REFLECTIONS FROM CENTRAL FLORIDA

THE QUARTERLY MAGAZINE OF THE
HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

FALL 2017 • VOL. 15 NO. 4

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HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

The Historical Society's mission is to preserve the heritage of Orange County and Central Florida by providing resources to help maintain the Orange County Regional History Center, where exhibits and educational programs honor the past, explore the present, and shape the future.

Sponsored in part by the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture.

Find us on social media

The History Center is handicapped accessible with elevators on every floor.

FROM THE DIRECTOR

One of our roles at the Orange County Regional History Center is to document the constant changes that occur in Central Florida. Sometimes that means preserving artifacts from a recent event like the tragic shooting at the Pulse nightclub last year. Other times our role is to pay homage to individuals who made significant contributions to our area's history. The purpose of this magazine is to preserve the stories of our region so that they don't fall into obscurity. In a dynamic, evolving community such as ours, that can sometimes be challenging, but it is always rewarding.

Reporting on the loss of history-makers is among our responsibilities, and History Center members and friends were deeply saddened by the death in late August of William H. "Bill" Milligan, a past president of the Historical Society of Central Florida and Orlando Remembered. His longtime dedication to our history was honored with the society's Donald A. Cheney Award in 2011.

Another difficult loss in the late summer was the death of renowned artist James Gibson, a longtime mainstay of our Florida Highwaymen Meet and Greet events. He will be honored at our next such event in December. To learn more about Gibson's career, see page 30.

This issue of *Reflections* covers a broad array of topics documenting fascinating Floridians and the communities to which they've contributed – plus, just in time for Halloween, the History Center's Adam Ware brings us the extraordinary story of a little-known murder mystery that happened just about a block away from the museum, in the San Juan Hotel.

Collections Manager Whitney Broadaway chronicles Sanford's Crooms family and their long-standing commitment to quality education. Rebecca Bryan Dreisbach, who writes often about the history of College Park, turns her attention here to the fascinating origins of the Lake County town of Umatilla. Guest curator Marcia Jo Zerivitz, founding director of the Jewish Museum of Florida-FIU, introduces us to the special exhibit titled *Kehillah: A Century of Jewish Life in Greater Orlando*, which we're proud will be on display at the History Center from November 12 through February 20.

In this issue, Chief Curator Pam Schwartz also sheds light on Murry S. King, the influential architect of the 1927 Orange County Courthouse that is home to our museum. The article features never-before-published photos of King, Florida's first registered architect.

Since its inception 15 years ago, the publication of *Reflections* has been largely funded by a grant from the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs, and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture. After the last legislative session in Tallahassee, the budget for all grants for cultural organizations was significantly reduced. As a result, we will now only be producing *Reflections* twice a year, instead of quarterly as we have done in the past. These issues will be expanded to offer additional content (32 pages instead of 24). We plan to look for alternative funding sources, and hope that funding levels are restored during the next budget cycle. Meanwhile, we are committed to documenting our region's evolving history, and we will continue to be Central Florida's storyteller.

– Michael Perkins, Executive Director
Historical Society of Central Florida, Inc.

Bill Milligan (at right), with former Orlando Mayor Bill Frederick, received the Donald A. Cheney Award in 2011.

FEATURED EVENTS

HISTORY IN A GLASS
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 26, 6 – 9 P.M.

At our History in a Glass series, local craft bars compete for bragging rights by creating libations inspired by Central Florida's past. On October 26, enjoy great food and music, plus three hand-crafted cocktails inspired by a mysterious 1938 murder at Orlando's San Juan Hotel. Join us for the series finale December 14. Members $20, general admission $25.

TRICK OR TREAT SAFE ZONE BLOCK PARTY
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 28, 10 A.M. – 3 P.M.

Young ghouls and goblins enjoy trick or treating throughout the History Center and Orlando Public Library along with creepy crafts, candy, and a scavenger hunt!

Featuring:
- Face painters & kids crafts
- Shaved ice treats
- Scavenger hunt
- Trick or treat candy
- Free books for kids*

Free for families with children ages 12 and under. *Children must be accompanied by an adult. *While supplies last.*

RETRO GAME NIGHT EIGHTIES EDITION
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 7 P.M. – MIDNIGHT

Get out your leg warmers and spandex, dudes! Retro Game Night revisits the 1980s for a totally awesome event. Play our great old-school games from Battleship to Twister, plus retro video games and giant versions of Jenga and Connect Four. Trivia Nick will be on hand for multiple sessions of '80s-themed trivia, and a DJ will spin favorite '80s tunes.

Beverages and pizza will be available for purchase. The event is for ages 18 and up. Eighties retro attire is encouraged. Admission is free for members and $8 for nonmembers.

IN THIS ISSUE

Cover: Educator Joseph Crooms stands with the 1929 graduating class of the Crooms Academy on the steps of his home at 812 S. Sanford Ave. Courtesy of the Sanford Museum.

Unless otherwise noted, all archival images in this issue are from the Historical Society's collection at the History Center.

FOR MORE ABOUT HISTORY CENTER EVENTS, VISIT US ONLINE AT THEHISTORYCENTER.ORG OR OUR FACEBOOK PAGE.
(All events are subject to change.)

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To receive the latest *Reflections* by mail, email Amanda.Henry@ocfl.net to become a member. To contribute an article, email rkilby@cfl.rr.com.

Reflections from Central Florida
The quarterly magazine of the Historical Society of Central Florida Inc. focuses on the Florida counties included within the History Center's reach: Orange, Osceola, Seminole, Volusia, Lake, Brevard, and Polk. The History Center is located at 65 East Central Blvd., Orlando, FL 32801. Visit our website at thehistorycenter.org

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The Joseph L. Brechner Research Center
The Brechner Research Center houses the special collections of the Historical Society of Central Florida, documenting nearly 200 years of Central Florida history. The center includes a research library, an archive, and space for researching items from the collection. The Research Center was created through a donation from the late Marion Brody Brechner in honor of her husband, Joseph (1915-1990), an award-winning journalist, community leader, and freedom-of-information advocate.

EPHEMERA

This large industrial lamp was donated recently by Tom Bessa. In 2000, he was making a routine inspection of a diesel fuel tank at the deactivated Strategic Air Command air field in the southwest corner of the former McCoy Air Force Base. The site is predominately occupied by the Orlando International Airport, but a few military structures remain on the property, some of them still in use. While heading out of the bombproof main building after finishing his inspection, Bessa noticed a contractor was removing lighting standards and lamps. The contractor explained that the equipment was from the 1950s and had to be replaced, and as he removed the very last one, he asked Bessa if he wanted it. Now, 17 years later, Tom Bessa added his piece of saved history to our collection.

IN THIS ISSUE

WHITNEY BROADAWAY
Collections Manager Whitney Broadaway is a fourth-generation Central Floridian with a rich family history in the Orlando area that dates back to 1893. She is also an internationally exhibited artist with a focus in printmaking and bookbinding.

BECKY BRYAN DREISBACH
Becky Bryan Dreisbach is a seventh-generation Floridian whose love for the state and for Orlando influences both her work and personal lives. A real estate professional, Becky also writes about history for the College Park Community Paper and is the author of "Umatilla," in Arcadia's Images of America series.

PAMELA SCHWARTZ
Pam Schwartz, the History Center's chief curator, has 16 years of museum experience as a director, curator, and designer. She also serves on the American Alliance of Museum's MAP Peer Reviewing and Accreditation committees in service to the field.

ADAM M. WARE, PH.D.
Adam Ware is the History Center's research librarian, managing the use of all published materials and overseeing the oral history collection. Adam holds a Ph.D. in Religion from Florida State University with emphases in 20th-century American religion, media history, and museum studies.

MARCIA JO ZERIVITZ
Marcia Jo Zerivitz is the founding executive director and chief curator of the Jewish Museum of Florida in Miami and has been a leader in the American and Floridian Jewish communities for more than 50 years, with a focus on Florida Jewish history.

Above: In this family photo, Daphne and Moses Crooms are seated in the middle; Joseph is on the far right in the middle row with Wealthy behind him. Nathalie is sitting up front just to the right of the dog, Snowball. At left: Joseph Nathaniel Crooms.

THE CROOMS FAMILY: A LEGACY OF EDUCATION

BY WHITNEY BROADAWAY, COLLECTIONS MANAGER

At the close of the Civil War, Moses and Daphne Crooms, freed slaves from the Goodwood Plantation in Tallahassee, moved east about 40 miles to Monticello. After a few years there, the Crooms family moved south and settled in Orlando. Moses Crooms was a skilled carpenter and became well known in the area. Daphne, who was said to have received some level of education on the plantation, became passionate about passing the love of learning on to the rest of her family. The Croomses had seven children: Walter, Moses Jr., A.C., Henry, Joseph, Virginia, and Mamie. Many of them became educators and ministers, including Joseph Crooms, who founded the Crooms Academy in Sanford.

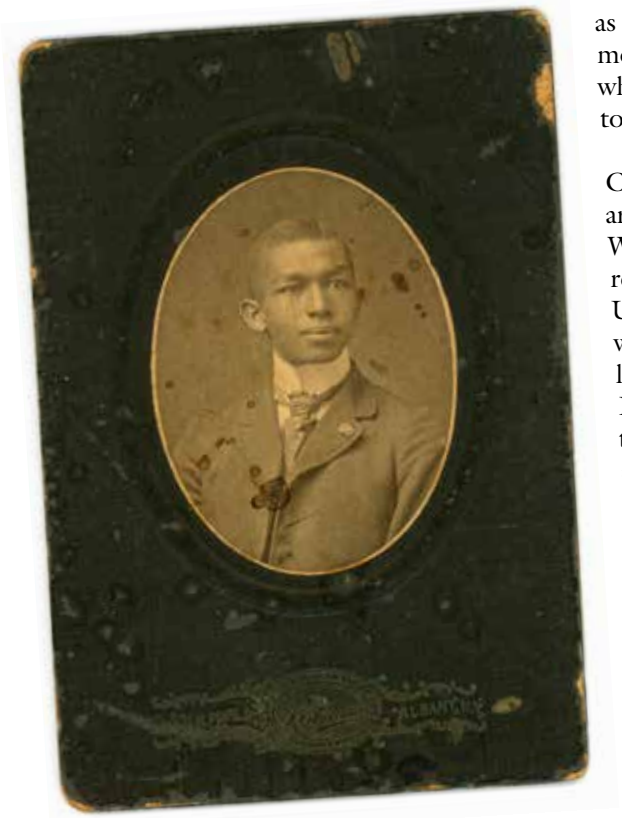
ROOTS IN SANFORD

Joseph Nathaniel Crooms was born on June 17, 1880. He went to high school at Johnson Academy, later named Jones High School, in Orlando, and continued on to earn a degree from the Florida Normal College in Tallahassee, the precursor of Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University. Crooms also studied at the Hampton Institute in Virginia and the Florida Institute in Live Oak. After teaching in Cocoa and Suwannee County, he settled in the Georgetown neighborhood of Sanford and began working at Sanford's oldest school for black students, founded in 1885.

Joseph Crooms started at the Georgetown School as principal in 1906 and immediately began making changes. He had five teachers and 240 students under his care at a school that only went up to the eighth-grade level, was in session for a maximum of six months of the year, and was housed in an inadequate structure on Cypress Avenue and Seventh Street.

There is no question that "Colored School No. 11," as it was listed in the Orange County Public School Ledgers, was not up to Joseph Crooms' standards. (Sanford was a part of Orange County until Seminole County was formed in 1913.) With the help of the teachers and the community, Joseph built a new two-story wooden building his first year as principal at 1101 S. Pine Ave. and renamed the school Hopper Academy.

The building still stands today and has been used as a library, a church, an after-school center, and a community meeting place since 1968, when it ceased to operate as a school. Crooms also expanded the curriculum to extend to the 10th grade and extended the school year to last seven to eight months. After all this work, his meager starting salary of $50 per month, as compared with the $125 per month paid to the principal at the white high school, was increased to a still meager $65.



On July 6, 1911, Joseph Crooms married Wealthy Richardson, a fellow educator from Winter Park. Wealthy had received degrees from Claflin University in South Carolina as well as South Carolina State College. Before joining the staff of Hopper Academy in 1908, she taught at the Daytona Literary and Industrial Training School for Negro Girls, which would later become Bethune-Cookman University. A year after their marriage, the couple's only child, Nathalie, was born.

BUILDING THE CROOMS ACADEMY

Even with all the improvements, Hopper Academy was still a long way from closing the racial divide in education that Joseph and Wealthy Crooms were fighting against. The school still only went up to the 10th grade and focused on trade skills, such as carpentry and agriculture – skills that, at the time, were considered to be the only things necessary for a black student to learn.

The Croomses knew they could do better than this stunted curriculum, and Sanford was fast outgrowing its only black school, so in 1926 they left Hopper Academy and founded a new institution. They acquired 7.5 acres on West 13th Street and erected a 40-by-60-foot school they named the Crooms Academy. With Joseph at the head as principal and Wealthy by his

This page, top right: Joseph Crooms poses in a cap and gown for one of his many graduations. Bottom left: Joseph Crooms as a young boy. Opposite page: Three couples from the Crooms family, numbered in pen. The 1s are Louise and Alfred, the 2s are Mamie and W.J., and the 3s are Wealthy and Joseph.

side as vice principal, the school was the first in Seminole County to offer black students a high school education that went all the way to the 12th grade and provided a full range of subjects including music and the humanities. Hopper Academy once again became an elementary and middle school that taught up to the 8th grade and fed into the Crooms Academy. Joseph remained principal at Crooms Academy until his retirement in 1953.

WIDE INFLUENCE, LIVING LEGACY

Joseph and Wealthy Crooms were well known in Sanford beyond their radical renovations to the school system. Joseph was a talented musician and, in addition to teaching music at the school, he also gave piano lessons from his home. Many sources cite his strict expectations and tendency to rap young pianists across the knuckles for ill attention.

In 1922, the couple moved into a home at 812 S. Sanford Ave. that had been designed by the prominent local black architect Prince Spears. The front steps of the Crooms house became the traditional backdrop for the Crooms Academy's graduating-class photos. The house was also bustling with hospitality and boarders in need of a place to stay. From school staff to homeless children, the Crooms home became a refuge for all manner of people in need. Even Zora Neal Hurston's younger brother, Clifford Joel Hurston, lived with the Croomses for quite a while after the Hurstons' mother died and was listed along with Howard Roberts as foster sons in Joseph's obituary.

Joseph and Wealthy Crooms' hard work in education wasn't limited to Sanford. They had a lasting friendship with Mary McLeod Bethune, and Joseph co-founded the Bethune Beach Corporation, which created the only beach that black people were permitted to use in Volusia County during the first half of the 20th century. Joseph often consulted with Bethune as she grew her budding school in Daytona (now Bethune-Cookman University), and they would swap ideas on institutional education. In 1950, Joseph received an honorary law degree from Edward Waters College in Jacksonville. He died in 1957, only four years after his retirement.

Wealthy Richardson Crooms' passion for education equaled her husband's, and before her death in 1982 she had served as superintendent of St. James A.M.E. Church and vice-president of the Advisory Board of Bethune-Cookman College. She was awarded the Mary McLeod Bethune Medallion and received a citation from President Franklin Roosevelt for her services during the World War II years, 1941-1945.

The Crooms' legacy of education lives on. Distinguished alumni of the Hopper Academy and the Crooms Academy include the author and anthropologist Zora Neal Hurston; U.S. Rep. Alcee L. Hastings; George Allen, the first black graduate of the University of Florida's law school; Oswald Bronson Sr., fourth president of Bethune-Cookman University; and Bob Thomas, Sanford's first black city commissioner.

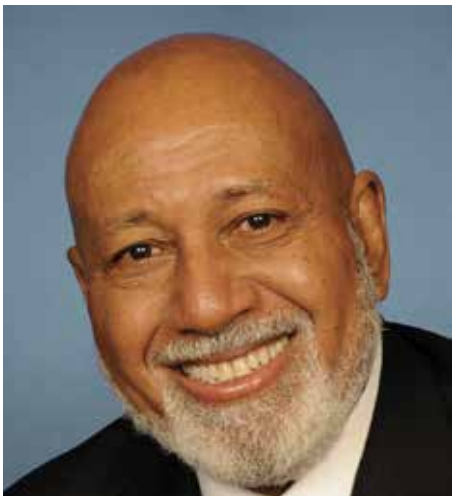
And the legacy also continues to live on at the current Crooms Academy. The original school built by Joseph and Wealthy Crooms burned down in 1973, and the school has seen many years of hard times, but the Crooms Academy of Information Technology in Sanford is now an award-winning magnet school that focuses on the computer and technology fields and is among the top schools of its kind in the nation. Joseph and Wealthy Crooms would be proud to see how far education in their hometown has continued to evolve. ■

Note: This article and the lovely family photos accompanying it would not have been possible without the help of Sally Richmond and Valada Flewellyn. In 2015, Flewellyn reached out to the History Center seeking a home for materials featured in a Crooms Family exhibition she had just curated. She facilitated the donation of Crooms family papers, photographs, and items owned by Sally Richmond, a great-granddaughter of Moses and Daphne Crooms. Both Flewellyn and Richmond were integral in identifying photographs and providing detailed information about the donated items. This donation has become an invaluable resource in our collection, with invaluable information about an inspiring and prominent Central Florida family.

HOPPERACADMEY.ORG

Below: Zora Neal Hurston, a graduate of the Hopper Academy whose younger brother became a foster son of Joseph and Wealthy. Bottom: Crooms graduate Alcee Lamar Hastings has served in Congress since 1993.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



WIKIEPEDIA

Top: From left to right, Mamie Crooms Maxey, Wealthy Richardson Crooms, Theodore, Nathalie (Crooms) Jenkins, Annie Harmon Crooms, and Edith Crooms. "Lovingly, and after 8/29/'59" is inscribed on the corner. Above: A modern photo of the Hopper Academy building. Right: The Crooms Academy building that tragically burned down in 1973.

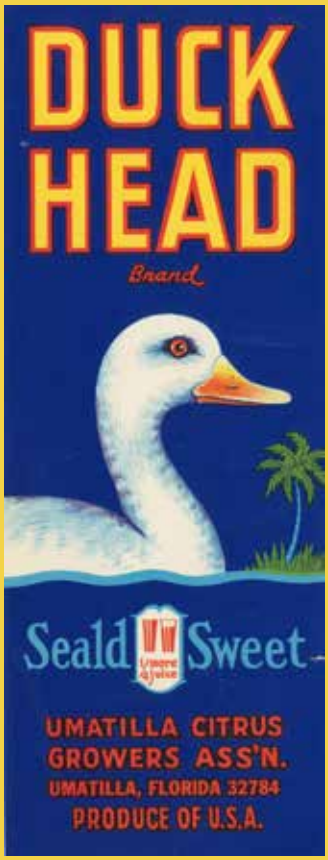
SANFORD MUSEUM

UMATILLA

Home of Hospitality and Health

by Rebecca Bryan Dreisbach

Courtesy Rebecca Bryan Dreisbach



Top: People leaving the Baptist Winter Assembly in Umatilla. Far left: Label for Duck Head brand citrus. Center: An advertisement for Umatilla lists all the benefits of the Lake County town. Bottom right: Patients and staff at the Harry-Anna Crippled Children's Home, circa 1950s.

"When I leave Florida, it will be to go to the only better country – the Florida of the Soul – where we will be young and well and happy forever."

Dr. Edward Guerrant, evangelist and Umatilla pioneer

The earliest days of Umatilla are lost to history, but it is known that Nathan Johnston Trowell and his wife, Rebecca Minors, left South Carolina in 1852, secured a land grant, and built a log cabin near present-day Lake Umatilla. Their only neighbors were roaming Seminoles and runaway slaves. In 1861, Rebecca died, leaving Nathan with four small boys. He later married Sevenah Hart of Alachua County, and together they added nine more children to the family. A notable trader, Trowell kept cattle and planted Sea Island cotton, rice, and indigo. He built a gristmill and cotton gin.

By the 1870s, Umatilla had a number of settlers but no means of receiving goods in town. Mail and supplies were carried by oxcart to and from Mellonville on the St. Johns River. In order to receive mail, the settlement needed a name, and William Whitcomb suggested Umatilla. Nathan Trowell rode on horseback to the U.S. land grant office in Gainesville and on April 26,1878, registered Whitcomb's suggestion as the settlement's name. Trowell was granted permission to establish a post office in his general store and became Umatilla's first postmaster.

RAILROAD THROUGH THE PINES

Trowell successfully campaigned for a stop on the new railroad coming south from Jacksonville. In 1880 riders on the St. Johns and Lake Eustis Railway could proudly proclaim to be on the second rail line in Florida. The tracks were almost hidden among the longleaf pine trees, groves, and lakes that set their path. Soon Umatilla was greeting visitors. The narrow-gauge train backed into town, as there was no turnaround. Though slow by today's standards, it was by far the most dependable transportation of the day.

Along with being only a stone's throw from the Ocala National Forest and its bounty, Umatilla offered beautiful natural vistas, magnificent moss-draped oaks, the heady fragrance of citrus groves in bloom, and temperate winter weather. Many winter visitors contributed to and enjoyed Umatilla's church and social life, and quite a few built homes to which they retired and established permanent residency.

HOSPITALITY AND HOTELS

By 1886, Umatilla's population was 200, and the business section of town included seven stores, a gristmill, three churches, and a schoolhouse. Residents could visit a barber and an ice cream shop. In 1887, Lake County was carved out of portions of Sumter and Orange counties, and Umatilla was a thriving, close-knit community.

Courtesy Rebecca Bryan Dreisbach

Courtesy Rebecca Bryan Dreisbach

Above: Early Umatilla resident Nathan Johnston Trowell visits an orange grove. He also planted Sea Island cotton, rice, and indigo and built a gristmill and cotton gin. Top of this page and facing page: The Umatilla House was the community's first hotel.

Considered an earthly paradise by those who returned year after year to spend winter in the sunshine, Umatilla was especially favored by families from Kentucky and Tennessee. The community offered a homey atmosphere and the hospitality of friendly neighbors. When people came, they were welcomed, and if they came to visit, it was because they liked the hunting, fishing, and boating, or simply the people.

The Umatilla House (later Mitchener's Hotel) was the community's first hotel. Locals and visitors alike enjoyed concerts and operas performed at the hotel. The Rosedale Hunting Preserve opened in 1886 and was known as one of the most romantic spots in Florida. Tucked into the landscape 4 miles outside of Umatilla, the preserve included 335 acres skirting Lake Yale on a chain of 15 large freshwater lakes. Rosedale was also home for its owners, Mr. and Mrs. C. G. Megargee, formerly of Philadelphia. Rosedale abounded with numerous small game, including quail, ducks, wild hogs, deer, and turkey, and its lakes afforded unlimited fishing,

boating, and bathing for guests.

Following the disastrous 1895 freeze, Umatilla suffered a blow when a fire began in the Alliance Store and destroyed the entire western business section of town in 1899. That land stood vacant for more than 10 years until Umatilla's tallest structure, the three-story Collins Building, was built in 1913. The Colonial Hotel occupied the second and third floors.

Much of Umatilla's early social life was centered in the Kentucky House, later known as the Buena Vista Hotel on Lake Umatilla. Operated by the town's barber, Fletcher C. Smith, the hotel hosted an annual gun shoot at which marksmen from all over the South competed for prizes. A 1920s brochure listed room rates between $3.00 and $7.50 a day. Meals were 50 cents each – breakfast, lunch, or dinner.

Two of Umatilla's smaller inns, the Maple Shade and Whitley Inn, were favorites for their traditional family-style dinners. The Whitley Inn, later the Umatilla Hotel, was well known for the homemade meals made by its owner, Mrs. Jesse Bryan Ramsey. The Umatilla Hotel filled with winter residents so happy with their accommodations that some paid a full year's rent to ensure they had a room for the winter season.

Umatilla became part of the 1920s Florida land boom when W. Hugh Rowe began an ambitious attempt to make Umatilla a resort town. Rowe bought 80 acres and built a theater, a business block, 10 or 12 houses, a garage, and a 100-room resort, the Rowebuilt Hotel. Rowe also donated 130 acres to the Southern Baptist Convention for a winter Assembly in Umatilla. Construction began in 1925, and a massive auditorium was built to rival the historic Chautauqua Institute.

The Rowebuilt Hotel was open for only 15 days before it closed due to the economic aftermath of the stock market crash of 1929. Its most famous visitor was evangelist Billy Sunday, who preached at the Baptist Assembly. The Assembly closed in 1932, when the trustees couldn't raise money to pay the mortgage.

FROM HOTEL TO HOSPITAL

In 1931, the polio epidemic arrived, and there was no provision for caring for the sick in Lake County. Nearby hospitals were full, and the vacant Rowebuilt Hotel reopened as the Lake County Medical Center with 18 beds and six bassinets. In 1933, ownership passed to its mortgage holders, Harry

Courtesy Rebecca Bryan Dreisbach

Courtesy Rebecca Bryan Dreisbach

Courtesy Rebecca Bryan Dreisbach

Clockwise from left: A postcard for the Buena Vista Hotel, formerly the Kentucky Hotel; the 3-story Collins Building, constructed in 1913; the entrance to the Rosedale Hunting Preserve.

R. Miller of Eustis and his wife, Anna. The Millers donated the building to the Florida State Elks Association for the establishment of a children's hospital, which, in the Millers' honor, the Elks initially named the Harry-Anna Crippled Children's Home. (It eventually became the Florida Elks Children's Hospital and served children for 65 years, closing in 1998.)

The money to open the hospital was raised by the Hialeah Park Race Track in Miami, which donated a day's receipts – $34,500. Dr. W. L. Ashton, who later became the hospital's medical director, carried the cash to Umatilla from the race track in a satchel! For many years, the Tangerine Bowl game – now known as the Florida Citrus Bowl – was the main fundraiser for the hospital.

Time seemed to stand still for some years. Citrus rose to its pinnacle in Umatilla with eight packing houses established to prepare fruit for shipment to northern markets. The Umatilla Fruit Company, owned by the Turner family, and the Umatilla Citrus Growers' Association, a farmers' cooperative, were the backbone of the city's new economy, and Umatilla enjoyed decades of prosperity until the devastating freezes of the 1980s.

A century before those freezes, the first edition of the *Eustis Lake Region* newspaper, dated Oct. 23, 1884, described Umatilla as "a homey town" where each resident was a "friend to Man" – a town that "welcomes all newcomers who desire a healthful location with wholesome surroundings." Today the same natural beauty and bountiful sporting life continue to make life in Umatilla happy and healthy. ■

Courtesy Rebecca Bryan Dreisbach

Courtesy Rebecca Bryan Dreisbach

Top: A mid-20th-century postcard for the Colonial Hotel. Center: The Harry-Anna Crippled Children's Home. Above: A colorful label for the Umatilla Citrus Growers' Association. Left: Mr. and Mrs. C. G. Megargee, owners of the Rosedale Hunting Preserve.

THROUGH THE CAMERA LENS

From the photo archives of the Historical Society of Central Florida

If you have photos you would like to donate to our collection, please contact our collections manager and photo archivist, Whitney Broadaway, at 407-836-8587 or Whitney.Broadaway@ocfl.net.

Caught in the Act

Some days a job in Orlando law enforcement means cracking a precedent-setting murder by poison. Other days the job may be slightly more . . . unusual. That didn't curb the dedication and creativity shown by Orlando Police Sergeants Robert Chewning and Bill Yohn in late 1956 and early 1957 when they jumped on the case of a prowler who had slashed more than $200 worth of women's clothing as the undergarments hung on clotheslines to dry during the night. (Chewning was a future department chief, appointed in 1967.)

The officers first tried to catch the culprit by lying in wait overnight between their normal shifts. When that didn't work, Sgt. Yohn turned to his recent Christmas gift: a 35-mm flash camera. The detectives set up the camera with a trip cord laying across the lawn of the most frequently targeted house. Sgt. Chewning was concerned that the suspect would destroy the camera once he realized his picture had been taken. So, he and Yohn had an electrician help connect several flood lights and an alarm to the trip wire in hopes that the prowler would spook and run away instead of tampering with the evidence. They even set up a small electric fan to blow air on the camera's lens and keep it from fogging, and rerouted the garbage pickup for that morning so the camera wouldn't be accidentally triggered.

At 5:15 a.m. on Jan. 10, 1957, the prowler sprung the trap. The residents of the house woke up and watched him start to run, then make a turn back for the camera. He smashed it several times before making his final retreat, but fortunately the film was unharmed and clearly showed Jewell Dallas Williams of Winter Park, mouth agape and knife in hand. He pled guilty to charges of prowling, disorderly conduct, and carrying a deadly weapon.

If the film in the camera survived the dramatic resolution, however, Sgt. Yohn's Christmas present was not as lucky. ■

COURTESY OF MELANIE KING

MURRY SCHAEFFER KING

CREATING CENTRAL FLORIDA LANDMARKS

BY PAMELA SCHWARTZ, CHIEF CURATOR

Above: Murry S. King rests in a hammock in an undated image.

"Surely a man who adds to the permanent, habitable, business and religious buildings of a city is a citizen worthwhile," states an excerpt from C.E. Howard's *Early Settlers of Orange County, Florida*, and such a man was Murry Schaeffer King.

Born in 1870 in Murrysville, Penn., and named for his hometown, Murry King was the son of Robert S. King, a wagonmaker, and Mary Jane Parks King. Murry King practiced carpentry and studied to become an architect while serving as a construction superintendent with the John Stuart Company.

In 1890, King married Ruth Ann Riley Dible, and the couple subsequently had seven children: Leroy (1890), Florence (1893), James B. (1894), Murry Jr. (1896), Merrit (1896), Edward (1901), and Pearl (1903).

Above: Murry S. King's State of Florida architectural license from 1915.

A NEW LIFE IN ORLANDO

Encouraged by a friend who had already made the move, King relocated his family to Orlando in 1904 and opened a cabinet shop at 18 E. Pine St. In 1912, from rooms 22 and 23 of the Watkins Block, King designed his first known structure: the Wescott Beardall House at 214 S. Lucerne Circle. Outside of his life as an architect, King was affiliated with the Knights of Pythias and the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks and was a member of the Orlando Chamber of Commerce, the Lions Club, and the Presbyterian Church.

King began designing homes for prominent residents, as well as many

large commercial and public buildings that are still Central Florida landmarks today. He blended known architectural styles to create his own, which included elements from the Mediterranean Revival, Neoclassical Revival, and Prairie styles.

King's accomplishments were myriad. He was a charter member and director of the Florida Association of Architects (FAA) and was appointed to the Florida State Board of Architecture, serving as its president for six years. A bastion for regulating architectural practice, King was the first registered architect in the state.

TOWARD A FLORIDA STYLE

In 1924, the FAA appointed a committee including King and other notable architects – Ida Annah Ryan, Frank Bodine, George Krug, and Frederick Trimble – to attend a meeting of the Florida Lumber and Millwork Association. Here, the architects addressed a desire from workers to do away with the cookie-cutter reference plans they had been using to build homes, and to have the FAA design a collection that actually suited the climatic conditions of Florida.

In *The Florida Circle*, a publication devoted to the architectural, commercial, and community development of the state, in May 1924 the committee explained that they hoped to prevent "financially irresponsible and even ignorant contractors, who bid low with the hope of getting a profit from the extra items which are not fully covered; though very essential to the completeness of the home, and the happiness of the

COURTESY MELANIE KING

owner." Many of the committee's plans were offered as a public service geared toward the small homebuilder to help reduce costs by standardizing as many


COURTESY MELANIE KING

Top: A 1912 certificate from the Florida Association of Architects proclaims King a charter member. Above: King sits in the front row on the left in an undated family photo.

STYLES DEFINED


WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

PRAIRIE STYLE (Late 19th, early 20th centuries)

- Known as the first uniquely American style made famous by Frank Lloyd Wright
- Features horizontal lines, broad eaves, flat or hipped roofs, and restraint in use of decoration


WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

MEDITERRANEAN REVIVAL (Peaked 1920s and 1930s)

- A blending of styles popular in Florida and California, which share their coastal nature and Spanish Colonial history
- Features large symmetrical primary facades, stuccoed walls, red tile roofs, arched windows, and often lush gardens


WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

NEOCLASSICAL REVIVAL (1895-1950s)

- Inspired by 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago
- Features columns with Ionic or Corinthian capitals, symmetrical design with a center door, often classical pediments, rectangular double-hung windows, and full-height porches

George Lansing Taylor Jr., University of North Florida

architectural details as possible.

The period from 1910 through the mid-1920s was a booming time of growth and real estate development in Orlando. King flourished, alongside many of his well-known contemporaries. This collective of architects created a deliberate style that suited Central Florida. It was described in another article in *The Florida Circle,* which noted that, "just as architects of old created styles to harmonize with their environment, so have the architects of Florida been creating, from native motifs, a style that is carefully adapted to the climatic conditions and surroundings of the state."

This Florida style "has an individuality all its own and should have a fitting name to express its origins," according to the article, which stated that the Florida Association of Architects would give a prize of $25 for the name of the style, to be selected. Contest submissions were to be sent to King by November 1924, with the winning name announced thereafter, but no record of a selected epithet has yet been found.

Though most of King's nearly 30 credited designs are found in Orlando, both the Simpson Hotel and the First National Bank and Trust Building in Mount Dora have been attributed to him, with others in Ocoee and DeLand. He is perhaps best known to us at the History Center as the architect of our beautiful home, the 1927 Beaux Arts style courthouse in the heart of downtown. Unfortunately, King died before this structure was completed, and his son James saw the project to fruition. King's Women's Club of Ocoee was also built after his death and was overseen by his son James.

Murry S. King died at age 55 at his Orlando home on North Orange Avenue on Sept. 20, 1925, of starvation, according to his death certificate.

Though the circumstances are unknown, it appears he "had not been allowed anything to eat for 34 days by D. Height," according to notes on the certificate. He is buried in Orlando's Greenwood Cemetery.

FAMILY TIES

I met with Melanie King, second great-granddaughter of Murry King, to talk about her family's history and to receive a digital donation of some of the photos included in this article. Her father, Murray Stanton King, named for his great-grandfather but spelled differently, began doing genealogy in 1996. Through the Kings' research, this long-time Central Florida family became involved with the Sons and Daughters of the American Revolution, as well as the Sons of Confederate Veterans. Melanie hopes to educate her family about their rich history and share what she knows about Murry S. King with her three nephews to continue the legacy. Are you from a longtime Central Florida family? Please consider sharing your history with us. ■

Courtesy of Melanie King

Top left: Murry S. King designed the Shamrock Building in Mount Dora. Center left: The cornerstone of the 1927 Orange County courthouse that's home to the Orange County Regional History Center. Center right: Murry King's son James, also an architect, completed the courthouse after his father's death. Above: The History Center today.

GEORGE LANSING TAYLOR JR., UNIVERSITY OF NORTH FLORIDA

Ocoee Women's Club, 4 N. Lakewood Ave., Ocoee
This building was designed in 1924 as the meeting place for the oldest formally organized women's social-service organization in the city of Ocoee. Due to the Great Depression and the decision to try raising money before building, the structure was not begun until 1937 and was overseen by Murry King's son James, who altered the style from Mission Revival to Art Moderne, which had replaced the former style in popularity by the 1930s.

Yowell-Duckworth (later Ivey's) Department Store Building, 1 S. Orange Ave., Orlando (1913)
This four-story structure was commissioned by Newton Pendleton Yowell and Eugene Duckworth for $61,000. It boasted the city's first elevator and, in its early years, a rooftop garden restaurant and movie theater. A fifth story was added in 1921. It was purchased by the J.B. Ivey Co. in 1944, and in 1948 was sold to Prudential Insurance for $950,000. The Ivey's store closed in 1976. Now repurposed, the structure sold for $15.5 million in 2017 to a digital-marketing firm.

Seth B. Woodruff Residence, 236 S. Lucerne Circle, Orlando (1916)
Woodruff was in the business of cattle, trucking, and orange growing and was also part of the small group responsible for the brick roads of Orlando built in 1895. This Prairie Style house was sold to attorney Lyman Beckes in 1934 and has since been remodeled and used as law offices.

RICK KILBY

Athens Theater, 124 N. Florida Ave., DeLand (1921-1922)
This Italian Renaissance structure opened as a silent-film and vaudeville theater and operated continuously for nearly 70 years. It was developed by L.M. Patterson, a native of Washington, D.C., who organized the DeLand Moving Picture Company. The opening night performance on Jan. 6, 1922, included a seven-reel silent film, *The Black Panther's Cub*, plus a four-act comic play and four vaudeville acts.

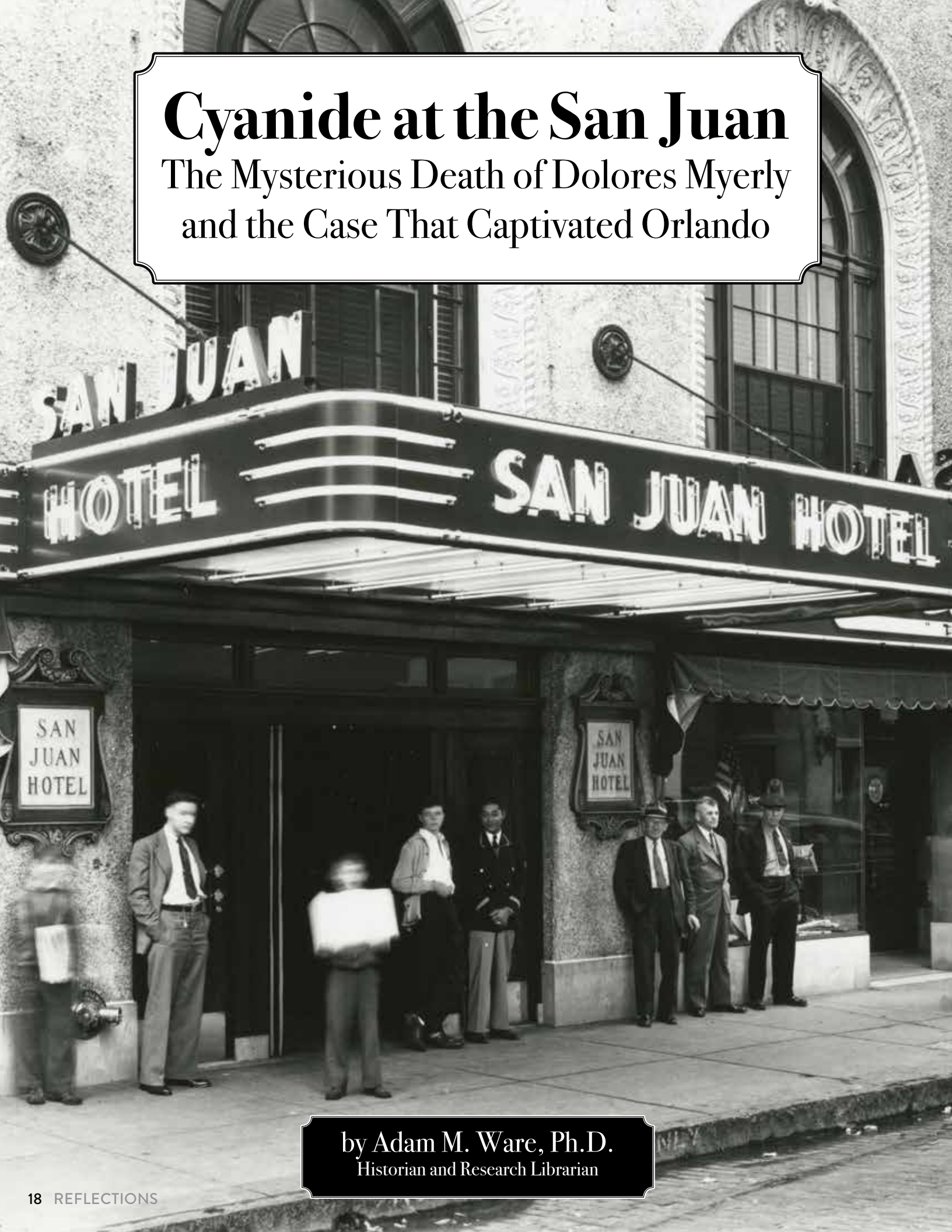
Wescott-Beardall Residence, 214 S. Lucerne Circle, Orlando (1912)
This Prairie Style house was built for Florence and C.G. Wescott, a racehorse breeder and award-winning trap shooter who brought national recognition to Orlando when his horses competed in the American Trotting Association races. Later, William Beardall, Orlando's mayor from 1940 to 1952, lived here.

GEORGE LANSING TAYLOR JR., UNIVERSITY OF NORTH FLORIDA

Simpson Hotel, 110 W. 5th Ave., Mount Dora, attributed to King
James Warren Simpson hired King to design what was considered to be the first fireproof hotel in Central Florida. Built of concrete, steel, and red brick, the building contained electrical wiring that was encased in dry water pipes with a protective covering of rubber and silk. Although the hotel closed in 1983 due to prohibitive costs of upgrading to meet changing building codes, the unlit neon sign of the Simpson can still be seen in Mount Dora, having been exempted from the city's ban on neon signs downtown.

Cyanide at the San Juan

The Mysterious Death of Dolores Myerly and the Case That Captivated Orlando



by Adam M. Ware, Ph.D.
Historian and Research Librarian

When Orange County Deputy Sheriff George Fields arrived at Room 208 of Orlando's San Juan Hotel early on the morning of Feb. 16, 1938, 19-year-old Dolores Myerly had been dead for about 30 minutes. Nothing added up: Robert Etty, a painter who lived in Pine Castle, was the last person to see her alive and therefore a prime suspect, but he had also called the police to the scene after first calling a doctor. Murderers seldom call the police on themselves without first leaving the crime scene, nor do they usually call doctors for their victims. In other words, Fields' investigation had only just begun. No one in the City Beautiful could have predicted where it would lead.

Death in Room 208

Under interrogation, Etty admitted he had met Myerly earlier that night at Jack Holloway's Friendly Bar at the corner of Orange Avenue and Wall Street, and had arranged to meet at her room just before midnight. Upon entering Myerly's room, Etty produced a bottle of whiskey and offered her a drink. After taking a sip, Myerly asked, "What in the world did you put in this stuff?" before collapsing at the foot of the bed. Etty first tried reviving her with wet towels and next called physician Duncan McEwan, who found Myerly dead when he arrived. The doctor then called for Deputy Fields, to whom he expressed the conviction that Myerly had been poisoned.

Fields arrested Etty, but the fact remained that Etty had made sincere efforts to revive his companion. It simply did not appear that he intended to kill her. County physician Dr. Frank Quillman prepared Myerly's autopsy, removing her stomach for analysis by chemist E.R. Alexander. According to court records, Alexander discovered 14 grains of potassium cyanide in the young woman's gut – enough to kill three people. Chemical analysis discovered 8 more grains in the whiskey bottle Etty had provided, and the examiner concluded that the bottle, before being opened and dropped on the floor of Room 208, had contained a staggering 25 grains of the poison.

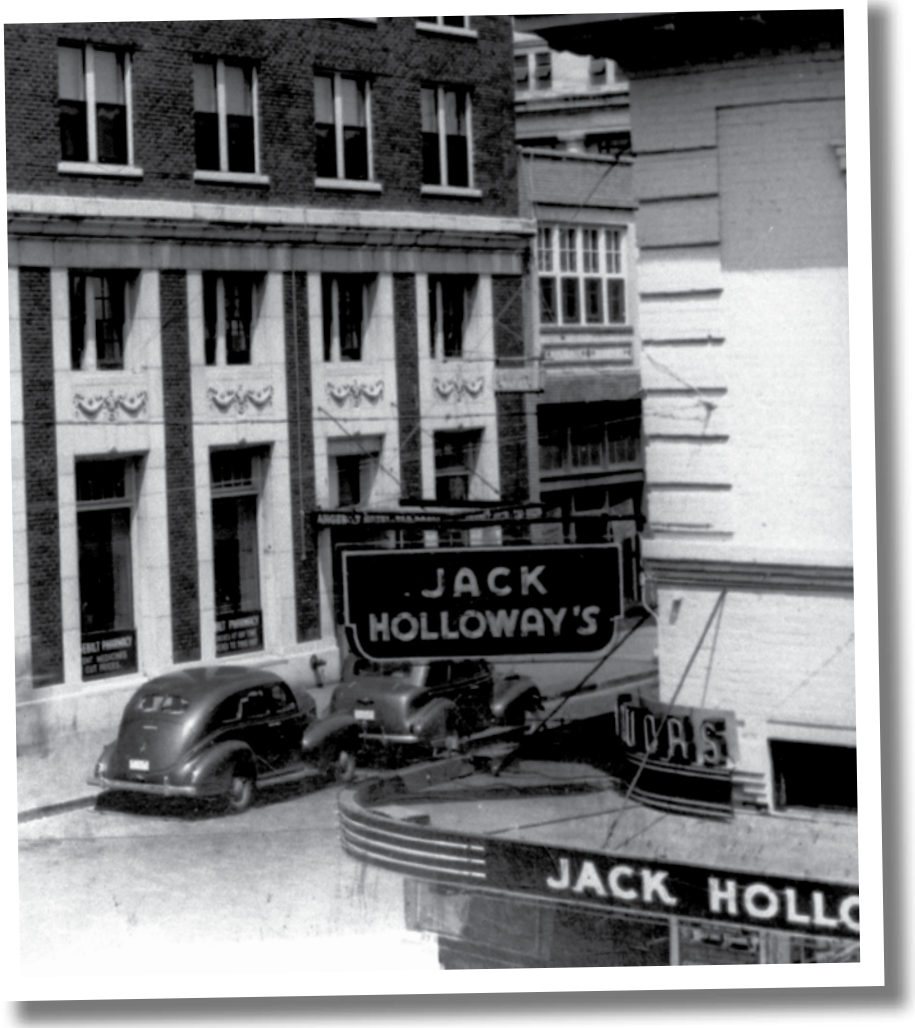
A search of Room 208 uncovered letters from the victim to her sister in Jacksonville. Called to Orlando to identify the body, the sister told investigators that neither she nor the victim, whose real name was Marie Bayouth, had ever seen Etty before. Etty declared he had never been to Jacksonville. Despite denying having a motive, Etty admitted freely to offering the young woman a drink, but he claimed no knowledge of the cyanide in the bottle. Etty's account seemed thin, but it formed Fields' only real lead.

Gift from a Stranger

Etty claimed he had received the bottle earlier in the night from a stranger he met at Holloway's. The stranger had offered him the whiskey gratis, claiming a preference for beer. Etty said the stranger could not have known he would later meet Myerly in her room, or that he would give her the bottle.

The doorman at Holloway's corroborated Etty's timeline, confirming that he had seen Etty with a man at the bar. Pressed for details, the doorman remembered only that the stranger complained of denture trouble. It was a single, odd detail, but it was enough to find Donald Long.

After a local dentist reported repairing dentures for Donald Long, both Etty and the doorman identified him as the supplier of the whiskey bottle. Long denied having met Etty, having supplied him with whiskey, and even having been at Holloway's the night of Myerly's death. He denied knowing Myerly. He denied ever having purchased cyanide. The last denial led Deputy Fields to talk to druggists. E.K. Enzor, the pharmacist at McElroy's, found a record for the sale of a quarter-pound of cyanide to a chiropractor named E.N. Sykes. When asked, Sykes claimed he had purchased



Opposite: Long an Orlando landmark, the San Juan sat on the northwest corner of Orange and Central. Above: Jack Holloway's faced Orange at what's now Wall Street Plaza.

the poison for Donald Long. "To get to the bottom of this thing," Long asked for the investigative help of a man named George Coston.

"The Efficient Lieutentant of Police"

George Coston was a well-known fixture in Orlando life. A 1929 Chamber of Commerce ad touting the quality of new-resident arrivals suggests he wrote the Chamber in 1923 inquiring about Orlando before moving from his Ohio home. "Mr. Coston is now the efficient lieutenant of police serving under Chief Pope, and points with pride to the fact that he came to Orange County as the result of information sent him." In the 15 years between his arrival in Orlando and his consultation with Donald Long, Coston had built a career in law enforcement, rising to the rank of police captain. In 1931, he was elected to the office of constable for District 1. His only public blemish was a charge of embezzling, for which he was acquitted. In the year prior to Dolores Myerly's death, Coston had operated a private security firm.

Cashing in favors with former Orlando Police Department coworkers, Coston met with Long and suggested to investigators that his client be released. Suspicious, Fields retained Long in custody and questioned Dr. Sykes again. In the second interrogation, Sykes suggested that he had purchased the cyanide for Long, because one of Long's colleagues had promised dividends from the sale of a new insecticide formula. Long's colleague? "George Coston," Sykes replied.

Fields arrested a furious Coston, who admitted that Long had been an employee of his security firm but insisted that neither man knew Dolores Myerly. Fields pursued information on both Long and Coston, discovering that Long had a criminal record of automobile theft, and that his cousin sat at that moment in a Jacksonville jail, serving a felony sentence. Fields traveled to Jacksonville to interview Edward Mosely, who confessed that Coston's security firm was a front, and that Coston intended to blackmail both Mosely and Long (using his law-enforcement knowledge of their criminal histories) into committing insider robberies against businesses contracted to Coston. Mosely claimed neither he nor Long wanted to participate, and that they had been stalling Coston when Mosely was captured on an unrelated charge.

Former Orlando Police lieutenant George Coston, Mosely said, had planned to exploit his knowledge of criminal-justice procedure to establish a crime syndicate, fronting as an investigator for robberies he himself ordered. While astonishing, Mosely's information still fell short of explaining how Dolores Myerly had come to drink the cyanide allegedly purchased for Coston. Fields recited Mosely's confession to Long, who admitted to having possessed the fateful whiskey

George Coston (left) in 1939 with his attorney, Harry S. Hammond.

Above: McElroy's Pharmacy (in an earlier period) was an Orlando institution; its pharmacist found records of a cyanide sale to a chiropractor. Top right: Dr. Duncan McEwan (right, with Ed Nilson of Nilson & Mueller Aircraft) was called to the scene of Dolores Myerly's collapse in Room 208 of the San Juan Hotel (right) on Feb. 16, 1938.

bottle, even as he added yet another kink into the case: Long received the whiskey from George Coston, his former employer and current investigative aide.

As Long's story unfurled, details became clear: Coston, enraged over Long's unwillingness to contribute to the theft ring, gifted the whiskey to his former employee, hoping that Long would drink it and die, thereby neutralizing Long as a loose end. Long had told the truth about preferring beer, and Etty had told the truth about receiving Long's gift of whiskey at Holloway's bar. Etty accepted the whiskey intending to impress his date later that night. In that way, the cyanide intended for Long found itself on the lips of Dolores Myerly.

Coston only offered denials and promised an ugly, public legal fight. Once behind bars, however, Coston made the mistake of attempting to pass notes to Long through an intermediary. Fields had accounted for this possibility, given that Long had already attempted to retain Coston as an adviser; by offering Long and the intermediary plea deals, Fields caught Coston in his own words. In the precedent-setting and highly public case that followed, with public opinion split – *Orlando Sentinel* mogul Martin Andersen even penned an editorial praising Coston as an unfortunate do-gooder who should be spared – prosecutors argued for a new mode of understanding murder. Adopting a language of "transferred intent," prosecutors claimed that Coston should be convicted of murder because he attempted to kill and succeeded in killing. That his victim was unfamiliar and unintended, the argument went, should be immaterial.

Coston was convicted and sentenced to death, before earning a reduction to a life term on appeal. He died in the Florida State Prison at Raiford in 1942, and is buried in Orlando's Greenwood Cemetery. His transferred-intent murder trial has become a precedent in the prosecution of numerous homicides in the decades since, most prominently in the 1984 case of Orange County Courthouse gunman Thomas Provenzano. ■

Kehillah: A History of Jewish Life in Greater Orlando

by Marcia Jo Zerivitz, Guest Curator

Jews have lived in Orlando since before it was a city and have contributed to the development of Central Florida in every area.

"To be part of a community is the most urgent historic obligation facing a Jew."—Elie Wiesel

"I was amazed to learn how many Jewish merchants were part of the development of downtown Orlando businesses in the 19th and early 20th centuries," says Roz Ettinger Fuchs, chairperson of the more than 50-person task force that gathered the materials for *Kehillah: A History of Jewish Life in Greater Orlando*, a special exhibition that will be on display at the History Center from Nov. 12, 2017, through Feb. 20, 2018.

Jews were first allowed to settle in Florida in 1763. There were Jews in Orlando at the end of the Civil War, but they left the area. Others soon arrived, however. Merchant Jacob R. Cohen was elected a city alderman when Orlando was incorporated in 1875. In 1919, I. N. Burman and a partner purchased the Orlando Steam Laundry. When airmail began in 1929, and one of the mail pouches fell into the Halifax River on a flight from Daytona Beach, the wet letters were brought to that laundry to be dried out! For 50-plus years, this business had Jewish ownership. For 40 years, Burman's family had the lease on the San Juan Hotel.

Most of Orlando's Jews or their ancestors originated in eastern Europe, where they could not own land or engage in agriculture. This is one reason Jews were drawn to Central Florida – to become farmers. They came, like most immigrants, to seek a better life for their families. In the process, they helped improve the quality of life for all as Orlando transitioned from a cow town to a major tourist destination.

A. O. Kanner was the first known Jewish child born in Central Florida, in Sanford in 1893, to a family who continued to live in Central Florida. Kanner had a 40-year political career in Florida; the Kanner Highway (State Road 76 in Martin County) was named

The wedding of Rose Gleibman and Aaron Harry Levy took place in 1917 in the Levy citrus grove with the entire Jewish community present.

for him. His cousin, Rose Kanner, was born in Orlando in 1904.

Pioneer Dr. Philip Phillips first arrived in 1897, eventually amassed 5,000 acres to grow oranges, and left a philanthropic legacy that continues. Many places in the area bear his name, including the Dr. P. Phillips Hospital (Orlando Health), the Dr. P. Phillips Baby Place at Winter Park Memorial Hospital, Dr. Phillips High School, the Dr. Phillips area of Orange County, and the Dr. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts. The Dr. Phillips House, which Dr. Phillips purchased for his family in 1912, is on the National Register of Historic Places and is now part of a historic inn on Lake Lucerne.

Pauline Berman arrived in 1908 and had a large impact on our community. In 1917, Berman called the meeting to organize the first Jewish congregation, Ohev Shalom. She was a successful businesswoman, community leader, and civic activist and helped found Orlando's first women's group, the Orlando Civic League, in 1913. She was also the first known female radio news broadcaster in the United States.

At the turn of the 20th century, the Orlando Jewish community comprised five families until 1912, when a migration from Pittsburgh doubled the Jewish population. Religious services took place in a citrus grove. Today, the city's Jewish population exceeds 30,000.

Orlando's earliest permanent Jewish resident was Dr. Philip P. Phillips (1874-1959), who settled in 1897 and became a king of citrus. This image is from the mid-1920s.

A Compelling Story of Community

The centennial of the founding of Congregation Ohev Shalom in 1918 became the springboard for the Kehillah exhibition, which tells a compelling story of initiative and achievement.

Kehillah means "community" in Hebrew. In the exhibit, the word specifically refers to the Greater Orlando Jewish community that includes Orange, Seminole, Lake, and Osceola counties. The exhibit logo – an orange tree with deep roots – symbolizes the early agricultural beginnings of the Jews who became "rooted" here, creating a community.

The subject is infinite, but exhibit space is finite. About 25 percent of the story comes from research for my work in the 1980s to begin the Jewish Museum of Florida-FIU at Florida International University in Miami Beach. A volunteer task force worked for two years to expand the documentation by interviewing community members and collecting photos and artifacts to portray these themes: Roots, Branches (Citrus, Agriculture & Retail); Seeds (Military, Israel, Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, Soviet Jewry, Love Thy Neighbor); Growth (Defense, Technology, Business, Industry, Real Estate, Media, Hospitality, Education, Community Service, Arts & Culture); Caretakers (Congregations, Agencies & Organizations); and Blossoms (Philanthropists & Notables).

Left: Pauline Berman (1892-1978), here in 1908, called the meeting to organize Orlando's first Jewish congregation, Ohev Shalom, which celebrates its centennial in 2018. Right: Rose "Rosebud" Kanner, the first known Jewish child born in Orlando, is off to first grade, circa 1909.

One of the exhibit's highlights, a video presentation, focuses on about 200 Jewish merchants and 340 stores in Orlando, plus about 30 in the surrounding areas, during the period from 1900 to 1969. The Makinson-Katz Hardware Store that opened in Kissimmee in 1884 remains the oldest retail hardware store still in operation in Florida. Two longtime Jewish-owned businesses remain in downtown Orlando, La Belle Furs and Southeast Steel.

The exhibit also highlights the many ways in which Jews organized to preserve their traditions and enriched the lives of their neighbors through their commitment to agriculture, businesses, professions, arts, education, civil rights, media, philanthropy, hospitality, defense, and more.

For example, 10-year-old Marshall Warren Nirenberg arrived in Orlando with his family in 1937. His father bought a dairy. After graduating from Orlando High School and the University of Florida, Dr. Nirenberg went on to earn the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 1968.

Alan Ginsburg, Harriett Lake, Henri Landwirth, Harris Rosen, and Chuck Steinmetz are also examples of notables who have made indelible imprints on the quality of life in Central Florida.

Harry Stahlberg (from left), architect George Miller, Orlando Mayor L. H. Conroy, and Al Roth at the cornerstone dedication for Congregation Ohev Shalom's new synagogue in 1926.

Innovators in Defense and Technology

The year 1958 saw the largest migration of Jewish scientists and engineers and their families to Central Florida to work at the new Martin Company plant. The arrival of Martin created

demand for new homes. Lester Mandell's Greater Construction Company, Hymen Lake's Sky Lake, and Bill Goodman and Norman Rossman's Bel-Aire Homes collectively built more than 30,000 homes in response.

More than 150 international technology companies are now based in what was once a sleepy farming and citrus area. Examples of the Jewish innovators who led them include:

- Sidney Stark, a vice president and general manager of the Orlando Division of Martin.
- Leonard Arnowitz, chief engineer of Martin's Vanguard rocket project.
- Kim and Alison Mandell Knapp, who started Maynard Electronics in their Lake Mary home in 1981 to produce the first IBM compatible hard-drive system, expansion cards, CPU accelerators, and the first multi-threading tape backup, improving backup time over competitive products.
- Steve Goldman who, in Maitland in 1977, founded Distributed Processing Technology (DPT), the first company to develop and manufacture storage controllers for the computer industry.
- Mitchell Laskey, who created 400 new jobs when he relocated his software-based healthcare company Dynamic Control Corporation (DCC) to Central Florida in 1982 to hire workers with technical skills.

Some Orlandoans went on to national prominence, such as Ervin Shames, who has been the chief executive officer of major corporations, and Steve Sinofsky, president of Microsoft's Windows Division.

A Voice for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties

Jews are sensitive to injustice. In Orlando, Jewish leaders have been activists for school desegregation and integration. Others fought to advance the rights of women, to combat discrimination and, in more recent years, to require equal protection under the law regardless of sexual preference. Examples include:

- Jerry Bornstein, who spent two decades and thousands of hours of pro bono legal time fighting the Orange County School Board on civil rights issues, including school desegregation and separation of church and state.
- Bea Ettinger, an early advocate for programs benefitting women in all walks of life.
- Kaylyn Cooper and Rebecca Stein, who made history as the first female couple to receive a same-sex marriage license from Orange County in January 2015.

Through *Kehillah*, discover more than a century of narratives from pioneers and later arrivals whose remarkable contributions are woven into the fabric of the region's history. More information about visiting the exhibition or purchasing the catalog is available at thehistorycenter.org. ■

Top: Biochemist and geneticist Marshall W. Nirenberg (at right) receives the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine from King Gustaf VI Adolf of Sweden in 1968. Above left: Aaron Harry, Saul, and Eddy Levy taste the fruit from their farm that won first prize at the state fair as the largest watermelon, circa 1915. Above: In 1926, the entire Jewish community participates in the dedication of the new synagogue at Church Street and Eola Drive in Orlando.

Experience Kehillah
Nov. 12, 2017–Feb. 20, 2018

***Kehillah: A History of Jewish Life in Greater Orlando* is a collaborative exhibition by the Orange County Regional History Center and the greater Orlando Jewish community. More than 500 captioned historical photographs and artifacts present this fascinating and inspiring 150-year story.**
(Above: Harry Kanner in an Orlando orange grove.)

Photographer Michael Maguire captured this growing memorial at Orlando's Lake Eola Park the night of the Pulse nightclub vigil on June 19, 2016. Mourners left candles, flowers, rainbow objects, pinwheels, handwritten messages, leis, and flags.

Going Back to a Place and Time

Honoring Pulse Nightclub Memorials Through Exhibit Design

This past summer, the History Center's exhibition *One Year Later: Reflecting on Orlando's Pulse Nightclub Massacre* posed its curators certain challenges.

The events at Pulse nightclub on June 12, 2016, are of international importance and evoke strong emotions from our coping Orlando community. A great deal of thought went into planning an exhibition that conveyed the response to the violence and the groundswell of public grief, love, and support in an honest and sensitive way – and one that would help our visitors continue to heal.

Designing the exhibition and choosing the objects and images for display, our staff reached back to their own experiences as grieving Orlandoans and museum workers gathering tributes for the One Orlando Collection at Orlando's four memorial sites: Lake Eola Park, Dr. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts (DPAC), Orlando Regional Medical Center, and the Pulse nightclub.

One important question stood out in our minds: As guests come into our museum to mourn, reflect, and remember, what view should welcome them into the gallery?

We rallied around one concept: the creation of a miniature memorial filled with replicas of specific items mourners left in the summer of 2016. Because we saw so many pinwheels twirling in the Florida breezes at the memorials, the use of colorful moving pinwheels became key to the design.

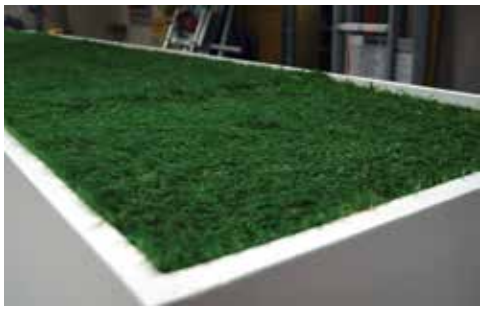
Our staff fabricator, Paul Trembly, designed a large wooden "planter" in which he hid six fans, programming them to turn on and off and intermittently vary their speeds, simulating those gentle outdoor winds.

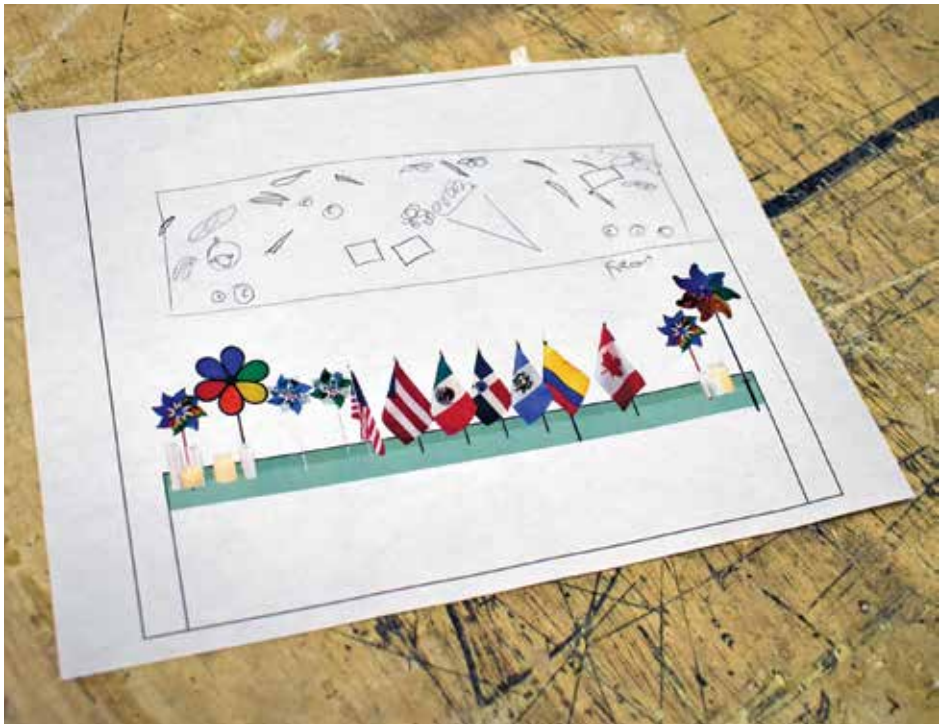
In addition to the pinwheels, our chief curator, Pam Schwartz, and exhibits curator, Emilie Arnold, set to the task of selecting which items to arrange across the planter's lawn of artificial turf. These included replicas of plush toys gathered from Lake Eola Park and Pulse nightclub, strikingly realistic battery-operated pillar candles, rainbow leis, a bouquet of artificial flowers, and hand-addressed envelopes containing messages of love. Most importantly, the planter featured 10 flags representing the nationalities and heritages of all 49 people who were killed.

When we opened the exhibition the morning of June 12, 2017, this planter came to life. "Flames" danced atop the candles and cast flickering light across the wall. Ghostly breezes set the pinwheels turning, two or three at a time. The entrance to the gallery became a contemplative space and the perfect introduction for our visitors, featuring a mix of memorial objects that signified the LGBTQ community in their rainbow colors and paid tribute to the diversity of those who died.

As the team charged with designing an eye-catching display – and as members of the Orlando community ourselves – we were honored to create a dignified piece reflecting the experience and emotion of this chapter in Orlando's history. ■

If you would like to know more about exhibits at the History Center, please contact our assistant curator of exhibits, Emilie Arnold, at emilie.arnold@ocfl.net or 407-836-8519.





Top left: This photo of exhibit project lead Paul Trembly's electronics workbench mid-wiring shows one of the six fans destined for the inside of the planter. Center left: Exhibits staff members used artificial turf to evoke the lawns at Orlando's outdoor memorials.Top right: When planning exhibit displays, the exhibits team uses scale computer renderings to lay out the placement of artifacts, labels, and props. Of course, sometimes there's nothing like a good pencil sketch; the drawing at the top of this paper shows a rough top-down concept for distributing items across the planter. Center: Curators set up the planter in the exhibits shop before moving it to the second-floor gallery. Bottom: When complete, the planter welcomed thousands of guests the week of June 11, 2017, evoking the dignity and diversity of memorial offerings mourners left in downtown Orlando and the neighborhood near Pulse following the massacre.

RAIDERS of the ... LOST ARTIFACT

NEW FIELD-TRIP EXPERIENCES BRING HISTORY TO LIFE FOR STUDENTS

How do we know what we know about history? Where do textbooks get their information? What is the difference between a primary and a secondary source? These are questions fourth-graders explored this past school year in a new, collaborative field trip presented by the History Center's Education and Collections departments. The field trip provided students a unique opportunity to get a behind-the-scenes experience of the museum beyond its exhibits.

In combination with viewing exhibits, classes visited the Joseph L. Brechner Research Center where our collections manager, Whitney Broadaway, talked with them about how we interpret history using artifacts from Central Florida. Some of the primary sources included photographs of downtown Orlando, a ledger book and blueprints from the Angebilt Hotel, and a key to jail cells from the period when the building that houses the History Center served as the county courthouse and county jail. Broadaway also explained how to best handle artifacts, with or without gloves, and how they should be stored and cared for.

This school year, the tour is cleverly renamed "Raiders of the Lost Artifact" and expanded to include middle and high school students. In addition to focusing on historical objects within the museum's archives, the tour also emphasizes the field of archaeology and how we know what we know about Florida's earliest people from remnants found in archaeological sites such as shell middens. ■

For more information about the History Center's education programs, contact our curator of education, Amanda Parish Walters, at Amanda.ParishWalters@ocfl.net or 407-836-8376 , or visit thehistorycenter.org/education.

Introducing the **Brechner Speaker Series**

Named in honor of the late Joseph L. Brechner, an award-winning journalist, community leader, and freedom-of-information advocate, this new series of speaker programs focuses on the media in Florida's history. All programs take place from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at the Orlando Public Library and are free. The History Center is offering free parking validation for this event. This series is sponsored in part by the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture.

OCTOBER 4
DONN R. COLEE JR.: "TOWERS IN THE SAND: THE HISTORY OF FLORIDA BROADCASTING"

Broadcasting touches almost every person in the United States every day. But like the air we breathe, we seldom give it a second thought. In this program, Donn R. Colee Jr. discusses the history of Florida's broadcasting industry, beginning in 1922, as well as the people who brought radio and television stations to life and the events that saw the state grow from boom to bust and back again, on its road to becoming the nation's third most populous state. Colee's program is based on his book, *Towers in the Sand: The History of Florida Broadcasting*, which tells the stories of more than 80 Florida broadcasting pioneers and current leaders.

A second-generation Florida broadcaster, Donn Colee began his career as a teenage DJ playing rock 'n' roll at WLOF-AM in Orlando. He's a member of the Florida Association of Broadcasters and the Florida Historical Society, among other groups, and currently lives in Palm Beach Gardens.

OCTOBER 18
WILLIE CLARK WITH ALL-STAR PANEL: "ON THE AIR: THE HISTORY OF BLACK RADIO IN ORLANDO"

In the 1950s and early '60s, radio personalities such as Clyde on a Cloud, Bigfoot Saul, and the Hossman were household names in Orlando's black communities. All were heard regularly in Central Florida during an era when radio DJs reigned as major figures in popular culture. This program will revisit the beginnings of minority broadcasting in the Orlando area and chronicle its emergence as a dominant media platform in the community.

The program includes a brief retrospective on the city's black radio pioneers and the history of WOKB-AM 1600 ("Tiger Radio"), Central Florida's first full-time black station, followed by what promises to be a lively panel discussion with legendary radio personalities, executives, and at least one former radio station owner, "telling it like it was."

JOSEPH L.
BRECHNER
SPEAKER SERIES

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 4
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 18
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 1
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15

Willie Clark is an award-winning broadcaster, entrepreneur, and community activist with 30-plus years of experience in the radio and television industry.

NOVEMBER 1
GARY MORMINO: "FROM 9/11 TO PULSE"

Often called the dean of Florida historians, Gary Mormino returns to Orlando with a program on the media and Florida in the years 2000-2016, a time when "no novelist could imagine a plot involving the real-life events that took place in the state," Mormino writes. "The story opens with the zany 2000 election and the unthinkable tragedy of 9/11 and ends with the shooting at Orlando's Pulse nightclub and the election of Donald Trump. In between the bookends, Florida experienced the worst recession in modern history. The media played a critical role in this melodrama."

Gary Mormino is the Frank E. Duckwall professor emeritus at the University of South Florida. In 2015, he received the Florida Humanities Council's Lifetime Achievement Award in Writing. His books include *Land of Sunshine, State of Dreams: A Social History of Modern Florida.*

NOVEMBER 15
ADAM WARE: "SUNSHINE STATE OF MIND: FLORIDA IN THE AMERICAN IMAGINARY"

"The media" often refers to the news or entertainment media. But even an idea can be a medium – an idea, for instance, of a sunny paradise where any plant will grow, any idea will succeed, or any dream can be realized.

Through real estate ads, citrus-crate labels, souvenirs, and shuttle launches, the idea of Florida has moved people to travel, invest, relax, and persevere.

In this program, historian Adam Ware looks at the varied ways the Sunshine State operates in American feeling and memory, from "the Italy of America" to "Florida Man." He'll discuss the materials that evoke and invent our image of Florida and the pioneers and entrepreneurs who mobilized the concept of Florida to change the course of the state's history.

Adam Ware is the Orange County Regional History Center's research librarian, managing the use of all published materials and overseeing the oral history collection. He has a doctorate in Religion from Florida State University with emphases in 20th-century American religion, media history, and museum studies. ■

James Gibson: "FEELING THE BEAUTY OF IT"

Renowned Florida landscape painter James Gibson once recalled that his first successes as an artist began in elementary school in Fort Pierce, when his skills at replicating cowboy images from comic books earned him ice cream money; other kids would buy his drawings for a dime.

A popular stalwart of Highwaymen events and exhibits at the History Center for more than a decade, Gibson was one of the most active of the Highwaymen painters and perhaps the most successful, according to the Highwaymen Trail website. He died in August of a heart attack at the age of 79.

Until the late 1990s, the Florida Highwaymen were one of the state's great untold stories. The name refers to a small group of African American artists from the Fort Pierce area who began painting Florida landscapes in the late 1950s. They sold their work from the trunks of cars during road trips along Florida's east coast for as little as $20 each. When collectors' admiration for their work took off decades later, inspiring books and art shows, some of the group including Gibson achieved great success. In recent years, works by the Highwaymen have hung in the state capitol and the White House, and the artists are members of the Florida Artists Hall of Fame.

"I didn't know we'd get this kind of respect," Gibson said in a 2015 interview. "I just painted. That's what I loved to do."

Born in Moore Haven in 1938, Gibson was a fourth-generation Floridian and the first of eight children, three of whom died young. His family moved to Fort Pierce when he was a small child. His father, J.C. Gibson, worked for a white Presbyterian church for 40 years and eventually became a deacon there. In James Gibson's boyhood, he helped out at the church, washing dishes on spaghetti nights for $3. He also rode a school bus with other black children on Saturdays to pick tomatoes.

In 1958, Gibson graduated from Lincoln Park Academy, where he briefly had Zora Neale Hurston as a teacher. He began college studies at Tennessee State University but left after two years because of the cost. Back in Fort Pierce, he joined his friend Alfred Hair and others in painting landscapes to sell, working first in the backyard of Hair's mother's house on 13th Street.

Gibson also worked for A.E. "Bean" Backus, the dean of Florida landscape painters, who encouraged the young painters at his Fort Pierce studio. Gibson helped make frames for Backus and cleaned his studio, absorbing as much information as he could about mixing paints, composition, and other aspects of landscape painting.

In the early days, Gibson would work through the night. In the morning, he would load his still-wet paintings into his brown 1957 Cadillac and drive to Miami or another town to sell the paintings to small businesses such as beauty parlors or the offices of dentists or lawyers. A jewelry store in Orlando was an especially good customer, he once remembered. Some days he would sell only enough for gas money to get home, but as he got better at both painting and salesmanship, his sales improved.

Early paintings sold for $25 to $35. It was hard work, but it beat picking fruit. During the strict segregation of the times, many opportunities weren't available, and the Highwaymen created a whole new way to sell their art. Painting landscapes became Gibson's life work. He began "getting into the painting" and "feeling the beauty of it," he later recalled. Being an artist was having a certain kind of spirit about what you did, he said. He hoped "to make his work sing."

By the end of the 20th century, Gibson had become a well-respected artist. He once estimated that he produced more than 10,000 paintings. He earned enough money to put two of his children through college. He received many awards, and his works were collected by distinguished people. Two of his beach scenes were featured in Steven Spielberg's film *Catch Me If You Can*. Looking back on his life in recent years, he said the key to his success is to "respect people, don't give up, and put God first. Everything else will fall into place." ■

Florida Highwaymen Meet & Greet
Sunday, December 10, 2017
10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Meet original Highwaymen artists and hear their stories. You'll have an opportunity to purchase their uniquely Florida artwork. Free admission. Call 407-836-8594 for more information.

HISTORIC HAPPENINGS

ADVENTURES IN HISTORY SUMMER CAMP

This year campers from 6 to 14 years old learned about Florida history, visited other museums via SunRail, explored downtown Orlando's historic sites and art scene, and much more.

SOCIAL MEDIA SUNDAY

Social Media Sunday celebrated the History Center's social media fans with free admission, guided tours, re-enactors, tasty snacks, games, and crafts for the whole family.

TACKY TOURIST PARTY

Cathy Salustri, author of *Backroads of Paradise: A Journey to Rediscover Old Florida*, helped kick off the summer as we celebrated the great Florida road trip with shuffleboard, trivia, and a tacky tourist costume contest.

THREADS OF OUR LIVES EXHIBIT

Members explored the history of weaving and experienced surprising colors and textures in functional, wearable, and decorative art made by Central Florida craftspeople at this special exhibit preview on June 23.

HISTORY IN A GLASS, PART I

On June 22 ace mixologists from three downtown Orlando establishments – Hanson's, The Woods, and The Courtesy – created craft cocktails inspired by the story of Billy Bluebeard, one of Orlando's first swans.

HISTORY IN A GLASS, PART II

Our August 24 event took a "Hog Wild" theme, as bartenders from The Matador, The Guesthouse, and Lil Indies – all in the Mills 50 District – competed to advance to the series finale on December 14.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

65 E. Central Boulevard • Orlando, Florida 32801

HALF OFF A SECOND MEMBERSHIP

Become a member to learn more about our rich history, strengthen your connection to the community, and help us fulfill our mission to honor the past, explore the present, and shape the future. Member benefits include reduced rates at our children's camps, two hours of free parking at the Library Garage, *Reflections* magazine mailed to your home, discounts at our Emporium shop, and much more.

Through the end of the year if you purchase one membership you can purchase a second membership at 50 percent off. Memberships make great holiday gifts that can be used all year long. You can join at thehistorycenter.org! *Discounted membership must be of equal or lesser value.*

BEFORE YOU COULD

HOLD THE PHONE

IN THE PALM OF YOUR HAND IT WAS MADE OF HUNDREDS OF MECHANICAL PARTS

WHAT MAKES A WATCH TICK?
HOW DOES A SEWING MACHINE STITCH?
WHERE DOES AN IPOD GET ITS SHUFFLE?
Take a look inside articles of everyday life through extraordinary photographs, disassembled objects, and fascinating videos.

PHOTO BY TODD MCLELLAN

Smithsonian Institution

Things Come Apart is an exhibition organized by Todd McLellan and the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES).

FROM THE SMITHSONIAN
ON DISPLAY FEBRUARY 19 – MAY 6

A VISUAL INVESTIGATION OF DESIGN AND ENGINEERING

THINGS COME APART