and completed the line to Sebring on June 12 of that year. By 1916, the railroad began to extend the line farther southward and established a station at the small village of Weco. The line was finally completed as far as Clewiston in Hendry County by 1922. The present railway depot in Lake Placid was erected by the A.C.L. railroad company in 1926-1927, and the small wooden depot that it replaced was turned into the office of a citrus packing house. This structure was destroyed by fire in 1954.

The name of the town by 1926 had become Lake Stearns but was changed by the Florida Legislature to Lake Placid in 1927 at the behest of Dr. Melvil Dewey and the Lake Placid association from New York. The rail line and the new depot assisted the association in turning the community into a winter resort. The United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

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Significance

group built two hotels that provided lodging for tourists-particularly members of the association from New York state--who arrived in the town by train. For a time the southern Lake Placid was a boom town, and many people from other states came to settle permanently in the city. The Great Depression of the 1930s brought a halt to growth, and Lake Placid ceased to be an important tourist destination until after World War II.

Railroad development in Florida had been largely completed by World War I and began its decline shortly thereafter. The 1920s and '30s formed a period of consolidation and modernization, but few new depots were built after the 1920s, and these were mainly in the fast-growing urban centers associated with tourism. After World War II, railroad passenger service declined dramatically in the Florida, largely as a result of the development of the interstate highway system and improved state roadways that entailed a declining economic incentive for the railroads to provide passenger service.

The depot continued in operation until the mid-1960s, after which the trains no longer stopped for passengers or ordinary freight. Due to the volume of citrus and caladiums that were shipped from Lake Placid, the depot stayed active as a truck service and continued operations as a telegraph office. All function of the depot ceased in 1975. The depot is now owned by the Historical Society of Great Lake Placid, Inc, which purchased the facility in 1982. It operates as a railroad and local history museum.

Significance of the Lake Placid Railroad Depot

As demonstrated by the above narrative, the Old Lake Placid Railroad Depot is a significant local resource that reflects the development of Florida's rail network in the first three decades of the twentieth century, and is directly associated with the growth of Lake Placid through facilitating the establishment of an economy based on citrus culture, other agriculturally based activities, and tourism. The building retains most of its original exterior and interior features, having lost only its clay tile roof, which the museum intends to restore when funds are made available. As a distinctive type of resource that reflects a significant period in Florida's history, the depot should be listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

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- Polk's Highlands County Directory. Jacksonville: R.L. Polk Co., 1928-1929.
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Boundary Description and Justification

Boundary Description

Lots 11, 12 and 13 in Block 2 of Lake Groves Co.'s Addition to Lake Stearns, Florida and also Lot 13 in Block 3

Boundary Justification

The above described boundary includes all of the property historically associated with the Old Lake Placid A.C.L. Station. That parcel of land is now owned by the Historical Society of Greater Lake Placid, Inc.