

**EVERGLADES SOCIETY FOR
HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

Dedicated to our Unique History

P O Box 46, Everglades City, FL, 34139

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SAVE THE HISTORIC

BANK OF EVERGLADES BUILDING

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WHO ARE WE?

ESHP is a 501(c)(3) charitable corporation of concerned citizens who are interested in preserving all historic sites, structures, documents, artifacts and memories within the Everglades City area. The Society was founded in late 2004 and initially concentrated on City Hall restoration.

Directors are elected to the Board by the membership every three years and are responsible for various projects such as historical signage.

ESHP participates in local events and organizes informative talks open the public.

ESHP operates the Everglades Area Visitor Center, relying on volunteers and local artists to greet tourists and explain what to do and see in our historic surroundings.



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ESHP@hotmail.com

www.eshp.org

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**SAVE THE HISTORIC
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from a painting by Donald Sunshine

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OUR HISTORY

The area was settled after the Civil War for farming, fishing, and hunting. The produce was taken by boat to Key West, the county seat. In the village of Everglades, the Storter family ran a trading post and welcomed anglers in what is now the Rod & Gun Club.

Barron Gift Collier, a wealthy streetcar advertising entrepreneur, bought out the Storter family. He established the town of Everglades as the seat of his new County in 1923 and made it the headquarters for the construction of the Tamiami Trail from Naples to the Dade County border. The Trail (US-41) opened in 1928, as did the rail link to Immokalee.

In 1923, Collier chartered the Bank which was housed in a little wooden building until this dignified edifice was completed in 1927. It was designed by William O. Sparklin, also the architect of the Courthouse (now City Hall) and the Laundry (now the Museum). The Bank is listed on the National Register of Historic Places (#990000825).

The Bank operated until 1962 when the business moved to Immokalee. The building was then used as a boarding house. In 1979 it was bought by Reba “Rusty” Rupsis who published the *Everglades Echo* newspaper there until 1990. After that, it was a Bed & Breakfast run by several succeeding owners.

ESHP is grateful that Robert Flick, the previous owner, donated the building to us so that it could be rehabilitated and saved as a dignified landmark site in our historic city.



photo courtesy Collier County Museums, Naples, FL

1927



2010

ACTION PLAN

PUBLICITY

The old Everglades Bank Building was featured by the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation in their “11 to Save” for 2018 and shown on the front cover of *The Florida Preservationist* (image left).

Our campaign will be aimed at all media in Collier County and adjacent areas.

FUNDRAISING

We have applied to several grants, some of which require matching funds. To raise money, we have been holding events and appealing to both individuals and businesses.

We will dedicate features in the building to substantial donors and will provide “naming opportunities.”

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS

We have sold surplus furniture with the remaining pieces in storage to be refurbished for future use. We have cleaned up the property, removing trees & bushes, had the building tented for termites, and installed a new roof.

The building has been surveyed by a structural engineer, and we are in the process of finalizing the architectural plans for the exterior and interior of the building. We have also obtained insurance and are in the process of completing the interior demolition.

MEDIUM TERM ACTIONS

As funds become available, the foundation will be repaired, and we will recreate the original Palladium window above the front door. Local businesses and organizations can “sponsor” one or more of the 22 windows which will be replaced with impact glass in frames similar to the 1927 originals (photo left).

LONG-TERM ACTIONS

Reconstruct the interior working with a well-respected Naples firm with over 30 years of experience.

FUTURE USE

We envision the downstairs as a Visitor Center with a coffee/juice bar, gift shop, and space for community events. In the old vault we will show the film “Wind Across the Everglades” which was made in this area in 1957. Upstairs there will be rooms available for a historic library, conference room, and art gallery.