

South Florida History

VOLUME 29, NO. 4, 2001 \$3.00



Florida: The Riviera of America

MIAMI

FOUR WHEELS
NO
BRAKES

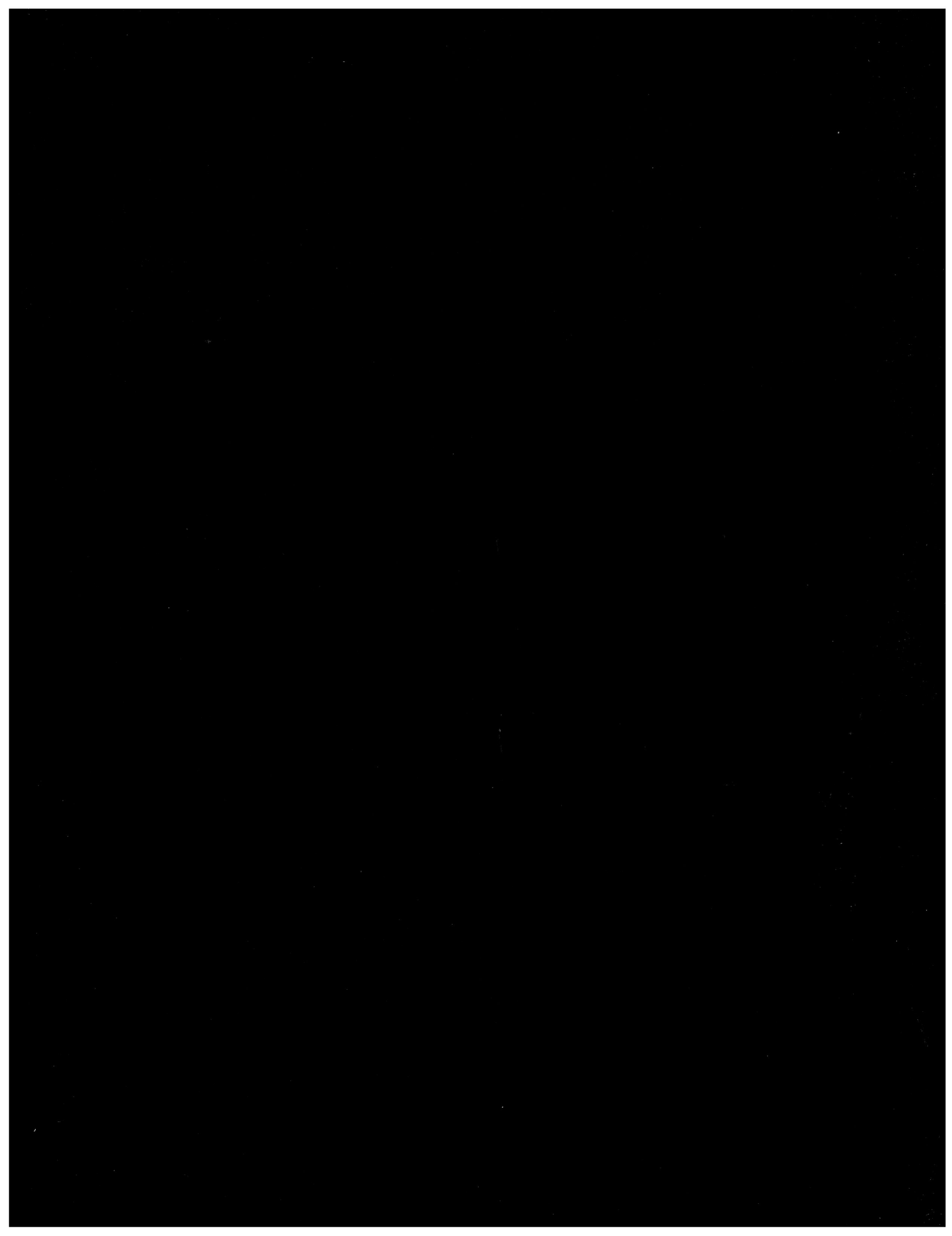
FLORIDA
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THE TIN YOU LOVE TO TOUCH

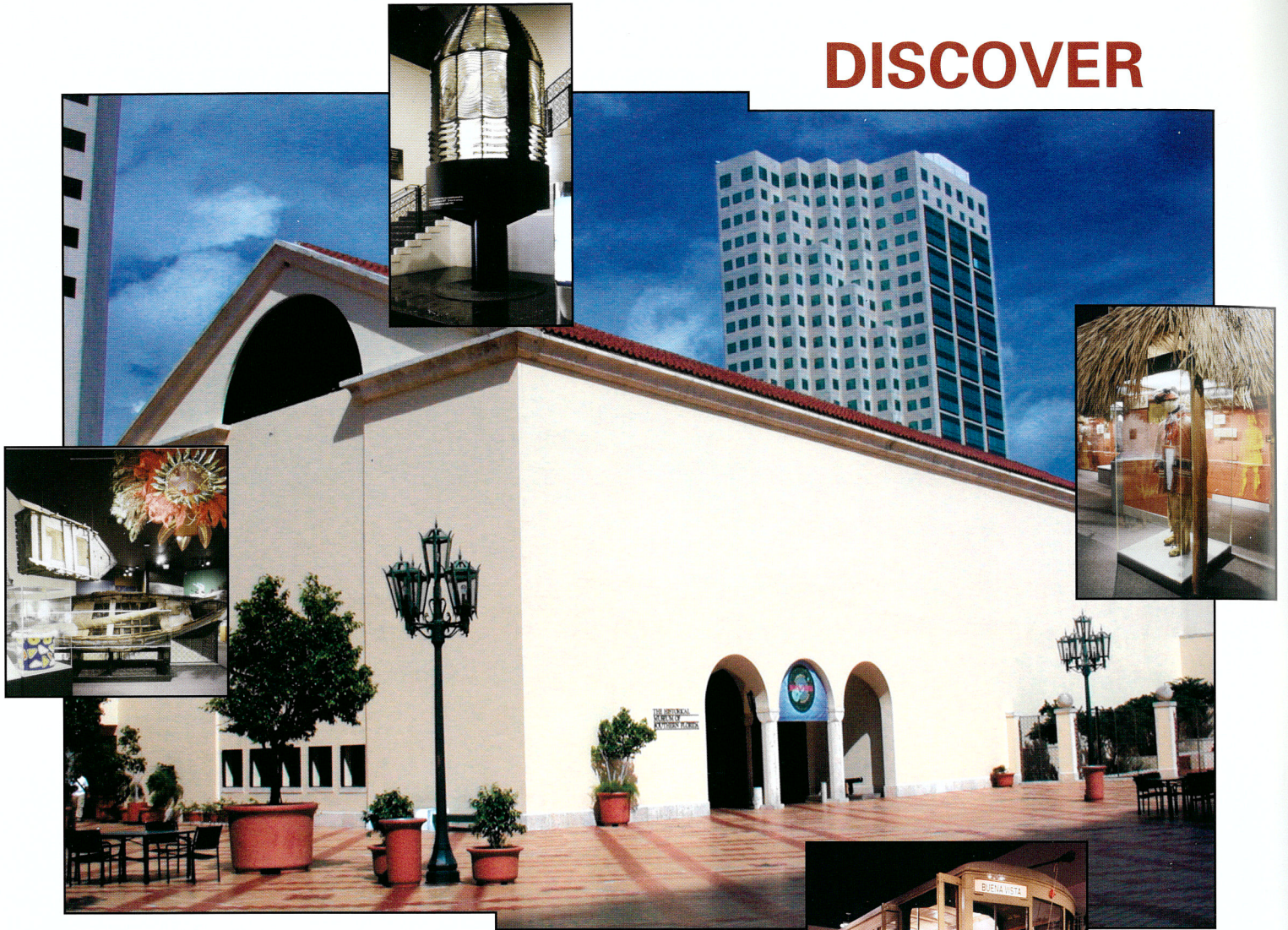
FRAGILE

TO BE OR
NOT TO BE

Frederic
Stanley



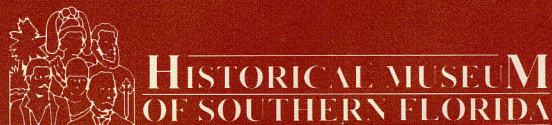
DISCOVER



EXPLORE

**10,000 years
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Climb onto a 1920s trolley car, board a 19th century sailboat,
defend a Spanish fort and see shipwreck gold and Native American clothing!

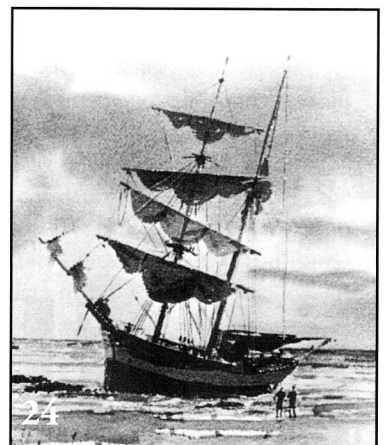


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Cover—Artwork from the cover of *Liberty* magazine, January 1926. See page 4 for the original cover. HASF 5.16C.G2.

Editor's notes



One of *South Florida History's* missions is to not only tell South Florida and the Caribbean's history through the use of written words, but to also illustrate it through the use of photographs and images. It is important that a great article be accompanied by images that are just as great. I may be biased, but imagery allows for a better understanding and visualization of, in this case, times past.

Frequently, compiling images that will accompany an article can be quite challenging and time consuming, yet fun and educational. Especially if the article dates back to the 1700s. Quite often there are very limited resources to work with. So you work with what you can. You dig through archives of photos, search the Internet for leads,

ask questions and make a couple of phone calls. And at the end of the day, or many days, once the research is completed, we always seem to find something worth publishing.

From an outspoken past legislator and a bat tower, to the Florida land boom and the wreck of the *Providencia*, filling the pages of this issue with imagery has been all of the above. Here it is, the final product of much research.

Learn how elected official John B. Orr's courageous stand against maintaining segregated state schools earned him the Ford Foundation's American Heritage Award. By breaking with prevailing popular opinion he gained the respect and trust of his constituents.

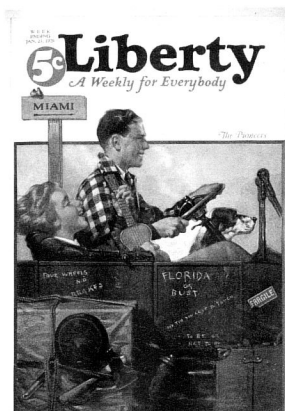
Then read on to find out about Richter Clyde Perky's mosquito control project. Hoping to keep the "high-rolling yachtsmen" coming to his tropical rendezvous in Sugar Loaf Key during the mosquito ridden summers, he came up with a \$10,000 solution: a bat tower (page 14). An "obvious solution," so he believed, that failed.

After reading about "Perky no longer having bats in his belfry," travel back in time to Florida's land boom. Explore its beginnings in the 1800s when everyone got rich, the realtors, the bankers and the land speculators, to the collapse in the 1920s, due mostly to fraudulent land sales (page 18).

And finally, learn how the wreck of the Spanish brigantine *Providencia* and its cargo lent itself to the naming of West Palm Beach and Palm Beach County (page 24).

Enjoy!

Sara Muñoz



Left—This was the cover of *Liberty* magazine, week ending January 23, 1926. HASF 5.16C.G2.

**Interested in submitting
an article or book review for
South Florida History?**

Contact Sara Muñoz at
publications@historical-museum.org for a copy
of the *Style Guide for Writers*.

South Florida History

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EXHIBITS

by Stephen Stuempfle, PhD

Every month curators at the Historical Museum receive proposals for new exhibitions in our galleries. Proposals come from many sources, including Historical Museum staff, staff at other museums, collectors, scholars and community leaders. This ongoing submission of exhibition ideas is vital to maintaining the museum's role as a public forum for the exchange of perspectives on the history of South Florida and the Caribbean. Through reviewing exhibition proposals, curators keep abreast of both trends in historical research and the interests of members of the South Florida community.

In deciding whether to adopt an exhibition proposal for development, we consider many factors, such as the relevance of the exhibition topic to our museum's regional focus, staff curatorial expertise or the availability of guest curators, the opportunity to use and/or expand museum collections, demonstrated community interest in a topic, the need for variety in the museum's exhibitions schedule and the availability of funding. Unfortunately, this combination of factors, as well as limitations of space and time, prevents us from adopting most exhibition proposals. But all are given careful review and are filed for future consideration.

Once an exhibition project has been adopted, one of the next steps is to decide how it should be presented to the public. Over the past few years, the Historical Museum has been expanding its exhibitions program to take full advantage of all available gallery spaces, the development of new technologies and opportunities for partnerships with other organizations. This expanded program enables us to reach new audiences through a variety of exhibitions each year.

Sometimes an exhibition can be configured in multiple formats for different audiences. For example, *The Everglades: Exploitation and Conservation* is currently on display in the museum's 2,000 sq. ft. central changing exhibitions gallery. In the upcoming year, the exhibition will tour museums in Tampa, Naples and Gainesville. Meanwhile, a small version of the exhibition, consisting of portable illustrated panels, was produced for the Florida Humanities Council and will tour over 60 venues across Florida. In addition, an online version of the exhibition is featured on the Historical Museum's website (www.historical-museum.org). This virtual exhibition will reach people throughout the world, who can visit our

museum at any time, day or night. Our website also includes online versions of past exhibitions and, by fall, will feature exhibitions developed exclusively for virtual experience.

Though the Internet has created immense opportunities for the display and viewing of images, many people still prefer to visit actual museums, where they can share experiences of real objects with other visitors. This year visitors to the Historical Museum will discover a variety of smaller exhibitions in our lobby and theater galleries. On display in the lobby during March and April

was a photographic exhibition, *Rediscovering Miami's Industrial Past*, with views not of beaches and recreation, but of oil wells, shipbuilding, rocket boosters and other areas of production. Currently, up until the end of June, are Seminole paintings of James Hutchinson. Additional exhibitions scheduled for the lobby this year will feature the tenth anniversary of Hurricane Andrew, early twentieth-century Cuban paintings and the history of the railroad in Cuba. The latter two presentations will accompany a larger exhibition in the central gallery of stunning illustrations, from the eighteenth to the twentieth century, of the rich flora and fauna of Cuba. Opening this fall, the Cuban exhibitions together will constitute the museum's tribute to the centennial of Cuba's independence.

In an effort to move beyond the walls of the museum, we are also presenting small exhibitions in other venues in the Miami area. This year we collaborated with the Florida Moving Image Archive to organize a new version of *Déjà View: Home Movies in South Florida*, which is being displayed in branches of the Miami-Dade Public Library System. In addition, we are currently exploring a variety of indoor and outdoor public spaces for possible photographic exhibitions that would raise awareness of South Florida history and the museum itself.

With this multifaceted exhibitions program, we hope to expand the Historical Museum's audience and provide diverse ways through which the public can connect with the museum and its collections. By presenting new and varied exhibitions, the museum will continue its dialogue with the ever-changing South Florida community and remain a catalyst for historical inquiry. —SFH



A view of the current exhibition *The Everglades: Exploitation and Conservation*.

HISTORICAL MUSEUM OF SOUTHERN FLORIDA

Miami-Dade Cultural Center, 101 West Flagler Street, Miami, 305.375.1492, www.historical-museum.org. The museum is open seven days a week, Monday–Saturday 10 am to 5 pm; Thursday 10 am to 9 pm; and Sunday noon to 5 pm. Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day. Adults \$5; Children 6-12 \$2. Members Free. To become a member, call 305.375.1492.

SPECIAL EXHIBITIONS

The Everglades: Exploitation and Conservation

February 22–August 18, 2002

Discover one of the world's most unique endangered habitats. Trace the history of the issues facing the Everglades today: drainage and water management; parks and wildlife refuges; the Everglades Restoration Act; agriculture, exotic plants and animals; and development plans that failed and succeeded.

Illustrating Cuba's Flora and Fauna

September 6, 2002–January 19, 2003

The first exhibition of its kind, *Illustrating Cuba's Flora and Fauna* will highlight the richness of Cuba's natural history as shown in printed illustrations from the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries. The exhibition will also show depictions of Cuba's natural beauty as an expression of national identity in souvenir times, marketing materials, stamps and coins. New perspectives will be offered on the process of evolution, dispersion, loss and assimilation that lie at the root of Cuba's natural wealth and beauty.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Everglade Evenings

Third Thursdays, 7–9 pm

Historical Museum of Southern Florida

In conjunction with *The Everglades* exhibition, this series will explore the history of human interaction with the Everglades through poetry readings, dramatic performances, films and panel discussions. For more information, call 305.375.1492.

June 20—Jeff Ripple's Everglades Photo

Jeff Ripple: lecture & slides

July 18—The Future Florida Parks Panel Discussion

Gene Tinnie—(Chair) Virginia Key Trust & Urban Environment League; Howard Gregg—Associate Director, Miami-Dade Park System; Linda Canzanelli—Director, Biscayne National Park; Amy Wolf—Trust for Public Land

August 15—Hurricanes: Remembering and Rebuilding

Film—1926: *The End of Paradise*

Nathan Hipps—Documentarian and Bryan Norcross—Channel 4 Meteorologist

Family Fun Days

Second Saturdays, 1–4 pm

Historical Museum of Southern Florida

Through a variety of hands-on activities, participants uncover how and why the environment has changed over time and propose solutions to preserving it. For more information, call 305.375.1492.

July 13—Where's Our Water (WOW)

With the Miami Children's Museum

August 10—Songs of the Swamp

Live performance by Grant Livingston

TROPICAL EXPLORERS SUMMER CAMP

This summer, travel back in time with the Historical Museum of Southern Florida's Tropical Explorers Camp! Campers ages 6-12 bring the past to life through gallery games, skits, music, arts and crafts, storytelling and field trips to historic sites and museums.

Each camp session is held Monday through Friday from 9 am to 5 pm. Camp fees are \$95 per session for Historical Museum members and \$105 per session for non-members. There is a \$5 discount for multi-session participants. For more information or to register your child, call 305.375.1628.

♦ **Session I June 24–28**

World Neighbors

Bring your sense of adventure on this trek around the world! Campers turn into globetrotters while they investigate those who have made South Florida and the Caribbean home.

♦ **Session II July 8–12**

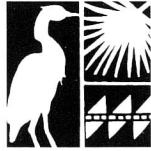
Adventures Through Time

Step back in time and see Florida history from the colonial era through the Civil War. Campers explore the lives of the settlers and discover how they survived.

♦ **Session III July 22–26**

Everglades Explorers

You won't need bug spray for this adventure through the Everglades! Discover how and why this unique wetland has changed over time and how it has impacted our lives.



COLLIER COUNTY MUSEUM, 3301 Tamiami Trail East, Naples—941.774.8476. The Collier County Museum explores the people, places and everyday events that have shaped Collier County's heritage. The museum and four-acre historical park are open Monday–Friday, 9 am–5 pm. Free.



BOCA RATON HISTORICAL SOCIETY TOWN HALL, 71 N. Federal Highway, Boca Raton—561.395.6766. The Boca Raton Historical Society operates a museum and gift shop at the old town hall. Hours of operation are Tuesday through Friday, 10 am–4 pm.



CLEWISTON MUSEUM, 112 South Commercio Street, Clewiston—863.983.2870. The Clewiston Museum, founded in 1984, is a growing museum, collecting and displaying items, large and small, important and trivial, which reflect the past of Clewiston and its surrounding area. The Clewiston Museum is open 1–5 pm. Tuesday through Saturday, with seasonal adjustments. No admission fee is charged; however, donations are encouraged.



FORT MYERS HISTORICAL MUSEUM, 2300 Peck Street, Fort Myers—941.332.5955. Open Tuesday through Saturday, 9 am–4 pm. Closed Sundays and Mondays and most holidays. Admission is \$6 for adults and \$3 for children ages 3–12. Museum members are free.



FLORIDA HISTORY CENTER & MUSEUM BURT REYNOLDS PARK, 805 North U.S. Highway 1, Jupiter—561.747.6639. The Florida History Center & Museum is open all year. Examine artifacts from early Florida inhabitants in the permanent museum collection and view the traveling exhibits. Open Tuesday through Friday, 10 am–5 pm and weekends 1–5 pm. Closed on Mondays. \$4 adults; \$3 seniors; \$2 children. The Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse is open Sunday–Wednesday, 10 am–4 pm (must be 48" tall to climb). For information: 405.747.8380. \$5. The Dubois Pioneer Home is open Sunday and Wednesday, 1–5 pm. \$2.



THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF PALM BEACH COUNTY, 139 North County Road, Suite 25, Palm Beach—561.832.4164. A nonprofit membership organization devoted to collecting and preserving archives and artifacts pertaining to the history of Palm Beach County and Florida. Make local history a part of your life and join as a member to help support this effort. You will enjoy lectures and special events, discounts on historical books and research fees. Office hours are Mon.–Fri. from 9 am–5 pm. Research hours are by appointment Tues.–Thurs. from 10 am–3 pm.

The above institutions subscribe to South Florida History.

Everglades

EXPLOITATION CONSERVATION

“...a waste of water, fit only for the resort of reptiles.”—William S. Harney, 1848

“The most important problem to be settled...is that of restoring water levels.”—Daniel B. Beard, 1938

by Rebecca A. Smith

The Historical Museum's new exhibition, *The Everglades: Exploitation and Conservation*, examines the two urges that have possessed humans for more than 150 years: to change the Everglades into something else and to preserve the Everglades as an environmental treasure. The changes—drainage, development, etc.—have made South Florida habitable for millions of people, but have nearly destroyed the unique wilderness that so many people love. To save the Everglades and provide for the needs of South Florida's citizens, state and federal governments have embarked upon a series of restoration projects that will cost billions of dollars and take decades to complete. Clearly, one of the great challenges facing South Floridians in the 21st century will be to reconcile the needs of both wilderness and civilization. *The Everglades* provides a historical perspective upon this dilemma.

The idea for the exhibition originated in another project, *Reclaiming the Everglades* (see page 28 for more information on this project). In 1997, museum archives staff embarked upon this con-

sortium project to bring some of our collections to the Internet. Funded by the Library of Congress and Ameritech, *Reclaiming the Everglades* is one of 23 American Memory projects that have created digital collections of primary resources from libraries, archives and museums across the nation (<http://memory.loc.gov>). Now online, *Reclaiming the Everglades* contains nearly 10,000 pages and images from three collections. Point your browser to everglades.fiu.edu/reclaim/reclaim.htm to see the results.



At first, African American seasonal laborers worked the fields. During World War II and until 1995, Blacks from the Bahamas and the Caribbean provided migrant labor. HASF 1995-277-9154.

Bill Brown and Ruthanne Vogel from the University of Miami library's Special Collections department, Gail Clement and Megan Waters at Florida International University's library, and myself, Curator of Research Materials at the Historical Museum, formed the project team. We searched our collections for appropriate Everglades

materials to scan and struck gold. We found more books, documents, photographs and ephemera than could possibly be included in *Reclaiming the Everglades*. Many of these materials were of exhibition quality. Eureka! Let's do an exhibition!

An Exhibition at the Historical Museum through August 18

The wealth of materials and the timely topic convinced museum staff that this was an exhibition idea worth pursuing. A grant from the Florida Historical Museums Grants-in-Aid Program funded much of the exhibition project, with additional financing coming from a variety of other government and private sources.

The Everglades exhibition team set to work with Chief Curator Steve Stuempfle coordinating efforts. The team followed the traditional steps to curating any exhibition—script development, artifact selection, plotting the physical layout, construction and installation.

Additional museum staff members contributed their skill as well—an exhibition brochure and other print pieces were designed in-house, and advertising was purchased to get the word out to the public. The Education Department developed a series of Family Fun Days to take place on the second Saturday of each month that would incorporate music, art and storytelling while focusing on the Everglades. Another educational series, called Everglade Evenings, was designed specifically for adults. They take place on the third Thursday of each month. Both programs are free and open to the public and allow participants to explore *The Everglades* exhibition.

This summer, on a day when a visit to the real Everglades would include battling hordes of mosquitoes and struggling to avoid heat stroke, come to the air-conditioned Historical Museum instead. Experience the Everglades from the perspective of history. —*SFH*

Top to bottom—During the second half of the century, white settlers established trading posts, where Seminoles bartered alligator hides, pelts and bird feathers for cloth, beads, and sewing machines. HASF 1984-100-23. During the 1890s, Warren B. “Alligator Joe” Frazee, posing with a crocodile, ran the first alligator farms in West Palm Beach and Miami. HASF 1984-100-24. In 1947, flooding from two hurricanes inundated western Dade and Broward counties. HASF 1989-011-8007.





Legislator John B. Orr earned the respect and the votes of his constituents by refusing to remain silent on a question of civil rights in the face of overwhelming opposition. HASF Miami News Collection 1989-011-22728.

Most Morally Courageous of Men

by Sue Searcy Goldman

In 1956, a special session of the Florida Legislature under Governor Leroy Collins met to determine whether the state's schools would remain segregated or follow the Supreme Court's mandate in *Brown vs. The Board of Education* (1954) to desegregate.

A freshman legislator, John B. Orr, Jr., cast the one vote to comply with the ruling. In his speech explaining his position, Orr said, "Perhaps the most dangerous byproduct of our activity in this special session is the attitude of disrespect for our laws and the principles of common decency that is developing. To defy the highest court in our land is unthinkable to me..."

Because Orr was facing reselection, his action at this particular time was considered political suicide. His address was met with insults, threatening calls to his home, and personal ostracism.

However, his stand brought out those who had feared to speak before. He began to receive letters from state leaders and from common citizens around the state who believed as he did that "...had we devoted as much energy, time and talent to discovering means to live within the law instead of in defiance of it, we could have found a way..."

His courageous stand won him the first award granted by the prestigious American Traditions Foundation which was reported in the Congressional Record of February, 1957. In presenting the award at a dinner in Washington, the committee gave its reason for its selection of Orr as follows:

"Representative Orr reinforced and strengthened the American tradition by refusing to remain silent on a question of civil rights in the face of overwhelming opposition; by giving heart to many others of like conviction but lesser courage; by contributing to the free and open exchange of views which is at the heart of the democratic process; by giving the public the right and opportunity to hear both sides of a controversial subject; by proving once again that freedom of speech and discussion are held dear by the American people—that an elected official can break with prevailing popular opinion, take issue with a local custom of long standing and, in so doing, earn the respect and the votes of his constituents."

Jack, as he was known both professionally and privately, had lived by principle all of his short life. He was the son of John Barclay Orr and Esther Randall, who by example, had nurtured a winner in all things. As Robert Herron wrote in *Miami Magazine*, he never considered himself a loser. He had been an excellent student and a star athlete at Miami Beach High School. Afterward, at Duke University, he honed the skills in debate that made him such a persuasive speaker. It was there that he refined his belief in the principles of basic human rights that would later become so central to his life. He finished his law degree at the University of Florida in 1948.

His mother, who became his lifelong defender, was a feisty, spirited humorist. His father, a well trained plasterer and builder, was eulogized as "an artist who created beautiful things in stone." It was his father's work at some of Miami's most famous landmarks (Vizcaya, the Biltmore Hotel and the Surf Club) that remain a tribute to his artistry. However, it was his dedication to citizenship that won the lasting appreciation of Miamians as stated upon his death—"the measure of a man's life is the well spending of it, not the length (Plutarch)."

Many years after his father's death (when Jack was only 13 years old), Jack Orr would recall his father calling him into his

sickroom to explain to him, the eldest child, how to take care of his mother, brother and sister.

In an interview in 1957 with Lowell Brandle of the *St. Petersburg Times*, Jack Orr summed up in his own words, a philosophy which he held to the rest of his short life:

"If I had to leave my son a few simple instructions to get him through life, I think I would tell him this:

"If I had to leave my son a few simple instructions to get him through life, I think I would tell him this:...

That prejudice in any form is a base emotion and the sign of an uncultured man.

I would tell him to stand up and fight for what he thinks is right, no matter how unpopular..."

Be informed. Read history. Know government. That—while we have government by the majority—the minority and the individual must be respected.

That prejudice in any form is a base emotion and the sign of an uncultured man.

I would tell him to stand up and fight for what he thinks is right, no matter how unpopular.

To take his principles seriously but not himself too seriously—never to take the martyr's role. I would teach him to judge men by their ability and what they do, instead of by their position or what they say.

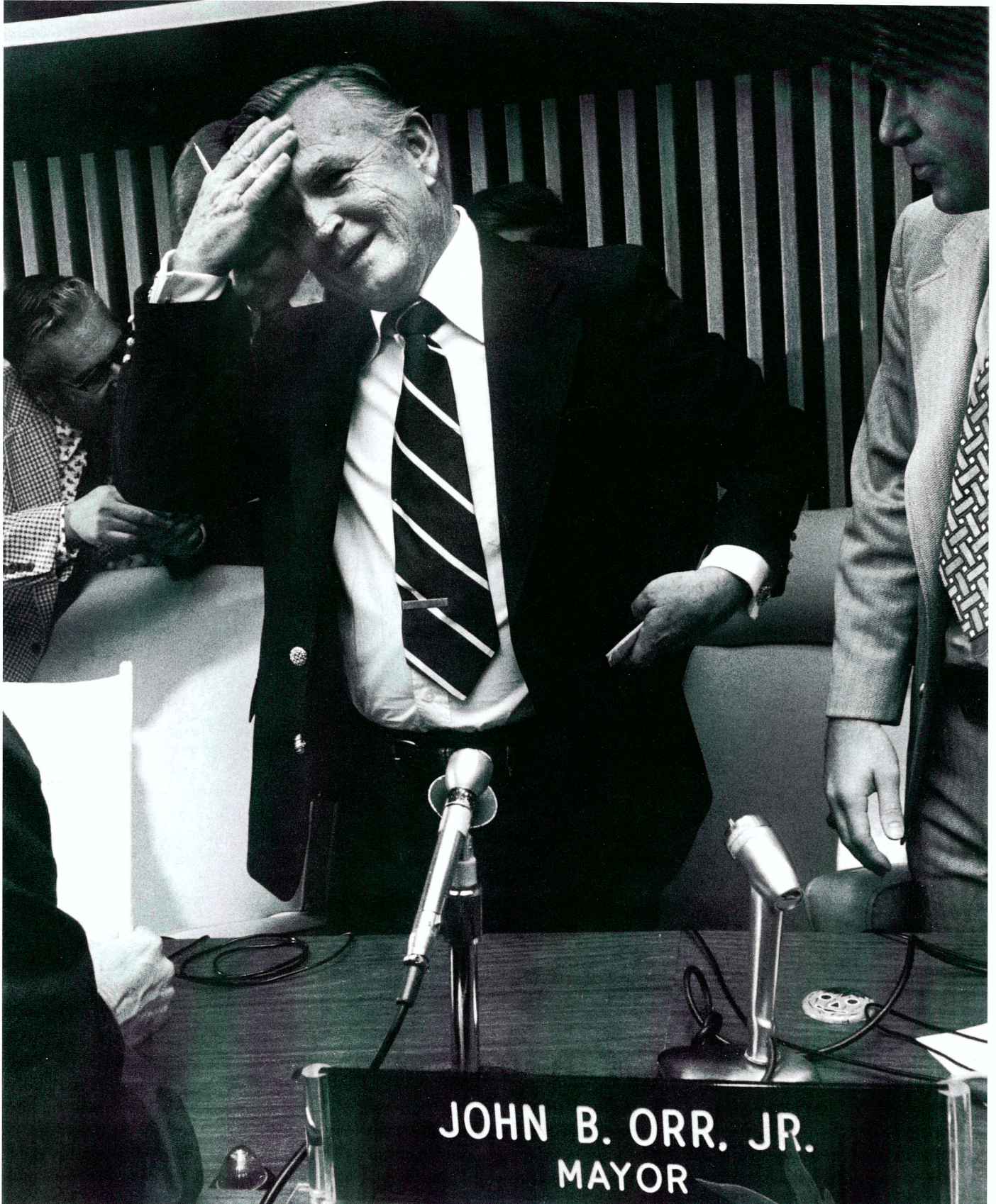
That the important thing is to live a good life and not just preach about one."

After the special session of 1956, Jack Orr was sent back to the Florida Legislature one more time. Then, in the hysteria of the 1960s, he was defeated for his strong stand on the equality of the races.

He returned to Miami to private law practice in several firms. In 1972, he decided to run for Metropolitan Miami mayor, which election he won. Having battled alcoholism for several years, he finally joined Alcoholics Anonymous and, beginning to believe in something other than himself, he turned his life around. Though he battled cancer for several years, he masterfully met the demands of his office as mayor, and, on July 25th, 1974, he died of a heart attack at the age of 54 years.

In speaking of Orr's early career, Sy Gelber said of his old friend and law partner, "He seemed to live at a higher, more intense level than anyone else." Referring in his article to all Orr's personal devils, Robert Herron ultimately concluded that in the end, it came down to the fact that there was simply no one to replace "this most morally courageous of men."—*SFH*

Sue Searcy Goldman is a retired professor of Alternative Education and Florida History (both Human and Natural) at Miami-Dade Community College. Native of Georgia, but a resident of Florida since the age of three. Widow of Phillip Goldman, who was a colleague of Jack Orr.



Jack Orr, as he was known both professionally and privately, gets sworn in as Metro-Dade County Mayor in 1972. HASF, Miami News Collection 1989-011-22730.

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B

by Nell Colcord Weidenbach

Way back in the 1920s, when the Lower Keys were generally considered to be outside the limits of the “real world,” one Richter Clyde Perky and his wife found their way from Denver, Colorado, to the lush mangrove islet known today as Sugar Loaf Key.

Access was only by boat, of course. Possibly Mr. Perky chose the isolated spot because of its privacy. Also, it was in prime fishing waters, only 15 nautical miles from sources of supply in Key West—all the prerequisites for an “exclusive fishing resort.”

Without delay, he is said to have developed a tourist hideaway comparable to Indian Key of a previous century. (Indian Key, near Islamorada, and Perky’s establishment were primitive forerunners of the burgeoning hotel-motel industry of modern times.)

On the waterfront, for the benefit of his lodge guests, Mr. Perky built a short cement walkway, leading to a now-defunct facility of some sort that presumably provided opportunity for fishing or for night-time revelry under the stars. Perhaps it was a thatched gazebo—or maybe merely comfortable benches overlooking the rising moon and the low-hanging stars.

Right—A vertical view of Richter Clyde Perky’s Bat Tower designed in 1929 to attract bats in an effort to combat mosquitoes. Courtesy of Florida State Archives.



He built a small open-air salt-water swimming pool with retaining walls of natural rock. The sizable depth can be estimated by the fact that a diving board was installed. [When this writer visited the site a few years ago, the retaining walls were still visible, but nothing remained of the diving board except its base. Whatever there had been of gazebo or benches had long since blown away in a hurricane. However, local fishermen obviously still use the pier, judging by the nets, fishing rods, and tackle box paraphernalia that were scattered hither and yon.]

As could be expected, Mr. Perky named his little paradise "Perky Key." One wonders why such a financial opportunist would not have chosen a catchy "PerKey" instead of a name that sounds like a cross between stuttering and strangling. "Perky Key," indeed!

At any rate, the King and Queen of Perky settled back to enjoy the "perks" of high-rolling yachtsmen who would happily pay prime prices for prestigious solitude.

No doubt, wintertime vacationers were ecstatic over the tiny jewel of a tropical rendezvous—unless they lingered too long into the mosquito season. And all who dared to cast anchor in the summertime before the age of mosquito control would have hastily forsaken the outdoor "perks" while they ran for shelter.

Alas, the word spread. Perky's Key appeared to be doomed almost before it was properly launched.

Somehow, Mr. Perky heard of a mosquito control project underway in Texas. It was said that night-flying mosquitoes are a natural food of night-flying bats. The obvious solution was to build some kind of facility—a "bat dormitory," so to speak—that would encourage bats to congregate. At sundown, they would be expected to emerge, as is the habit of bats, and would engorge on the hordes of available mosquitoes.

According to the Texas experiment, a tower was the ideal habitat. Mr. Perky was able to obtain the plans for such a structure, which he proceeded to build in 1929 at the exorbitant cost of \$10,000.

Using unpainted cypress with pine slats, he built a four-sided structure about the height of a two- or possibly three-storied building. It rests solidly on cement pilings high enough to allow a man to walk under the floor with ease. When standing under the structure, with its standard floor beams, one can look up into the height of the tower through a square hollow shaft that is open at the bottom. It looks very

much like a hanging-down periscope placed in the center of the tower.

Other than that one peephole, the tower is closed to the eye, possibly to provide privacy for the bats' sleeping quarters. One can only guess as to whether the main part of the tower is hollow; or perhaps it is equipped with roosts and feeding trays. Presumably, the open-ended "periscope" was the flight tunnel for the nightly exodus.

At the base of the supporting pilings, there is a metal shield encircling each piling, obviously designed to deter raccoons, cats, and even inquisitive people from attempting to climb the unclimbable cement posts.

On one of the pilings is an inscription etched in the cement in very shallow, unprofessional printing:

*Dedicated to Good Health at Perky, Fla.
By Mr. & Mrs. R. C. Perky
March 15th, 1929*

At last, the tower was ready, no doubt equipped generously with bat bait. The few remaining tourists, of course, were more than ready! It was surely a memorable day when the bat shipment arrived. The sleepy nocturnal creatures were released into the tower immediately, to rest for the pending feast. What a night that must have been on Perky Key!

Historical records do not tell us how long the bats lingered—or if they made only a one-night stand. History does report: "Perky No Longer Has Bats in His Belfry." The mosquitoes,

unfortunately, continued to multiply as always.

NOTE—All that remains of "PerKey" today is the Bat Tower with the remnants of the waterfront structures. Visitors can view it at close range on Sugar Loaf Key. Turn at the Airport Road. The historic old tower will be silhouetted against the sky about a quarter of a mile or so from U.S. #1.—*SFH*

Nell Colcord Weidenbach is a Florida native whose family has spent many vacations in the Florida Keys. By profession, she was a teacher and is a freelance writer, with numerous publications relating to Florida history.

Right—Hoping to keep the mosquitoes away from his "tourist hideaway" on Sugar Loaf Key, Richter Clyde Perky spent \$10,000 on a 4-sided structure that would serve as a "Bat Dormitory." Courtesy of Florida State Archives.

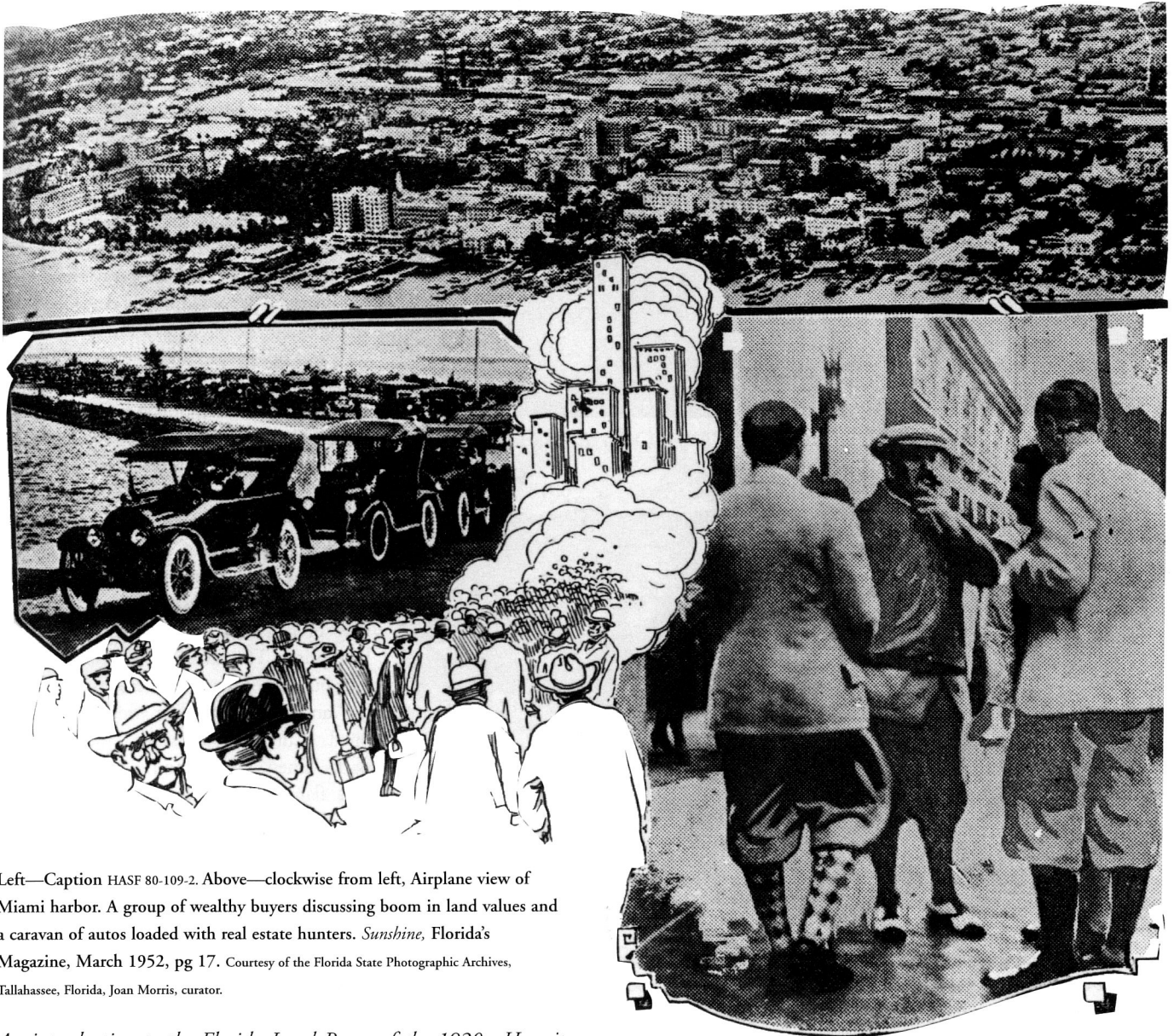
The obvious solution was to
build some kind of facility
—a "bat dormitory," so to
speak—that would encourage
bats to congregate. At sundown,
they would be expected to
emerge, as is the habit of bats,
and would engorge on the
hordes of available mosquitoes.





Florida
the *Riviera*
of America

by Mark Mathosian



Left—Caption HASF 80-109-2. Above—clockwise from left, Airplane view of Miami harbor. A group of wealthy buyers discussing boom in land values and a caravan of autos loaded with real estate hunters. *Sunshine*, Florida's Magazine, March 1952, pg 17. Courtesy of the Florida State Photographic Archives, Tallahassee, Florida, Joan Morris, curator.

An introduction to the Florida Land Boom of the 1920s. How it began, flourished and ultimately collapsed because of fraud, greed and public reaction to land swindles!

Before you begin this article look at the photo above, “Grab for Florida Land Rivals ’49 Gold Boom.” Look closely at the line of cars. These visitors are on a quest—a quest for Florida Land. Miami, Ft. Lauderdale, Palm Beach, you name the city. All along Florida’s Gold Coast Henry Ford’s model T’s flowed non-stop into south Florida over the old Dixie Highway. Can you imagine what it must have been like? These were truly the glory days for Florida realtors.

In the early 1920s, real estate offices stayed open from 8:30 a.m. until midnight. In fact, having an office wasn’t even necessary. Deals were made on the curbside and consummated with a handshake. There were no cold calls or bad months for realtors or bankers. Simply have your customer sign a contract and get a deposit on a lot. Details could be worked out later. Real estate commissions

flowed. Everyone got rich, the realtors, bankers and the land speculators. That’s how it was, at least for a while. Then the bottom fell out and the land boom collapsed. By the time the boom went bust it left behind a wake of broken dreams, lost fortunes and weary Americans who were turned off to the sunshine state and the fraudulent land sales tactics to which they were exposed.

The Beginning

During the late 1800s Florida was viewed as a semi-tropical paradise and was referred to by many as ‘the Riviera of America.’ It was a winter retreat for the rich. Wealthy Americans and Europeans would spend their winters here, leaving only after the brutal heat from the Florida sun became too much to handle. However, by the early 1920s things started changing and the masses got in on the fun.



Top—The land boom drew thousands of people to the sunshine state in search of jobs and a new life. Several out-of-towners scouring the local newspapers for opportunities. Above—Doc Dammers, an associate of George Merrick, developer of Coral Gables, hawks land to anxious buyers in 1921. Courtesy of the Florida State Photographic Archives, Tallahassee, Florida, Joan Morris, curator.

Historians agree that the atmosphere in the early 1920s was ripe for a land boom. For starters, a new roaring twenties, free-for-all lifestyle, was emerging in America. This was due, in great part, by the robust prosperity America saw at the end of World War I. Factories that produced war products now turned their attention to the public. Armament-making equipment was converted to produce consumer goods. With a booming economy and dollars to spend, the emerging middle class started buying mass produced consumer products including passenger cars assembled by Henry Ford in his Detroit warehouses. With new roads being built almost daily, there was an optimistic view held by millionaires down to farmers that the good times would last forever. Florida became the winter playground for everyone. All road signs pointed south to the land of sandy beaches, tropical breezes and coconut trees.

With the middle class now more mobile than ever, land developers in Florida, primarily on the Gold Coast, from the Palm Beaches to Miami, began promoting planned developments in a big way. Articles and advertisements appeared in every major newspaper and magazine promoting Florida land deals. The boom developers viewed arriving tourists with dollars in their pockets as easy marks for purchasing 'pre-developed' lots in their proposed paper developments. Being good salesmen they knew that while on vacation people are relaxed, have their guards down and are apt to spend more lavishly and purchase more liberally than when at home. And, everyone was a target for a good sales pitch. Millionaires purchased large estates and multiple lots while the average person bought single town and beach lots.

The developments were called "paper developments" because during the frenzied days of the boom, lots were bought from blue prints. The lots looked better that way. The buyers got the promoter's vision of what the land would look like after it was developed. Curving boulevards, yacht basins, parks lined with leaning coconut trees and flaming hibiscus. A beautiful scene! Florida paradise.

Around Miami, the hub of lot sales activity, subdivisions were often sold out on the first day of sale. This was easily accomplished. Advertisements appeared describing the location, special features and approximate price of the lots. Reservations, of course, were accepted. Ante up a check for 10 percent of the sales price and you would be the proud owner of a lot in tropical paradise...well, not quite. What you actually received was a 'binder.' A binder was a legal document issued to you by the land developer that identified your lot and had the word 'sold' stamped on it. The knicker-clad salespeople who took your 10 percent deposit were gleefully referred to as the Binder Boys. With a binder in hand you were expected, at some future point, to begin making monthly payments on your lot to the developer. However, in most cases that time never arrived. Instead, the binder was sold to another land speculator for a profit. That person resold the binder to another person for a profit, who resold the binder to another person for a profit, and so on and so on. One binder could feasibly be sold up to a dozen times or more.

By mid 1925 the feeding frenzy was on! Real estate success stories were regularly published in the northern newspapers describing how some fortunate person made a killing with Florida real estate. Following are examples of a few typical transactions:

A binder on a Ft. Lauderdale lot was purchased in November, 1924, for \$600. The same lot binder was sold for \$3,750 a few months later. That equates to a whopping profit of 525 percent! In another case acreage was purchased in December of 1924 for \$5 an acre, sold in early 1925 for \$12 per acre, later sold for \$17 per acre, resold again for \$30 per acre and then once again for \$60 per acre. Quick deals, quick profits! The real estate transfer chart below reveals some amazing numbers. When the number of land conveyances during January, 1919, is compared with the number of conveyances for 1926, the last year of the boom, the number goes from 807 to 11,400 transfers per month! Conveyances tapered off in 1927. By that time, the land boom was recognized as being over.

The Public Takes Action

On December 6, 1925, 750 bank delegates from around the country arrived in St. Petersburg, Florida, by train. The main purpose of their investment association convention was to address the many problems they were encountering as a direct result of the land boom. On the agenda was the possibility of enacting “Blue Sky” laws for Florida, a code of ethics and real estate bonds. At the same time that notice of this convention hit the newspapers it was also reported that members of the Better Business Bureau of New York and 45 similar organizations began an investigation of various land schemes and development enterprises in Florida. The BBB announced it was opening this investigation with the cooperation of the Florida Chamber of Commerce and its bureaus.

Month	1919	1920	1921	1922	1923	1924	1925	1926	1927
January	807	1,966	2,336	2,122	2,640	4,126	9,744	11,400	6,909
February	776	1,940	2,279	2,100	2,847	5,039	10,844	10,403	6,729
March	1,183	2,540	2,798	2,931	4,027	5,733	14,158	12,392	9,109
April	1,420	2,555	2,775	2,738	3,594	5,727	16,409	11,749
May	1,316	2,100	2,206	2,547	3,509	5,251	16,383	9,344
June	1,265	1,703	1,902	2,074	3,079	4,572	16,112	8,500
July	1,062	1,407	1,609	1,798	2,420	4,166	15,825	7,275
August	1,125	1,250	1,398	1,735	2,254	3,937	16,490	6,473
September	998	1,183	1,312	1,589	1,958	3,992	16,459	4,152
October	1,238	1,564	1,564	1,834	2,383	5,052	16,969	4,491
November	1,373	1,795	2,067	2,042	2,751	5,992	13,288	5,824
December	1,695	1,965	1,996	2,212	3,087	7,807	11,849	6,501

As published in the *Journal of Land & Public Utility Economics*, Volume III, Number 2, May, 1927.

The Bubble Shows Cracks

There were many factors that led to the collapse of the land boom. They included a transportation breakdown and Florida train embargo on express shipments that occurred in December of 1925, adverse IRS tax rulings against speculators, an inordinate amount of bank failures, a stock market downturn and last but not least, fraud in Florida land sales. Questionable and sometimes outright fraudulent real estate and securities sales by land developers and individuals surfaced during the middle and latter parts of 1925. As the fraudulent activities unfolded, news stories appeared in the same northern newspapers that previously helped fuel the boom by printing advertisements for land developers and success stories about speculators. Before long, governmental investigations were begun, business records seized, and criminal charges filed against the perpetrators. It was during this same period that Florida enacted a law requiring licensing of Florida’s real estate salesmen and the binder boys.

At first some Florida representatives took the defensive when confronted with bad publicity. When interviewed by a reporter from *The New York Times* on or about November 3, 1925, Walter W. Rose, then President of the Florida Association of Real Estate Boards said that he believed the bad publicity unfairly attacked the vast resources of the state. He pointed out that Florida was without a penny of bonded debt and enumerated Florida’s other positive attributes such as its resources in agriculture, fruits and phosphate. He told the reporter that these features should be brought to the attention of the American people. When asked as to when he believed the “Florida bubble would burst,” he replied, “When the sun decides not to shine anymore, when the Gulfstream ceases to flow, when the railroads lengthen their schedules and when they stop making Fords, then Florida will slow up.”

Regardless of how Mr. Rose may have felt personally, the state of Florida already had put the wheels of change into motion. During the regular session of the Florida State Legislature in 1925, an act was passed providing for “the registration and regulation of



Above—Real estate salesmen or possibly binder boys standing in front of a Miami billboard near the Atlantic ocean. Courtesy of the Florida State Photographic Archives, Tallahassee, Florida, Joan Morris, curator. Below—Fulford By-The-Sea in relation to the ocean and bay. HASF 79-177-30.

real estate brokers and salesman.” The act was approved by Governor John W. Martin on May 26 and went into effect that same day. Among other things the act created the Real Estate Brokers Registration Board, a body given the authority to carry out and regulate the provisions of Chapter 10,233 of the Laws of Florida.

Actual licensing began in October of 1925 and within a short period of time the Board registered 18,660 brokers and 17,668 salesmen. That same year, the name of the Registration Board was changed to the “Florida Real Estate Commission.” Under the new commission, thousands of additional licenses were issued and by years end a total of 48,872 brokers and salesmen were registered. And, what was the fee for becoming licensed as a Florida real estate person? A whopping ten dollars for brokers and five dollars for salesmen!

Shortly after it was organized, the Commission created a Department of Investigations (DOI). The DOI was given the responsibility to investigate complaints involving brokers and salesmen who “conducted their business according to unethical and dishonest lines.” In the Annual Report of the Florida Real Estate Commission for the year ending September 30, 1926, the DOI reported the following activities:

Cases received	878
Cases investigated and reported.....	767
Cases pending in court.....	5
Objections pending	1
Cases on hand not reported.....	105
Certificates revoked	12
Certificates suspended	3
Certificates denied	4
Arrests for operating w/o a license.....	54
Arrests for false advertising.....	7

An interesting fact uncovered by the new investigative body and reported in the Florida Real Estate Commission’s first and second annual reports was that the majority of the fraud taking place in the state was by people that were not residents of Florida!

By the time the report covering from September 1927 to September 1928 was issued, a total of 1,493 complaints were filed with the Commission. According to the report, “Of the total number of cases of complaints filed 1,190 were against parties who became residents of the state subsequent to 1924, while only 303 were residents prior to that time.”

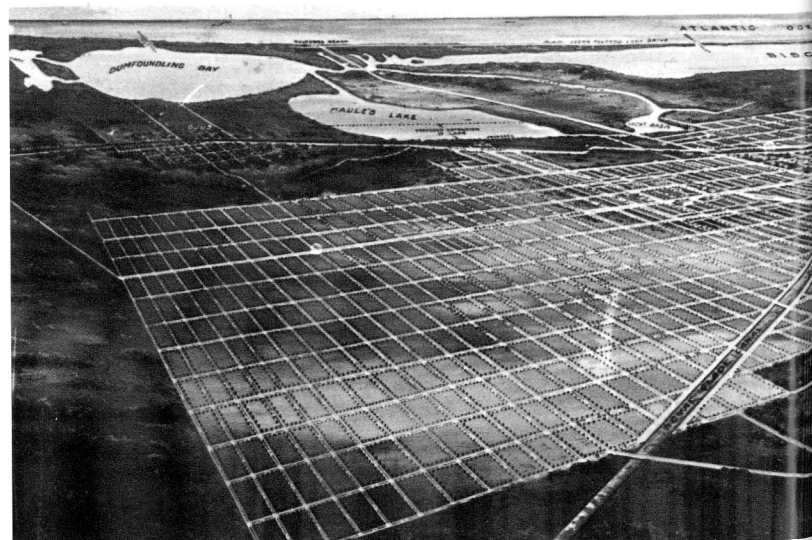
The report goes on to state, in defense of Florida commerce, “These figures tend to show the truth of the statement so often made in defense of the state that frauds which have been so often cited against Florida were for the most part the acts of people from without her border and for whom she ought not be held responsible.”

While Florida was busy defending itself from bad publicity, newspaper reports of fraudulent activities, bank failures and land developments gone bust continued to permeate the northern papers. Fulford-By-The-Sea is a perfect example of a planned paper development that went bust.

Fulford-By-The-Sea

Fulford-By-The-Sea was located slightly west of the Dixie Highway in north Dade County. Fulford’s promotional pitch was filled with the typical promises of wide boulevards, lush landscaping and beautiful homes. As an added bonus, Fulford’s promotional pitch also promised a “paper university.” Unfortunately, the promoters never completed the planned community or the university.

In April of 1926, the principal promoter of Fulford-By-The-Sea, M.C. Tebbetts, was arrested on charges of using the mail to defraud. In August of the same year, a “fraud order” denying his company the use of the mails was issued by the U.S. Postal Department. According to representatives of the post office, as reported to the news press, “no steps had been taken to put into effect certain improvements promised purchasers of lots.”



An article in *The New York Times* dated August 4, 1926, reported that an investigator was assigned by the Postmaster General to visit Florida and investigate the project. The solicitor reported back to the Postmaster General that advertisements run in Miami newspapers in July 1925, misrepresented the amount of improvements done on the land. For example, the promoters of Fulford-By-The-Sea advertised that the development was \$1 million “beyond promises.” It was alleged that more than \$1 million had been spent on sidewalks, roads, beautification of homes, and business blocks.

Investigation revealed that the total expenditures for all improvements had been a little over \$582,000 not \$1 million as advertised. The Solicitor also said that the company had built a speedway nearby at a cost of \$663,379.35. The Postal representative called this speedway “an unsightly affair and depreciates the value of the high priced lots adjacent to it.”

The fraud order issued by the Postmaster General was against the Florida Cities Finance Company of Miami and Fulford, Florida, and an associate firm, States Realty Corporation of Miami. By the time this order was issued, the companies in question were already under the control of a receiver. In 1927, the project was sold to a group of investors from Chicago, and by then the land boom bubble had burst.

Charles Ponzi Lands In Jacksonville

During the land boom, shady characters would regularly surface in Florida. One such person was the now infamous Charles Ponzi, a convicted Boston, Massachusetts, swindler who visited Florida to try his hand at promoting Florida real estate.

In 1925, Ponzi made his way to Jacksonville, Florida, under the alias Charles Borelli. Ponzi told the public he was here to stage a ‘comeback.’ He allegedly purchased Florida land which he intended to subdivide into lots. His plan was to sell these lots



Bay Vista Park realtor's office and billboard advertising property in subdivision in 1921. HASF 5-18.

throughout the U.S. for \$10 each. To further his scheme, Ponzi began selling ‘certificates of indebtedness’ to investors in his newly formed Charpon Land Syndicate. Ponzi sold the certificates for \$310 each and promised investors a return of 200 percent over two months. He was allegedly going to use the investment proceeds to buy, subdivide, plot, stake, advertise and pay other incidental operating costs for the Syndicate.

Ponzi advertised the land as being “near Jacksonville.” In reality, the land was some 65 miles west of Jacksonville and was roughly about nine miles south of Lake City. Quite a drive from Jacksonville to this Florida subdivision! Inspection of this property later revealed it consisted primarily of scrub oaks, palmettos and swamp land. The only developing that ever took place was the creation of the paper plans and the placement of wooden stakes so buyers could find their lots. Ponzi was subsequently arrested and tried by jury for violating Florida’s “blue sky” securities laws regarding the sale of trusts. He was found guilty on April 2, 1926. He was sentenced to one year in prison for his offense.

Cleaning up a Tarnished Reputation

It took decades for Florida to recuperate from all the bad publicity it received during the days of the land boom. In some ways the tainted reputation remains. To this day you still occasionally hear stories about someone being ‘sold swamp land’ by an unscrupulous salesman; however, those stories are few and far between. Florida today has a healthy, vibrant real estate industry that is relatively clean from fraud and corruption and is in fact highly regulated. When all is said and done it is best to remember some of the words spoken by Walter W. Rose in 1925: “...When the sun decides not to shine anymore, when the Gulf Stream ceases to flow...” only then will the exodus to Florida, the sunshine state, finally come to a halt! –SFH

Mark Mathosian is a 30-year resident of Florida and is an accomplished magazine and book author and editor. He currently resides in Naples, Florida, where he spends his free time doing research for a book about the Florida landboom.



The wreck of the
Providencia
in 1878

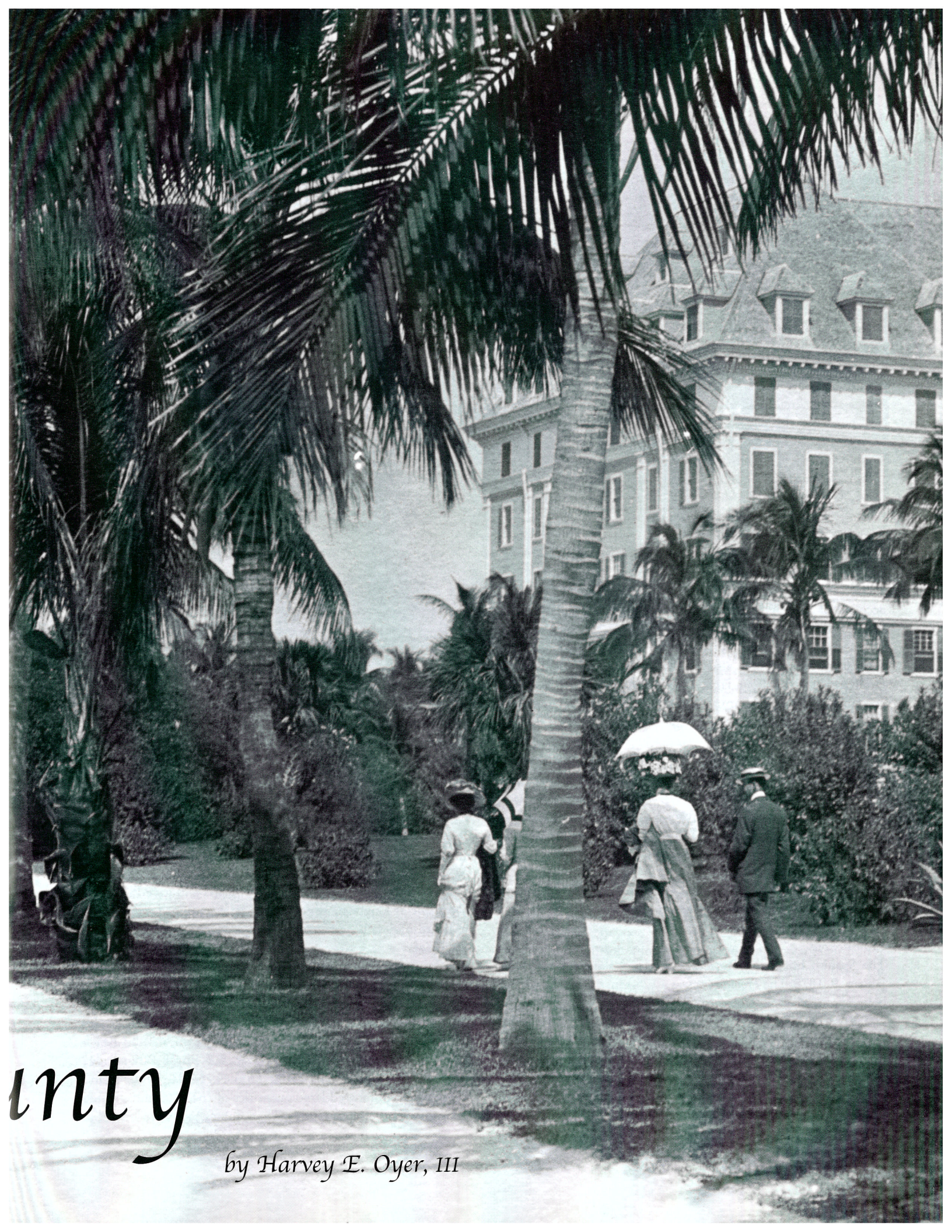


Above—Wreck of the Spanish brigantine *Providencia* along the coast in 1878. Courtesy of the Florida State Archives. Right—A stroll along the palms on the Royal Poinciana Hotel's grounds. Ca. 1900. HASF X-1635.



& the naming of

Palm Beach Co



nty

by Harvey E. Oyer, III

THE EARLY PIONEER SETTLEMENT OF OUR AREA is inextricably tied to shipwrecks. Shipwrecks not only provided occasional excitement for the early settlers, but, more importantly, shipwrecks provided the building materials for many of the first homes as well as clothing, metals and dry goods, all of which were in short supply in the very early years. Shipwrecks have occurred for centuries along our coastline, mainly due to Southeast Florida's shallow reef systems and dangerous, unpredictable weather during the summer and fall months.

Most of us are familiar with the more famous wrecks, such as Englishman Jonathan Dickinson's wreck just north of Jupiter Inlet in 1696 and his harrowing account of the eight month journey of his crew and family to reach the safety of St. Augustine. Most are also familiar with the legendary accounts of the 18th century Spanish gold and silver fleets that transported riches from Spanish mines in Latin America back to Spain, with some vessels being lost along the Florida coastline only to be discovered by modern-day treasure hunters. However, arguably one of the most important shipwreck in our area's long and colorful history is a little-known Spanish vessel called the *Providencia*.

Providencia

The Spanish brigantine *Providencia* wrecked along our coast on January 9, 1878. The *Providencia* was a 175-ton, square-rigged brig bound from Havana, Cuba, to Cadiz, Spain, carrying a cargo of 20,000 coconuts harvested from the island of Trinidad. What exactly caused the ship to founder on our shore may never be known as the weather, by all accounts, was perfect. It has been speculated that the captain and crew intentionally wrecked the ship in order to collect the insurance proceeds and were only too happy to give away the cargo to the pioneer settlers. The first settlers to reach the wreck



Top—Second from left; Hiram F. Hammon, homesteader of Palm Beach tract in 1873 containing 163 acres just south of the Royal Palm Way. One of the first settlers to reach the wreck of the *Providencia*. Third from left, leaning on sailboat mast; George W. Lainhart. Standing in the boat; Richard B. Potter, M. D., the first physician to settle in the Palm Beach area. Bearded man in foreground; William Lanehart, who homesteaded a Palm Beach tract which included present day subdivision Vita Serena (Clarendon Ave.), also one of the first settlers to reach the wreck. Ca. 1893. Courtesy Historical Society of Palm Beach County. Above—M. W. Dimick's coconut grove in what is today the town of Palm Beach. Courtesy Historical Society of Palm Beach County.

were William M. Lanehart and his close friend Hiram F. Hammon, who apparently made friends with the ship's captain as Lanehart and Hammon claimed that the captain had given them the salvage rights.

The *Providencia* was well-provisioned with wine and cigars and most accounts describe a large party on the beach between the pioneer settlers and the ship's crew that lasted for two weeks. Eventually the ship's crew was picked up by a passing steamer and taken to Key West. The ship, which was insured, was sold by the insurance company to the highest bidder, who was William Lanehart, who paid \$20.80 for it.

There were enough coconuts on board to supply all of the settlers with more than they would ever need. However, Lanehart and Hammon decided to sell the coconuts to the other settlers at the price of 2 1/2 cents apiece. While this price was very reasonable, many of the settlers had little money to spare and did not purchase any of the coconuts. After H.D. Pierce bought 200 coconuts for himself, 200 for Cecil Upton, and 700 for Capt. Armour, the Keeper of the Jupiter Lighthouse,

Hammon and Lanehart opened their hearts and gave Pierce the *Providencia's* longboat, which Pierce later equipped with a centerboard and sails and made it into a sailboat which he called the *Creole*.

How Palm Beach Acquired its Name

The most significant outcome of the wreck of the *Providencia*, though, was that several pioneers, including Cap Dimick, who would later become the first Mayor of the Town of Palm Beach and whose statue stands guard over the Royal Park Bridge entrance to Palm Beach, Frank Dimick, M.W. Dimick, and Albert Geer, purchased large quantities of coconuts and planted them all over their homesteads. Their homesteads were located in



A view of Palm Beach's famous coconut palm trees, taken from the corner of Lake Trails and Sea Breeze Avenue. Ca. 1930s. HASF 1983-63-4 (n)

what is today the town of Palm Beach. In fact, the name “Palm Beach” derives directly from the *Providencia's* coconuts.

After the Dimicks and Geers planted thousands of coconuts on their barrier island homesteads, large groves of coconut palm trees resulted. During the ensuing decade, when the population on the barrier island had increased enough to justify another post office (the first post office having been named “Lake Worth” and located at the north end of the barrier island), the island residents petitioned the government to establish a second post office. The second post office was located in the general store owned by Captain U.D. Hendrickson and the Brelsford brothers, near where the Flagler Museum is today. As required in the petition, the pioneers had to come up with a name for their new post office. With groves of beautiful coconut palms growing in every direction around them, the pioneers decided on the name “Palm City.” Unfortunately for the pioneers, the name Palm City had already been taken by another municipality in Florida. Thus, the pioneers were left with their second choice, “Palm Beach.” When it came time to incorporate a town in the following decade, the name “Palm Beach” was the logical choice, and so was born the town of Palm Beach.

How West Palm Beach and Palm Beach County Acquired Their Names

The 1890s also witnessed the arrival of Henry M. Flagler's Florida East Coast Railway, the Royal Poinciana Hotel and The Breakers Hotel. In order to house the enormous number of workers needed to build the railroad and hotels, an area on the

west side of Lake Worth began to develop. Eventually, it too incorporated as its own municipality, taking the name “West Palm Beach,” as it was located west of Palm Beach.

Finally, on April 30, 1909, when the residents at the north end of Dade County had grown sufficiently tired of traveling to Miami every time they desired to record a public document or attend court, Florida's 47th county was established—its name, of course, “Palm Beach County.”

Today, the name “Palm Beach” is known around the world in virtually every land and language. Its connotation with coconut palm trees waving in Florida's sunshine makes it one of the most identifiable images in the world. This image as well as the names of three very important governmental jurisdictions all derive from the same obscure event, the grounding of the *Providencia* in 1878.

Epilogue

The last remnant of the *Providencia* was the nameboard. According to Bessie Wilson DuBois, a member of the well-known DuBois pioneer family of Jupiter and author of *Shipwrecks in the Vicinity of Jupiter Inlet*, around 1893 the nameboard was nailed up on the rear of Melville Spencer, Sr.'s home. Whatever became of it no one knows. —SFH

Harvey E. Oyer, III, an attorney with Gunster, Yoakley & Stewart, P.A. in West Palm Beach, is a fifth generation native of Palm Beach County and the great-great grandson of Capt. H.D. Pierce, one of the earliest pioneer settlers of South Florida, and the great-great nephew of barefoot mailman and author Charles W. Pierce.

History in the Making

Reclaiming the Everglades

by Rebecca A. Smith

A tiny part of the books, documents and photographs in Florida's libraries, archives and museums have been scanned and placed on the Web. That small sample, however, is a treasure-trove.

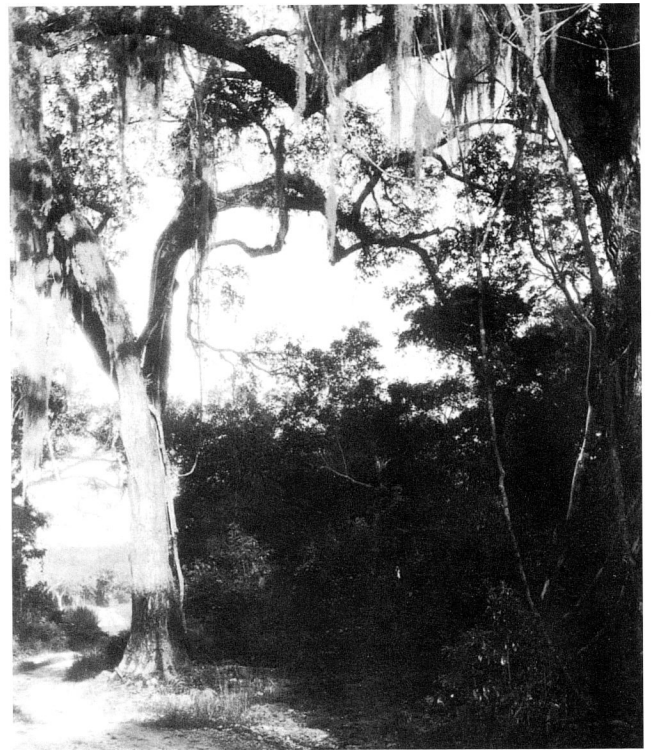
RECLAIMING THE EVERGLADES (everglades.fiu.edu/reclaim/index.htm)

The Historical Museum's contribution to these growing online archives is found in *Reclaiming the Everglades*. This online resource contains nearly 10,000 pages and images relating to the Everglades prior to 1934, the year Congress authorized the creation of Everglades National Park. Reclaiming the Everglades can be accessed through the American Memory and PALMM sites.

Materials from the Historical Museum's collections, naturally, include visual materials: photographs, postcards and prints depicting the historic Everglades. From Cape Sable to Lake Okeechobee, Seminoles to settlers, the places and people of the region are depicted. Papers and publications are included as well. Selections from the James Jaudon papers pertain to the northwest section of present-day Everglades National Park, the building of Tamiami Trail, agriculture and various plans to develop the region. Ephemera includes booklets and pamphlets, such as John K. Small monographs.

The University of Miami Richter Library's Special Collections department has contributed selections from its archives, including Model Land Company records and Marjory Stoneman Douglas papers. The Model Land Company—the real estate section of the Florida East Coast Railway—created a number of letters, maps and other documents pertaining to the Everglades.

Books from the University of Miami and Florida International University's libraries add depth to the site. These range from boy's novels such as *The Knockabout Club in the Everglades* to botanical works such as *The Reclamation of the Everglades with Trees* and ethnographic studies such as *Seminole Indians of Florida*.



The site includes supplemental materials to help you find your way through the many files. These include a chronology and a description of the collections in *Reclaiming the Everglades*.

American Memory: Historical Collections for the National Digital Library (memory.loc.gov)

The Library of Congress American Memory site contains more than 7 million digital items from more than 100 collections. Many of these collections contain South Florida materials. The Detroit Photographic Company photographs, for example, include turn-of-the-century views of Miami, Key West and Palm Beach. "Spain, the United States, & the American Frontier" contains essays with links to books, maps and documents. Educational pages and kids pages are designed to help teachers and students use American Memory materials. Plan to spend many productive hours at the American Memory site.

PALMM: Publication of Archival, Library & Museum Materials (susdl.fcla.edu/)

A variety of state digital imaging projects have been brought together in PALMM. Digital collections range from photographs of nineteenth century actors and actresses to children's books. The following two PALMM sites are of particular interest.

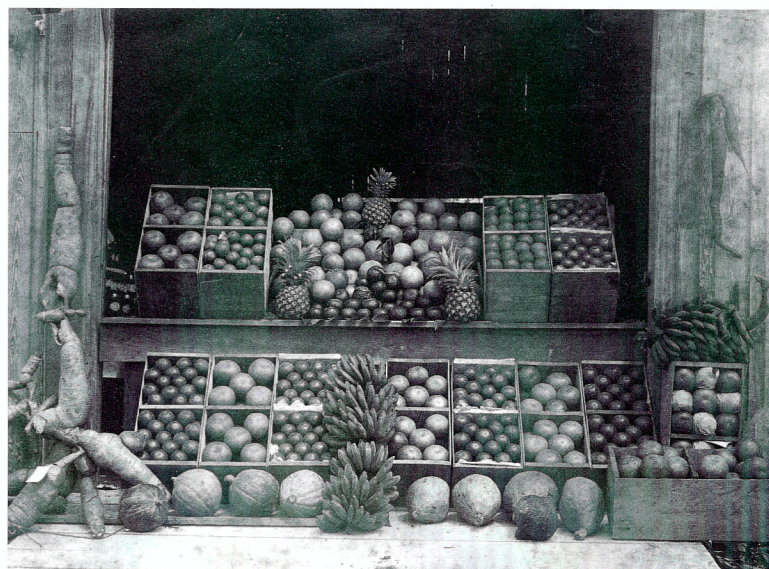
Florida Heritage Collection (susdl.fcla.edu/fh/)

Looking for an out-of-print book or pamphlet about Florida? Try the Florida Heritage Collection web site. Hundreds of publications and some papers and photographs from ten state universities have been scanned and uploaded to this site. Items of statewide interest include the *Florida Historical Quarterly* (plan for a long wait while huge files download). Local materials are also amply represented. A keyword search on "Miami" produced 25 items, ranging from Isidor Cohen's *Memoirs* to City of Miami minutes.

Linking Florida's Natural Heritage (palm.fcla.edu/lfnh/)

Linking Florida's Natural Heritage is the ultimate scientific bibliography, with links to many online publications and documents. While the focus is science, history has slipped in; older citations are included, and *Reclaiming the Everglades* can be searched through this site as well. *-SFH*

Left, top to bottom—A child with coconuts, 1929. HASF 198-50. The road (Ingraham Highway) through the hammock, with Spanish moss in the trees. October 22, 1920. HASF 11-50. A Seminole family preparing a meal by the Tamiami Trail. Ca. 1920. HASF 178-30. Right, top to bottom—Sunset, probably on Florida Bay, with coconut palm fronds in foreground. Before 1928. HASF 94-50. Hunters riding a swamp buggy, 1953. HASE, Miami News Collection 1989-011-13388. Fruit and vegetables on display at the entrance to a building. Ca. 1900. HASE. These are only a few of the many photographs that can be found at <http://everglades.fiu.edu/reclaim/>

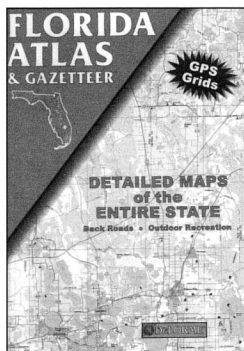


Searching for Florida

by Randy F. Nimnicht

I have been searching for Florida since I was a kid. My early interest in history soon expanded to anthropology and natural history. Very early the importance of place became evident. History "happens" in a specific place. I enjoyed traveling around our state looking at historic sites, structures, and geography. As I roam around now, I always have 3 books in my truck.

FLORIDA ATLAS & GAZETTEER, FOURTH EDITION DeLorme, Yarthmouth, Maine, 1997.



There are 103 "quadrangle" maps within the *Atlas*. These are based on the seven and half minute quadrangle maps prepared by United States Geological Survey. The detail is extremely good showing highways, roads, streets, and even unimproved roads and trails. The back cover consists of a large map of Florida overlaid with a grid system providing numbers which refer to the individual maps in the volume.

Drainage patterns are shown and you can see how this affected roadway placement. The *Atlas* is available at supermarkets with a list price of under \$20. DeLorme has also published an eight CD set of the U.S.G.S. quadrangles of Florida that allows you even greater detail than the *Atlas*.

NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY FIELD GUIDE TO FLORIDA

First edition Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1998.



This fine book is truly a field guide and will fit in a back pocket. It is divided into three parts: an overview deals with topography, geology, habitats, conservation and ecology, weather and the night sky. The second part deals with flora and fauna providing excellent color photographs, good descriptions and field identification of the more common members of various species. Part three deals with parks and preserves and is organized by dividing the state into

four broad areas. There are many wonderful guides that provide more detail on a given topic or specific area but this does a fine job for a quick overview.

FLORIDA'S FABULOUS TRAIL GUIDE World Publications, Tampa Florida, 2001.

Authored by Tim Ohr with spectacular photographs by Pete Carmichael, this guide documents 281 trails that are available throughout Florida. Trails are placed within four geographical regions: Northwest, North, Central, and South. Each trail is described in detail and many are accompanied by wonderful photographs. A statewide map provides ready reference to the location of individual trails. The author aptly says, "These trails are places of solitude and peace of mind. This is where the soul of the real Florida can still be experienced."

Many of these trails are new and they give strong evidence to Floridians' desire to protect and enjoy our environment.

These books add immensely to my continuing search for Florida. Just when I think I know her—I find so much more.

Interested in submitting an article or book review for *South Florida History*?

Contact Sara Muñoz at publications@historical-museum.org for a copy of the Style Guide for Writers.

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Membership in the Historical Museum is the ultimate expression of solidarity with our mission.

It is a tangible way each individual can add his or her passion and purpose to our own.

We wish to express our gratitude to all those who joined or renewed their membership.

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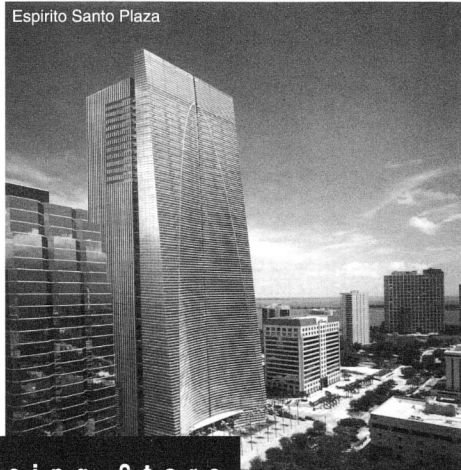
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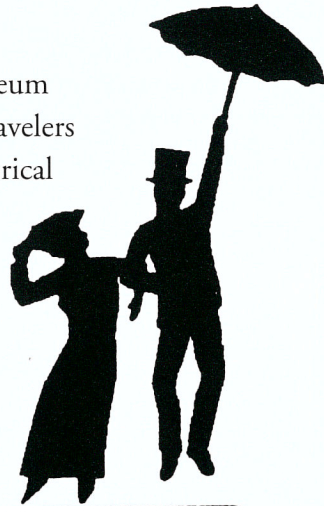
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When Randy Nimnicht retired in December 2000 as President & CEO, he had served the Historical Museum for twenty-six years. Randy's vision steered the institution from a fledgling volunteer organization to a professional institution accredited by the American Association of Museums. Every program, every innovation bears his footprint. Thanks to Randy, we are the community's most important historical resource.

The Historical Museum is pleased to establish the *Randy F. Nimnicht Fund for Interpretation of South Florida & The Caribbean*. The fund, part of the museum's endowment, celebrates a lifetime of achievement.

Please join us in this lasting tribute to Randy by making a gift to the fund in recognition of twenty-six years of outstanding leadership.

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June 24-28

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Session II

Adventures through Time

July 8-12

Step back in time and see Florida history from the colonial era through the Civil War. Campers explore the lives of the settlers and discover how they survived.

Session III

Everglades Explorers

July 22-26

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