

# Naples Area History

Presentation by  
Paul Pacter

[www.PaulVisits.com](http://www.PaulVisits.com)

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## SW Florida History Timeline

- 500 BC** Calusa Indians in the area.
- 1500 AD** Spanish settlers arrive in area.
- 1821** Spain cedes Florida to USA.
- 1845** Florida becomes a state.
- 1870s** Small settlements along coast north and south of Naples.
- 1886** City of Naples founded by two Kentucky investors (The Naples Co). Property sales began.

## SW Florida Timeline

- 1888** Population 80.
- 1889** Naples pier first built.
- 1923** Collier County created (split from Lee). County seat Everglades City.
- 1927** Train service comes to Naples.
- 1928** Tamiami Trail completed. Naples now accessible by road.



## SW Florida History Timeline

- 1949** Naples incorporated.
- 1962** County seat moved to East Naples.
- 1971** Passenger train service ended.



### Census Population 2020

City of Naples	19,915
Collier County	375,752

### City of Naples Historical Pop.

1930	391	1980	17,581
1940	1,253	1990	19,508
1950	1,465	2000	20,981
1960	4,656	2010	19,539
1970	12,042	2020	19,115

# Naples Collier County Museum

## Five Collier County Museums [www.colliermuseums.com](http://www.colliermuseums.com)



All good!  
All free!  
History!



Government Center



Naples Depot



Marco Island



Immokalee Pioneer



Everglades City

## Collier Museum at Government Center

**Website:** [www.colliermuseums.com](http://www.colliermuseums.com)

**Where:** At Government Center, 3331 Tamiami Trail, East Naples 34112.

**What:** Historical information and artefacts about settlers, American Indians, and development in SW Florida.

**When:** Tues-Sat 9am to 4pm.

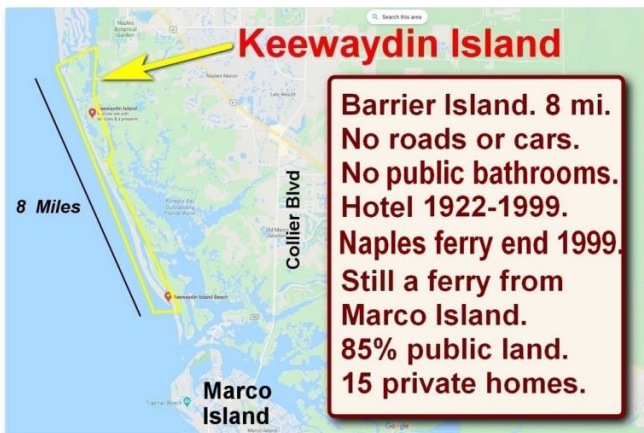
**Admission:** Free.

## Collier County Museum Main Exhibit Building

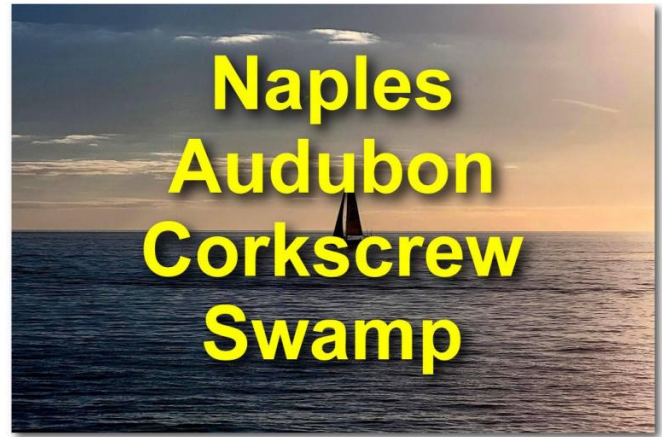


10,000 sq feet of displays.









**Corkscrew Swamp – “Audubon Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary”**  
**Website:** [corkscrew.audubon.org/](http://corkscrew.audubon.org/)  
**Where:** 375 Sanctuary Rd W, Naples 34120.  
**Get There:** East on Immokalee Road. 15 miles East of I-75, turn left onto Sanctuary Rd. Follow signs.  
**When:** Daily 8:00 am to 3:00 pm.  
**Admission:** \$17. College students \$10. Children 6-14 \$6. Book online.

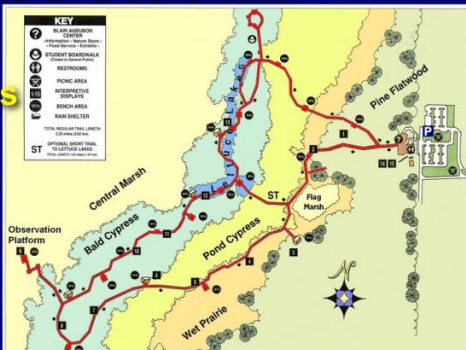
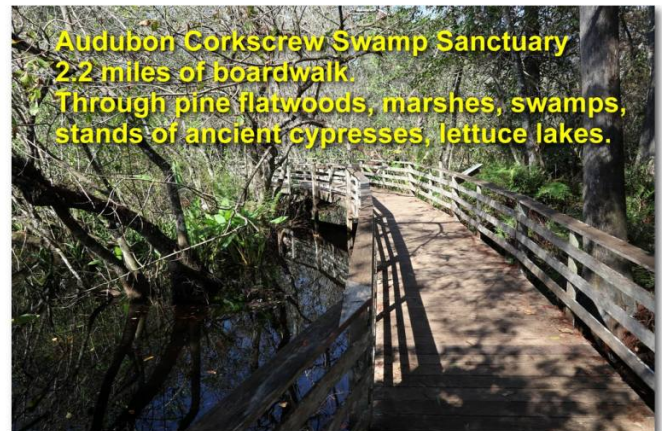
**What:** Visitor center: Check in. Exhibits. Nature Store.



**Boardwalk:** 13,000 acres of wetlands. 2.25 miles of boardwalk through pine flatwood, wet prairie, marsh, and the largest old growth Bald Cypress forest in North America. Alligators, otters, deer, cottonmouth snakes, turtles, wading birds, owls, songbirds, raccoons, etc.

**2.2 Miles of Boardwalk**

Benches  
Overlooks  
Rain Shelters  
Shortcut

**Several of the Animals at Corkscrew Swamp**








**Several of the Many Flowers at Corkscrew Swamp**










## Several of the Many Birds at Corkscrew Swamp



## History of Corkscrew Swamp

- 1953 National Audubon Society began fundraising. *Goal: Stop logging.*
- 1954 2880 acres purchased. Only accessible by 4-wheel drive vehicle on dirt road.
- 1956 first boardwalk completed using local cypress wood. 10,000 visitors.

- 1968 boardwalk expanded to a loop.
- 1969 marsh observation platform added.
- **Total length nearly 2 miles.**
- Cypress wood no longer available. Boardwalk repaired with treated pine. But that wood was not good in a wet swamp area.
- By 1990 70,000 visitors a year on boardwalk.

## In 1995 a completely new boardwalk built using ipe wood, grown sustainably in Brazil. Length 2.25 mi.

- 2017 Hurricane Irma broke the boardwalk in 24 places. 560 foot section had to be fully replaced.
- But ipe wood was no longer grown sustainably. Now repairs are made using domestic black locust wood and some plastic “wood”.

## Historical Sign at Corkscrew Swamp

### Protecting the Plume Birds



Plume hunting wiped out most egrets!

## Historical Sign - Logging

### The Start of a Sanctuary



## Logging Train "The Deuce" c. 1915 Used by Lee Tidewater Cypress Co. in Lee-Collier Counties Retired 1957



On display at Collier County Museum

## Naples Pier





### Naples Pier History – Slide 1

- Original 600-foot pier built in 1889 by the Naples Company. Passenger and freight dock where goods, mail, and people arrived by boat from Punta Gorda to Naples. **T-shaped.**
- Pier had footpath plus tram on rails to take goods to town.
- In those days, 12th Ave South was named Pier Street.

### Naples Pier History – Slide 2

- **Damaged by storms and rebuilt in:**

1910.  
1926.  
1935.  
1944.



**After  
Hurricane  
Donna**

1960 Hurricane Donna, total destruction.  
2017 Hurricane Irma.

**2022 Major damage from Hurricane Ian. Pier will need complete reconstruction.**

### Naples Pier - Hurricane Ian Update as of December 2024.

- 30 pilings collapsed.
- Half the pier is missing.
- New pier: \$24.6 million.
  - FEMA expected to pay about \$14m.
- Contract awarded to Shoreline Foundation, West Park, Florida, but that work can't start until the final signoffs from federal agencies.

### Naples Pier Reconstruction Plan



## Naples Depot

### Naples Depot Museum



**Website:** [www.colliermuseums.com](http://www.colliermuseums.com)

**Where:** 1051 Fifth Ave South at 10th St, Naples 34102.

**Get There:** One block east of US-41 downtown. **Temporarily closed due to Hurricane Ian Damage!**

**Admission:** Free. ~~Tues-Sat 9am to 4pm.~~

**Same site: Naples Train Museum**

**(private):** \$7 adult, \$3 kids. Fri and Sat.

10am to 2pm. **Model Railroading.** **Open in Season**

**What:** Museum about Naples railroad history and general history.

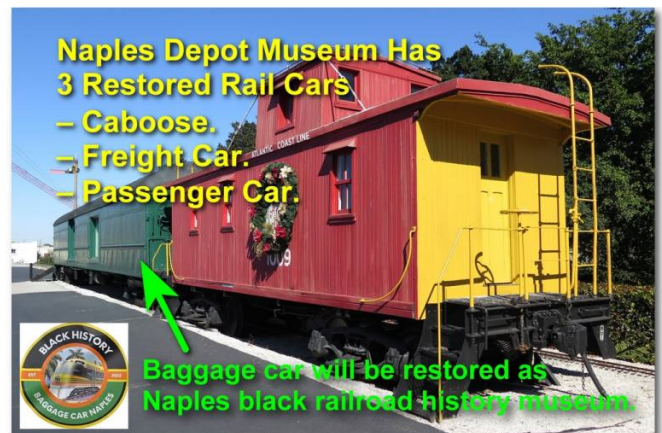
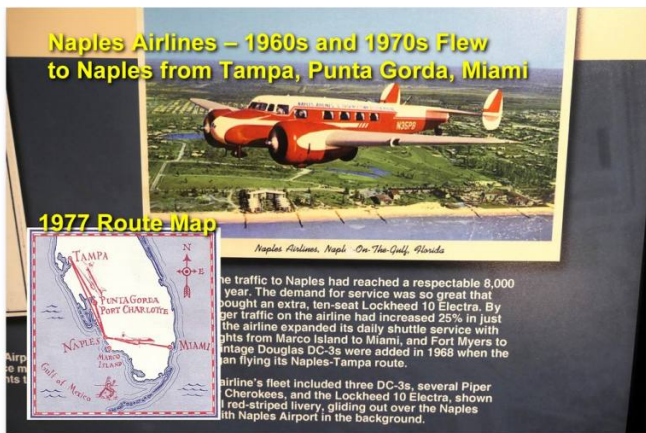
- Set in restored 1927 Seaboard Air Line and Atlantic Coast Line Railway passenger station.
- Freight service ended 1930s.
- Passenger service ended 1971.
- National Register of Historic Places.

**Museum is about the history of Naples in general, not just about railroading.**

### Naples Depot Museum







**Naples Lionel Train Museum**

**What:** Model train exhibits and outdoor mini train ride.

**Where:** 401 10th St South, Naples, FL.

**Website:** [naplestrainmuseum.org/](http://naplestrainmuseum.org/)

**Admission:** Over 14 \$8. Ages 3-13 \$4.

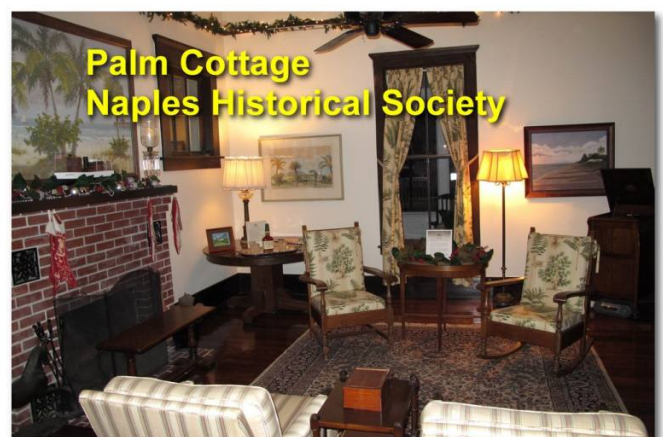
**When:** Open Fridays and Saturdays 10am to 2pm in Season - mid-October to end of April.





**Palm Cottage**  
**Naples Historical Society**  
**Website:** <https://napleshistoricalsociety.org/>  
**Where:** 137 12th Avenue South, Naples.  
**Get There:** On 12th Avenue South Near Naples Pier.  
**Admission:** \$13.  
**When:** Noon to 4pm Tues-Fri. 1pm-4pm Sat. Guided tour (calendar online) or self-guided.

**What:** Palm Cottage is Naples' oldest house, built in 1895. 3,500 sq ft house. Tabby mortar construction. Filled with antiques. National Register of Historic Places. Tours. Lecture programs. Norris Gardens are on the property.  
*Winter home of Henry Watterson, editor of Louisville Courier-Journal and friend of Naples founder Walter Haldeman.*  
 They also offer walking tours of Naples Historic District nearby.





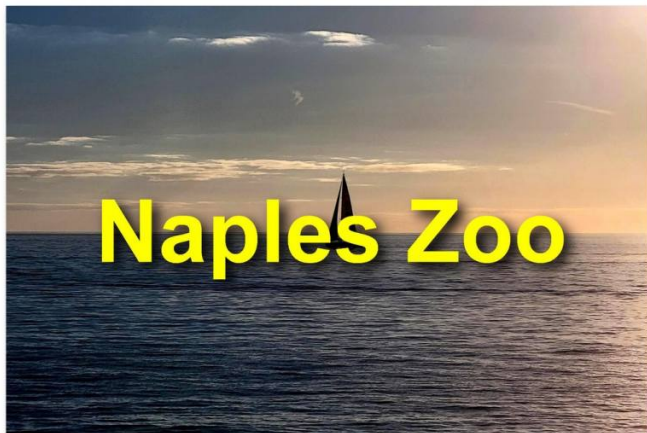


**Palm Cottage  
Oldest House in Naples**



**Opened February 2025:  
Smith Exhibit Hall  
Next to Palm Cottage**

**Exhibits on Naples History**



**Naples Zoo**

### **Naples Zoo**

**Website:** [www.napleszoo.org/](http://www.napleszoo.org/)

**Where:** 1590 Goodlette Rd, Naples 34102.

**Get There:** Just south of Golden Gate Pkwy on Goodlette Road.

**Admission:** Adults \$27. Children 3-12 \$18. Free parking. 9 am to 4:30 pm daily.

**Formal name:** The Naples Zoo at Caribbean Gardens.

**What:** 43-acre zoo and historic botanical garden.

### **Naples Zoo History:**

**1919:** First plantings by botanist and ornithologist Dr. Henry Nehrling.

**After 1929:** Nehrling died. Gardens neglected.

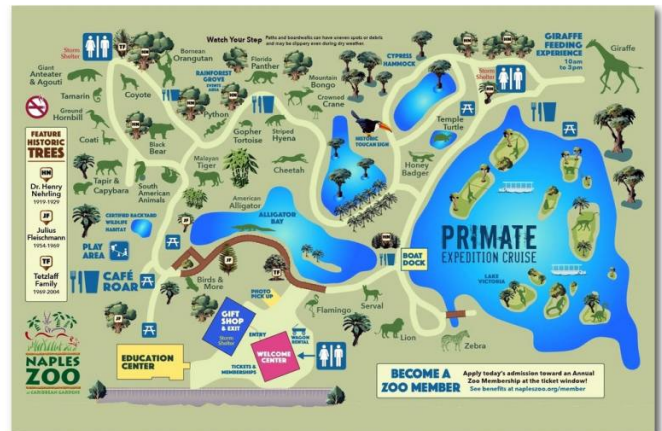
**1950s:** Julius Fleischmann added plantings, lakes, pathway, and parrots and waterfowl.

**1954:** Opened as Caribbean Gardens.

**1968:** Fleischmann died.

**1969:** Zoo taken over by Larry and Jane Tetzlaff. Exotic animals introduced.

**2004:** Purchased with public funds. Non-profit created.



**Alligator Bay - American Alligators**



**Starting in 1950s, this Toucan was atop a billboard sign for Caribbean Gardens on US-41**



# Naples Freedom Park

## Freedom Park

**Website:** <https://www.collierparks.com/>

**Where:** 1515 Golden Gate Pkwy, Naples. Just east of Goodlette-Frank Road.

**When:** Daily 7am to sunset.  
Education Center 9am to 10pm Mon-Sat.

**Admission:** Free.



### What: 50 acre wetlands.

- 3,500-foot boardwalk over the eastern side of the park.
- Plus trails and six lookout pavilions around the lakes in the western side of the park.
- 2,500 square foot Education Center.
- Freedom Memorial – tribute to the lives lost on 9/11/01 in the terrorist attacks and to the heroes of past and present wars.

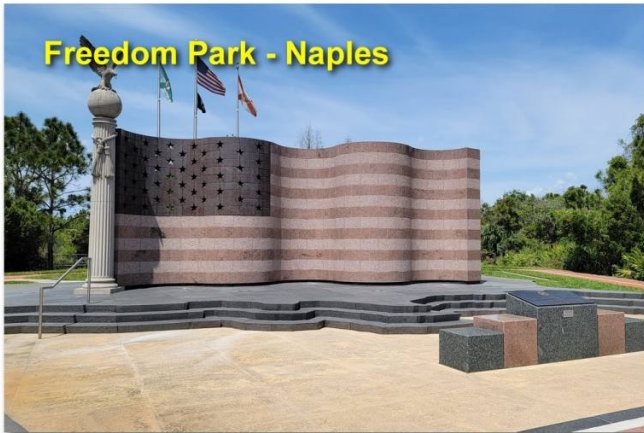
### Wildlife I have seen there include:

- **Birds:** Anhingas, egrets, various kinds of herons, gallinules, woodpeckers, limpkins.
- **Reptiles:** Alligators, turtles, frogs, iguanas, snakes.
- **Others:** Blue crabs, marsh rabbits, raccoons.

### Park website also claims:

- Armadillos, otters.

## Freedom Park - Naples



## Freedom Park - Naples World Trade Center Steel



# Naples Cambier Park

**What:** Cambier Park sits on 13 acres, just south of 5th Ave., in the heart of downtown Naples.

- Named after William Cambier, a town engineer instrumental in the development of Naples in 1926.
- Band concerts Sundays 2pm. Free.
- Big band concerts Mondays 7pm. Free.
- Various sports.
- Community center.
- Art shows.





**America's Military and First Responders Museum**

Website: [www.amfrm.org](http://www.amfrm.org)

**Where:** At Naples Airport, 500 Terminal Drive, Naples 34104

**Get There:** Airport-Pulling Road between Golden Gate Pkwy and Davis Blvd. West on North Road. Turn on Terminal Drive.

**Museum is in a separate room in the main airport terminal building.**

Formerly Naples Military Museum



**Museum will be moving to 4110 Golden Gate Pkwy in new Veterans Service Center. 10X current floor space!**

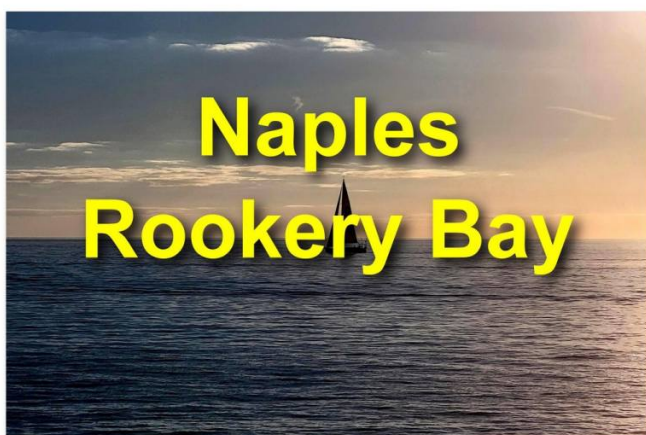
**Good News**

The Military Museum has been granted the use of a 17,000 sq ft building located at 4110 Golden Gate Parkway as the Collier County Veteran Service and Museum site. Now, from our current 800 sq ft artifact case displays, we can plan a first-class museum style setting with the over 5,000 artifacts, which are mostly from WW2 and have been in storage since 2020. A Sherman Tank will sit inside the building along with other military equipment, in addition to our vast weapon collections, complete Civil War relics, uniforms from all branches, photos, posters, documents, and many unique artifacts donated to the museum.

Your help and support are needed to make the renovation project going forward in order to have the best military museum in the State of Florida. Please send your tax deductible donation to the below address. Thank you.

5050(E) Organization - all donations are tax deductible  
 (941)205-0357 500 Terminal Dr., Naples, FL 34104  
[www.amfrm.org](http://www.amfrm.org)  
[davehinds@amfrm.org](mailto:davehinds@amfrm.org)

A photograph of the new museum building, a large, modern structure with a glass facade and a flat roof. It is surrounded by palm trees and other tropical vegetation.





Rookery Bay  
Briggs Boardwalk  
½ Mile Loop  
Completed 2009



Sabal Palm – Florida State Tree (South Carolina too)  
Can Grow to 65 Ft Height.  
aka Cabbage Palm, Palmetto,  
Swamp Cabbage.



Our State Tree is technically NOT a tree!  
It is a GRASS.

Calusa Shell Mound  
1700s or earlier



Bits of History  
on Shell Island

1887 Water Tank

1901 & 1908  
Gravestones



# Naples Swamp Buggy Races



## Swamp Buggy Races

Website: [www.swampbuggy.com/](http://www.swampbuggy.com/)

Where: Florida Sports Park, 8520  
Rattlesnake Hammock Rd, Naples 34114.

Get There: Just east of Collier Blvd.  
Turn on Lord's Way. Free parking.

When: Fall Classic Sunday, Dec 8, 2024  
Winter Classic Sunday, Jan 26, 2025  
Bud Cup Finals Sun March 2, 2025

Admission: Sat 11am-5pm is trials, \$10.  
Sun 10:3-am-5:30pm is races, \$17.

**What:** Naples is the only swamp buggy  
race track left in the USA. Mile O' Mud.  
For over 70 years.  
About 18 inches of water (much deeper  
in the 'slip holes').

**Track mimics the Everglades terrain.**

**Six categories of buggies:** Ranging  
from standard Jeeps with snorkels to  
giant monsters with NASCAR racing  
engines.

## Some Examples:

Glades Buggy  
Large rear tires.  
Sits low in the water.



Palm Beach Buggy  
High raised platform  
on 4 large tires.







**Edward H Frank**  
(born 1902) moved to  
Arcadia 1914, Bonita  
1921, Naples 1927.

Opened Naples's first  
garage (on 5th Ave)  
and first restaurant.



Built the first swamp buggy 1919 for  
construction in swampy terrain and hunting.

This buggy, built in 1920s, is at the Collier  
County Museum.



## Marco Island Historical Museum

**Website:** [www.colliermuseums.com](http://www.colliermuseums.com)



**Where:** 180 South Heathwood Drive,  
Marco Island.

**Get There:** Collier Blvd (SR-951) to  
Marco Is. South on Bald Eagle Dr.  
Becomes Heathwood Dr. Museum is on  
right across from Marco Library.

**When:** Tuesday-Sat 9am to 4pm.

**Admission:** Free.

**What:** Traces the settlement of Marco  
from Calusa (500 AD), to Spanish, to  
Seminoles (and Seminole Wars), to  
permanent settlement in 1870.

**From there, the museum covers Marco's:**

- Agricultural history (fishing, clamming,  
and pineapple farming).
- Growth of the village (early 20th c).
- Major property development (1920s and  
again beginning in 1960s).



**Marco Island Historical Museum**  
**Large copy of  
the Marco Cat**

### Brief History of Marco Island

**500 AD:** Calusa Indians arrived. Possibly  
descendants of the Mayans (Yucatan).

**Mid-1500s:** Spanish explorers arrived. By  
mid-1700s Calusa were wiped out or fled.

**Late 1700s:** Creek Indians arrived from  
Georgia and Alabama. (Later renamed  
Seminoles.)

**1816 to 1858:** 3 Seminole Wars vs US Army.  
Most Seminole wiped out or fled.

**1845:** Florida statehood.

**1870:** First permanent settler William Collier  
arrived. Village of Marco founded. *Not related to Barron.*

**1896:** Old Marco Inn opened by Colliers.

**20th c:** Fishing, pineapple farming, clamming.

**1912:** Ferry service to Marco began.

**1920s:** Barron Collier bought large amount of  
land. Incorporated Marco as Collier City.  
Development rush began. But failed in Great  
Depression. 1957 name reverted to Marco.

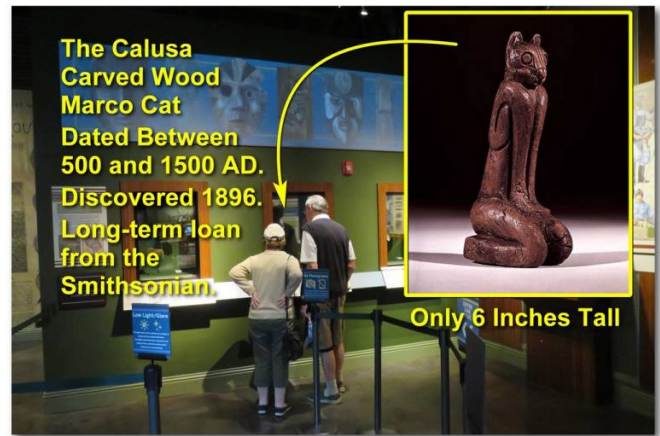
**1938:** First bridge to Marco (Goodland).

**1960s:** Mackell Bros. bought most of Barron  
Collier's land. Development took off.



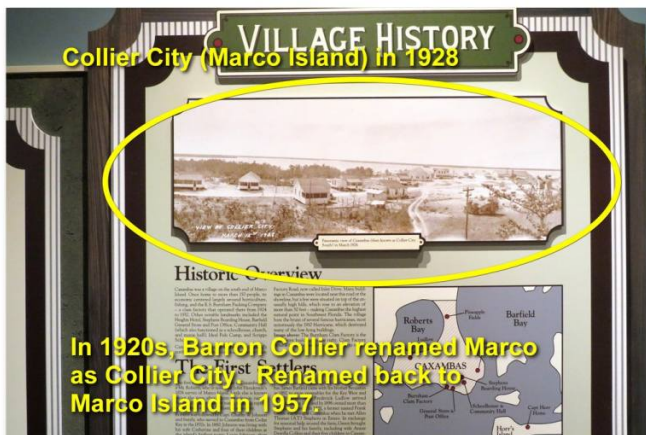


Museum has extensive history of the Calusa and other early native Marco Island people including 200 pre-Columbian artifacts.



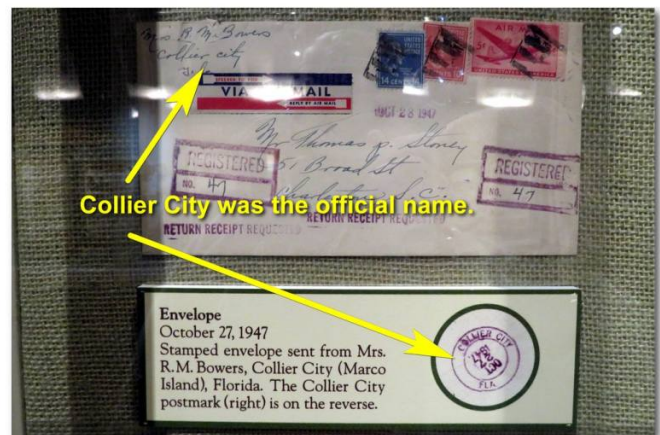
The Calusa Carved Wood Marco Cat Dated Between 500 and 1500 AD. Discovered 1896. Long-term loan from the Smithsonian.

Only 6 Inches Tall



Collier City (Marco Island) in 1928

In 1920s, Barron Collier renamed Marco as Collier City. Renamed back to Marco Island in 1957.



Collier City was the official name.

Envelope  
October 27, 1947  
Stamped envelope sent from Mrs. R.M. Bowers, Collier City (Marco Island), Florida. The Collier City postmark (right) is on the reverse.



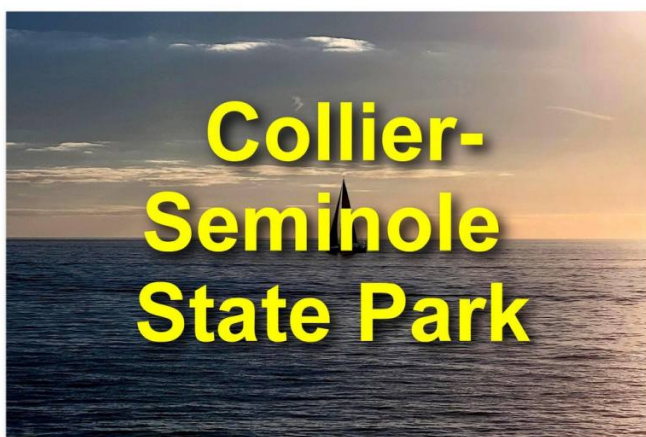
The Atlantic Coast Line completed its track into Collier City (now Marco Island) in 1927. ACL terminated all South Florida passenger service in 1971.

Ticket, Train  
Atlantic Coast Line Railroad  
December 31, 1930  
An Atlantic Coast Line Railroad ticket like this one would have been used by passengers traveling to Collier City (Marco Island).  
Schedule, Train  
Atlantic Coast Line Railroad  
This Atlantic Coast Line Railroad schedule includes a stop in Collier City (Marco Island).



Deltona Corp. (The Mackle Brothers)

The Mackle Brothers first visited Marco in 1962. In 1964 they bought Barron Collier's land and announced a \$500 million planned community.



# Collier-Seminole State Park

## Collier-Seminole State Park

Website: [www.floridastateparks.org/parks-and-trails/collier-seminole-state-park](http://www.floridastateparks.org/parks-and-trails/collier-seminole-state-park)

Where: 20200 Tamiami Trail E., Naples  
Another entrance at Old Marco Road.

Get There: US-41 Tamiami Trail East, 8 miles east of Collier Blvd/SR-951.

When: 5am to sunset.

Admission: \$5 per vehicle, or annual pass.



## Bay City Walking Dredge

The park is the site of a **National Historic Mechanical Engineering Landmark**, the **last existing Bay City Walking Dredge**.

Built in 1924, it was used to build the **Tamiami Trail Highway (US-41)** through the **Everglades and Big Cypress Swamp**, linking **Tampa and Miami**.

**Opened southwest Florida to travelers.**

**Bay City Walking Dredge - 1924**  
**One mile per month.**



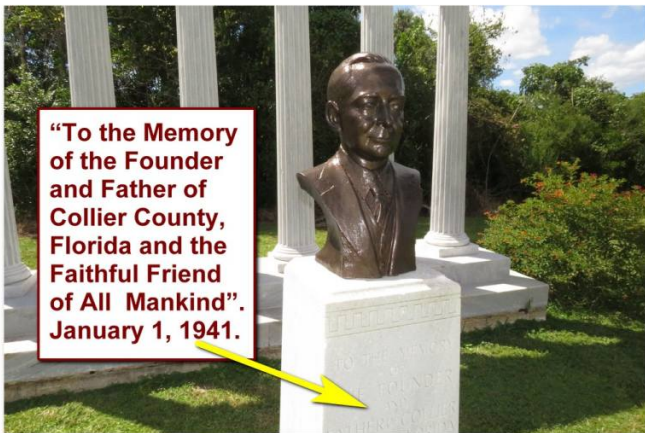
## BARRON COLLIER MEMORIAL

IN THE 1920'S BARRON COLLIER OWNED A MILLION ACRES. THIS SPOT WAS A SMALL HARDWOOD FOREST KNOWN AS ROYAL PALM HAMMOCK BECAUSE OF A MAGNIFICENT STRAND OF NATIVE ROYAL PALM TREES. COLLIER RESERVED 150 ACRES HERE FOR WHAT HE HOPED TO HAVE DESIGNATED "LINCOLN-LEE" NATIONAL PARK. THOUGH COLLIER ADDED ENOUGH ADDITIONAL LANDS FOR A NATIONAL PARK, THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT DID NOT ACCEPT. THE LAND BECAME A COUNTY PARK AND WAS TURNED OVER TO THE STATE IN 1944.

## Barron Collier Memorial Collier-Seminole State Park



**"To the Memory  
of the Founder  
and Father of  
Collier County,  
Florida and the  
Faithful Friend  
of All Mankind".  
January 1, 1941.**



# Everglades City



**Today both are small, isolated towns  
of about 400 people. Populations:**

Everglades City	
1930	172
1940	518
1950	625
1960	552
1970	462
1980	524
1990	321
2000	479
2010	400
2020	352

Chokoloskee	
2000	404
2010	359
2020	346

**Collier County total  
population 2020:  
375,752**

**Until 1962 Everglades City  
was the Collier County Seat.**



**1868:** An army deserter (John Weeks) was hiding in what is now EC. Began some farming.

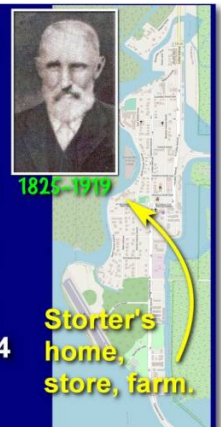
**1870:** First real settler William Smith Allen. Allen remained until 1889. Farmed along river front.

**1870-1881:** A few settlers arrived. Built rough homes. Fishing and farming.



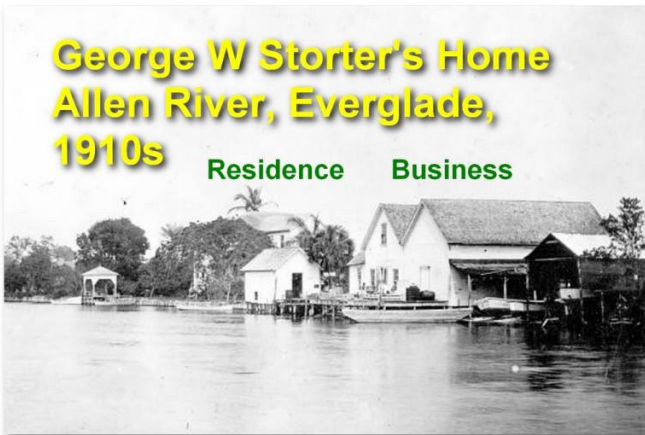
**1881:** First visionary settler George Storter Sr arrived. Invested in property and developed agriculture.

**By 1890:** Storter bought out Allen and Weeks and other settlers. Planted vegetables and sugar cane (and made syrup). Started trading post and inn. Church. Railroad 14 miles north to Deep Lake.



## George W Storter's Home Allen River, Everglade, 1910s

Residence Business



## Storter Trading Post Everglade, 1915



## Other events in Everglade before Barron Collier arrived in 1922:

**1893:** Everglade Post Office.

**1910:** Major hurricane. School and many homes washed away.

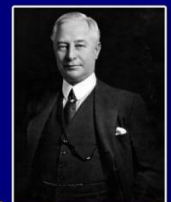
**1913:** Small railroad built 14 miles from Deep Lake to Everglade so farmers in Deep Lake area could get their grapefruits etc to a boat to sell in Fort Myers & Key West.

**1922:** Ice plant in Everglade to preserve fish for shipping.



## Barron Gift Collier

- Born Memphis 1873. Died 1939.
- Made \$1 million in street lighting by age 26. Then printing and streetcar advertising.
- Visited SW Florida 1906. Loved it.
- By 1916 had bought 1 million acres of land.
  - He became the largest landowner and developer in Florida.
  - He also owned a chain of hotels, bus lines, banks, newspapers, telephone company, steamship line.



Collier's 1 million acres cost him between 12 cents and 30 cents an acre.

In 1922, Barron Collier bought out George Storter and virtually the whole Everglade village.

- Renamed the Allen River the Barron River.
- Added an s to the town's name (Everglades).

At that time only one dozen resident families. Plus a few fishing and hunting cabins owned by non-residents.



## Everglades area prospered under Collier's leadership in the 1920s.

- Planned community including shops, hotels, school, bank, churches, public utilities, courthouse, hospital, newspaper.
- Created Collier County separate from Lee.
- He brought a passenger and freight railroad into Everglades.
- He built the Tamiami Trail.
- He built County and State Road 29 north Everglades to Immokalee.

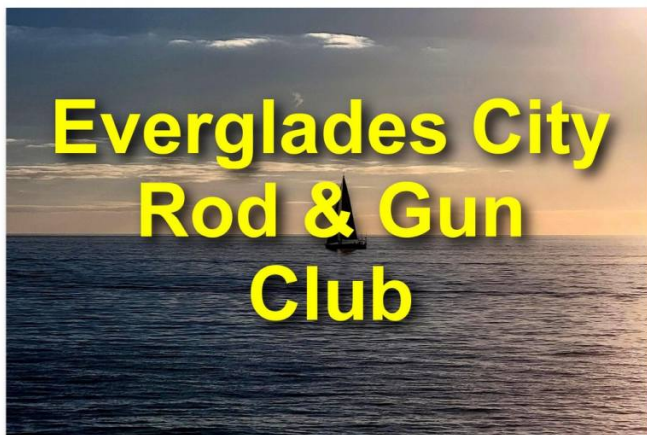








1970s-80s Everglades was drug smuggling capital of USA! 80% of adult males were arrested. But still too sensitive for the museum to display.



**Rod & Gun Club**  
200 W Broadway, Everglades City.  
On Barron River.

1870 first settler William Allan built his house on this site.  
George Storter Sr settled 1881. In 1889 he bought out Allen.  
At some point Storter started offering meals and taking overnight guests.  
His son George Jr continued ownership.

1922 Barron G. Collier bought the property and renamed it Rod & Gun Club.

- He operated it as a private club.
- He hosted international dignitaries and several United States presidents.

In 1972, the Bowen family, from Michigan, bought the Club and is still operating it today.



#### Celebrity Guests at Rod & Gun Club:

Presidents: Theodore Roosevelt, Harry Truman, Dwight Eisenhower, Herbert Hoover, Richard Nixon.

1942: John Wayne, Ernest Hemingway.

While on location filming:

- 1945, "Winds Across the Everglades": **Burl Ives, Gypsy Rose Lee.**
- 1983, "Cannonball Run": **Kate Jackson, Burt Reynolds, Sally Field.**
- 1994, "Just Cause": **Sean Connery.**
- 1997, Walt Disney's "Gone Fishing": **Danny Glover, Joe Pesci.**

David Carradine  
Eddie Arnold  
Phil Donahue

Roy Clark  
Jack Nicklaus  
Marlo Thomas

Mel Tillis  
Peter Jennings

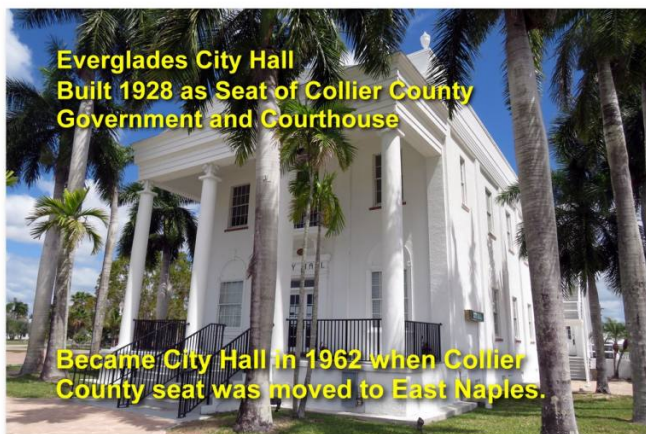
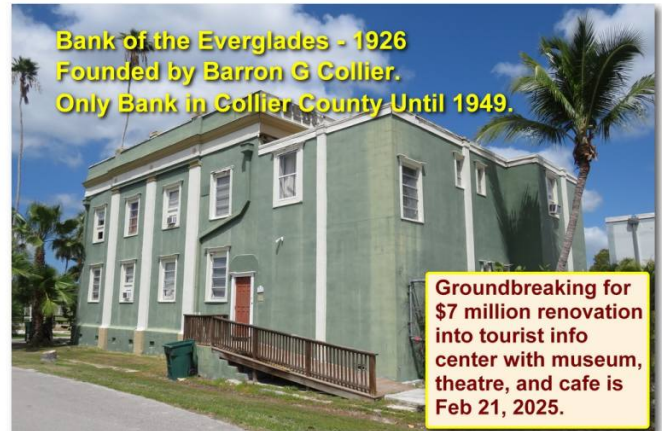
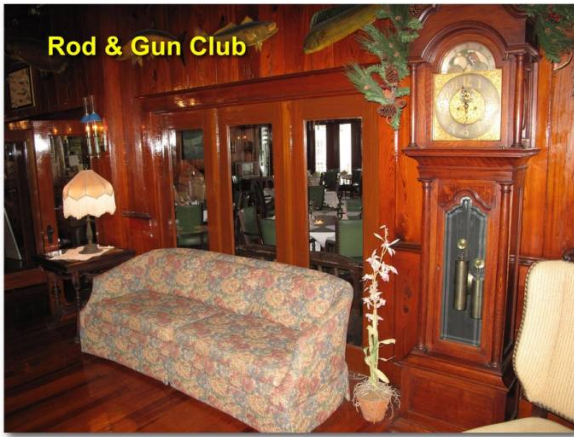
**Dwight and Mamie Eisenhower at the Rod & Gun Club – 1951**



With long-time Rod & Gun Club manager Claus 'Snooky' Senghaas →









## Everglades National Park

- Legislation passed 1934.
- 1.5 million acres of land acquired 1934-1947.
- Dade, Monroe, Collier Counties.
- Largest subtropical wilderness in US.
- Elevation 0 to 8 feet.



## Everglades National Park opened in 1947.

- Dedication ceremony in Everglades City.
- Attended by President Harry Truman.

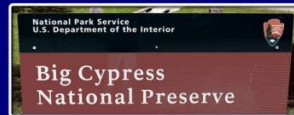
**UNESCO World Heritage Site 1979**



**1947**

## Big Cypress National Preserve Abuts Everglades National Park.

**Established 1974. Adds 729,000 acres. Very similar topography. Classification as Preserve is political. Preserve allows more commercial and recreational activity than Park.**



**Everglades National Park Gulf Coast Visitor Center destroyed by Hurricane Irma in 2017. A temporary replacement visitor center was destroyed by Hurricane Ian in 2022.**

**New visitor center is under construction. Opening late 2025.**



## Chokoloskee

**Settled early (1880s): 20 ft elevation big asset. Population today: 346.**

### Why visit?

- History – Ted Smallwood's Store.
- Murder of Edgar Watson 1910.
- Fishing Trips.
- Lunch at Havanna Cafe (seasonal).



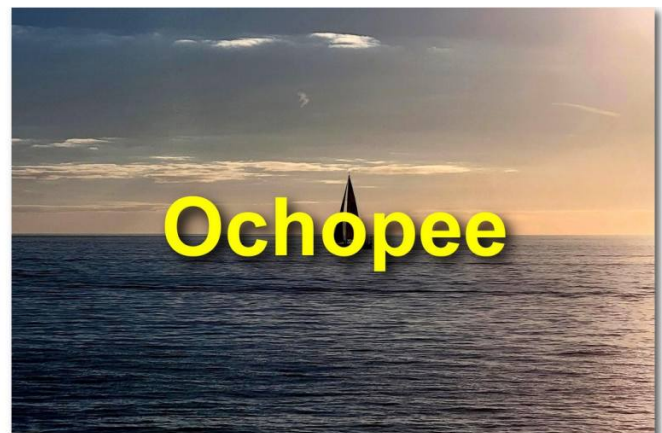
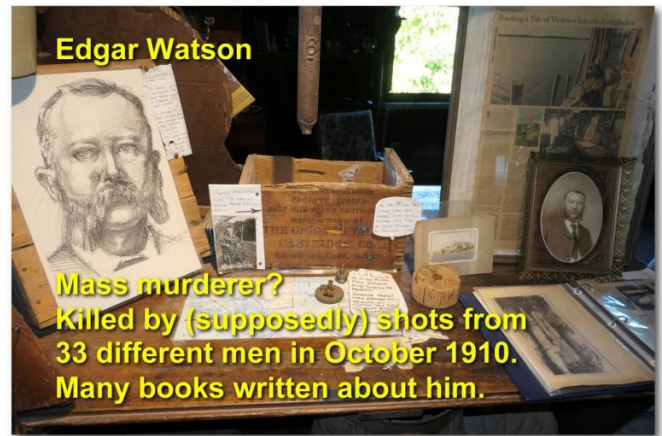
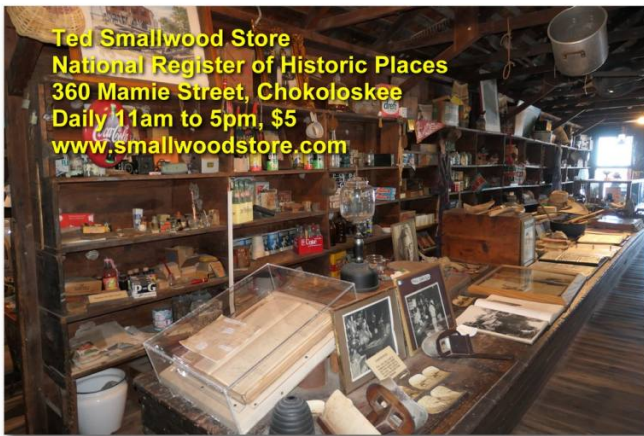
## Chokoloskee

**Island. One of the Ten Thousand Islands. The only one now inhabited. Connected by causeway since 1956. Only 150 acres: 0.22 sq mi. But has up to 20 foot height: Calusa shells discarded 500 BC-2000 AD. Height offered protection from floods.**

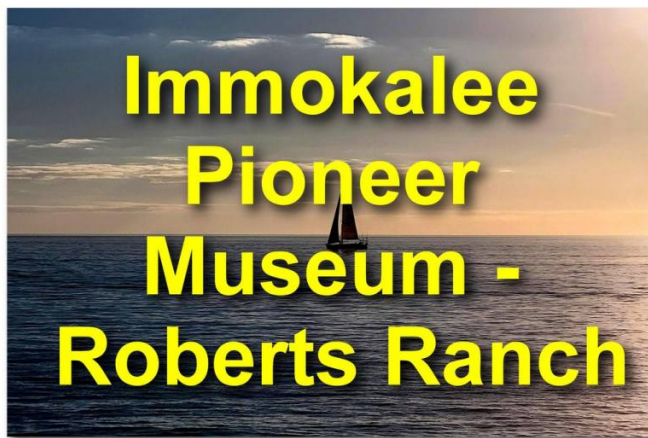
**Smallwood Store Est. 1906 by Ted Smallwood National Register of Historic Places This building 1917.**














## Immokalee Pioneer Museum at Roberts Ranch

**Website:** [www.colliermuseums.com](http://www.colliermuseums.com)

**Where:** 1215 Roberts Avenue West, Immokalee.

**Get There:** Immokalee Road east from Naples. Left on W. Main St, Immokalee.

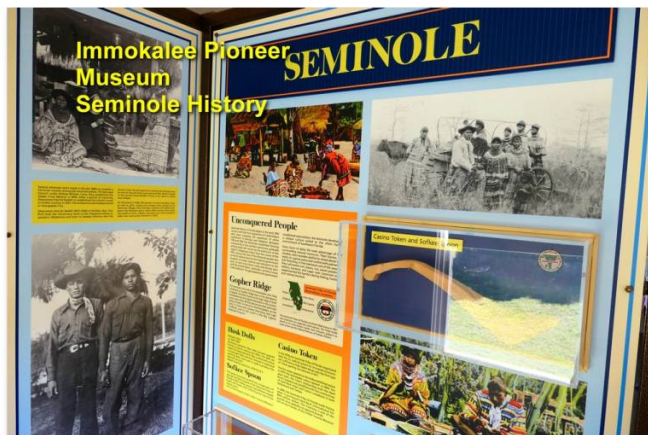
**When:** Tuesday-Sat 9am to 4pm. Closed Sun and Mon.

**Admission:** Free.

**What:** Immokalee is Collier County's largest inland community. Sprawling cattle ranches and agriculture.

First occupied by the Calusa Indians and later by the Seminole, the area has seen a colorful mix of hunters, trappers, cowmen, missionaries, and Indian traders since it was first settled in 1872.

**Early pioneers renamed the town "Immokalee" in 1897 after a Seminole word meaning "my home" or "his home."**







Roberts Family Home  
Living Room  
1924



Roberts Ranch  
Horse Stalls and Barn  
Early 1940s

Ranch was started in 1914.  
By 1960s it had grown to 135,000 acres.  
Divided among heirs. Then oil discovered.



Roberts Ranch  
Smokehouse  
1926



Roberts Ranch  
Bunk House  
1930s



Roberts Ranch  
Well - Dates from 1870s



## Immokalee Oil Well Park

### Immokalee Oil Well Park

**Where:** SR 29 between I-75 & Immokalee.

**When:** Daily Dawn to Dusk. Free.

**What:** 1940s oil derrick that pumped oil.

- Oil discovered near Immokalee 1940s.
- First well drilled 1943.
- To date, 297 wells drilled.
- Only 5 remain active. Aug 2024 output:
  - 16,000 barrels of oil.
  - 725,000 cubic feet of gas.

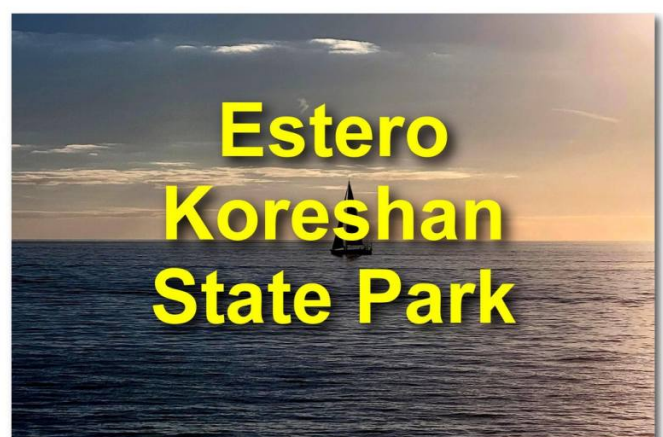
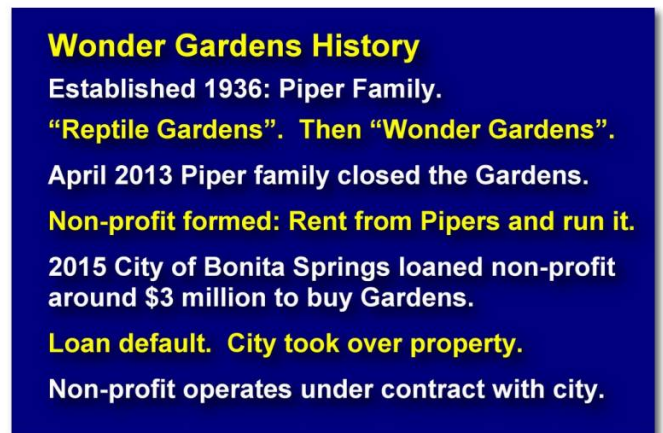
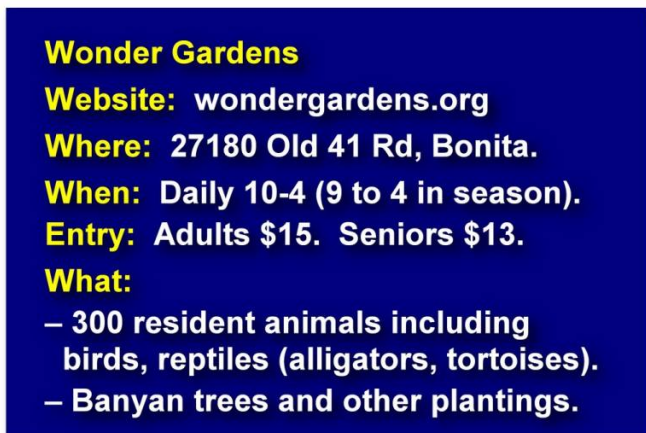


Oil Well Park  
1940s Oil Derrick











### Koreshan State Park

**Website:** [www.floridastateparks.org/parks-and-trails/koreshan-state-park](http://www.floridastateparks.org/parks-and-trails/koreshan-state-park)

**Where:** 3800 Corkscrew Rd., Estero FL 33928.

**Get There:** Just west of US-41 at Corkscrew Road.

**When:** Open daily. Park 8am to sunset. Historic village 8am to 5pm.

**Admission:** \$5 per car. Or annual pass.

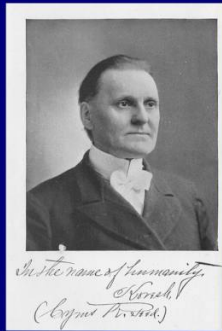
**What:** Village was the home of a unique and eccentric pioneer group of 200 people that chose to live on the banks of the Estero River.

**In 1893, the Koreshans, a religious sect founded by Dr. Cyrus R. Teed, moved here. They built a settlement based on a commitment to communal, celibate living.**

The enterprising Koreshans established a farm, nursery and botanical gardens. Also a bakery and public store.

Koreshan State Park has 11 immaculately restored historic buildings erected by the Koreshans between the late-19th and early-20th centuries.

There is an interpretive center with education materials, including a video.



Cyrus R Teed  
Alias "Koresh"

### Planetary Court - Home of 7 Ladies Who Were the Governing Council at Koreshan



### Planetary Court Interior



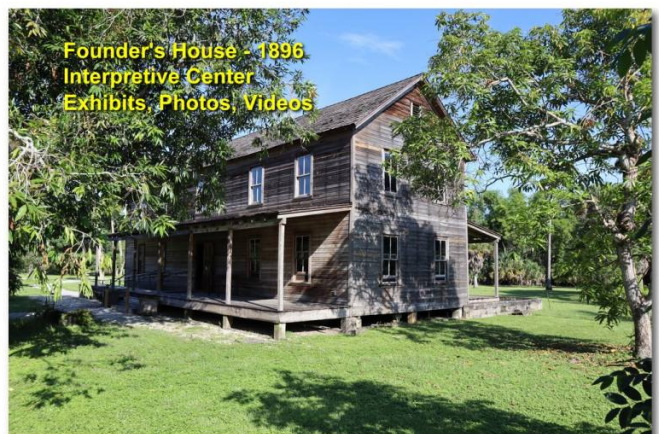
### Koreshan Unity Settlement Art Hall - 1905 - Concerts and Religious Activities



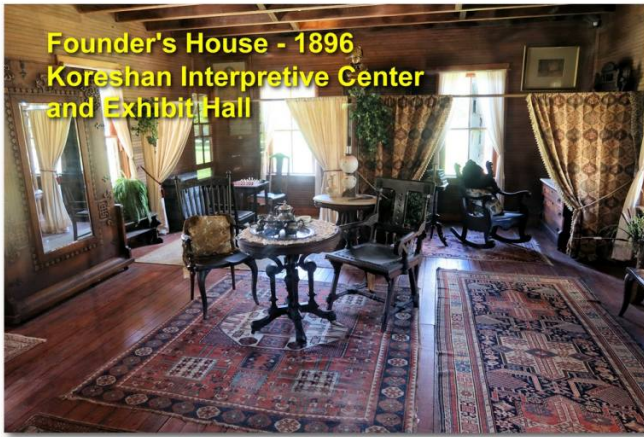
### Koreshan Unity Settlement New Store - 1920 Only store between Ft Myers and Naples



### Founder's House - 1896 Interpretive Center Exhibits, Photos, Videos







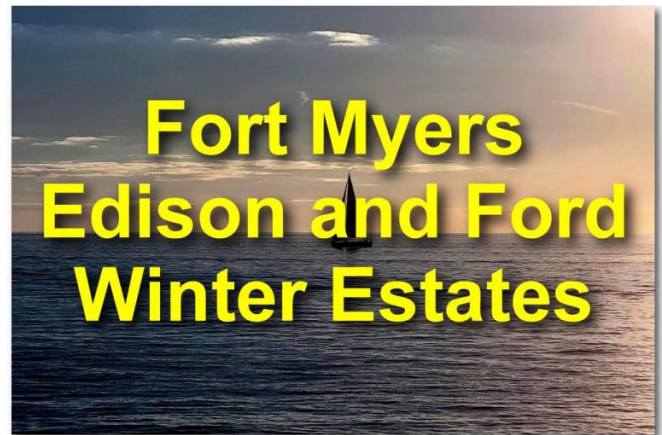
**Founder's House - 1896  
Koreshan Interpretive Center  
and Exhibit Hall**



**Koreshan Unity Settlement  
Bakery - 1903**



**Koreshan Generator Building  
1908**



## **Fort Myers Edison and Ford Winter Estates**

### **Edison and Ford Winter Estates Fort Myers**

**Website:** [www.edisonfordwinterestates.org/](http://www.edisonfordwinterestates.org/)

**Where:** 2350 McGregor Blvd, Fort Myers 33901.

**Get There:** I-75 to Colonial Blvd Exit #136. West on Colonial Blvd about 6 miles to McGregor (just before The Gulf). Right on McGregor. About 3 miles, on left.

**When:** Daily 9am to 5:30pm.

### **Admission:**

- \$25 self-guided tour. Download Internet app. 25 stops.
- \$30 tour led by site historian.

**Both include the historic homes and gardens, and admission to Museum and Edison Botanic Research Labs.**

**On these tours you do not go into the houses. You look in.**

### **Edison's Winter Home:**

- 14-acre Site on Caloosahatchee Riv.
- Queen Anne New England Style.
- Built 1885 in parts in Fairfield, Maine.
- Sent to Fort Myers on 4 sailing ships.
- Assembled in Fort Myers in 1886.
- One of the first pre-fabricated buildings in America.



**Thomas Edison's Home  
Fort Myers  
1886**

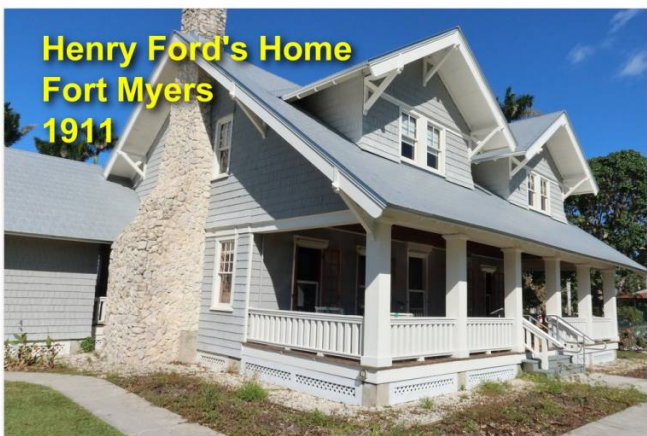




**Ford Home:**  
Edison's good friend Henry Ford bought the house next to Edison's in 1916. It was built 1911. Named "The Mangoes".

Henry Ford manufactured the first automobile that many middle-class Americans could afford, starting 1910. The car became a practical conveyance that profoundly affected 20th century society worldwide.

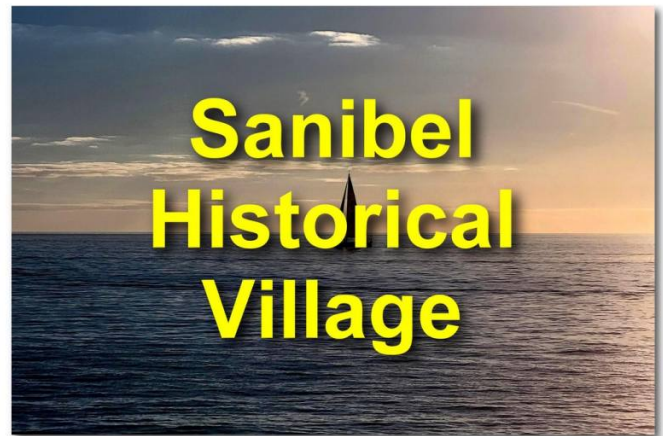
**Ford died In 1947.**







**Henry Ford's Home  
Dining Room**



# Sanibel Historical Village

## Sanibel Historical Museum and Village

**Website:** [sanibelmuseum.org/](http://sanibelmuseum.org/)

**Where:** 950 Dunlop Road, Sanibel, FL.

**Get There:** Cross Sanibel Causeway.  
Right on Periwinkle 2.5 miles.

**When:** Mid-October through April  
(Seasonal): Tues.-Sat. 10 am to 4 pm.  
May through July (Summer): Tues.-Sat. 10  
am to 1 pm.

**Admission:** Adults \$15. Under 18 free.

## Ten historic Sanibel buildings (1896-1927) restored to their original state.

- Shore Haven (1924).
- Bailey General Store (1927).
- Caretaker's Cottage (1925).
- Morning Glories Cottage (1925)
- Sanibel Packing House (1900)
- Sanibel School House (1896).
- Post Office (1926).
- Burnap Cottage (1898).
- Miss Charlotta's Tea Room (1926).
- Rutland House (1913).



*Sanibel Historical  
Museum and Village*



**Sanibel Historical Museum and Village  
Shore Haven - 1924 - Sears Roebuck kit home  
Beachfront Home**



**Sanibel Historical Museum and Village  
Bailey General Store - 1927  
Was originally near the ferry dock.**



**Sanibel Historical Museum and Village  
Morning Glories - 1926  
Beachfront Cottage**

**Sears kit home. Came in 30,000 pieces  
on a truck delivered on a barge in 1925.**



**Sanibel Historical Museum and Village  
Miss Charlotta's Tea Room - 1926  
Built by Bailey Brothers at the Ferry Dock  
as a Temporary Store**





Sanibel Historical Museum and Village  
Sanibel School House - 1896



# Sanibel Ding Darling NWR Calusa Shell Mound

## J. N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge

US Fish and Wildlife Service

### Website:

[www.fws.gov/refuge/JN\\_Ding\\_Darling/](http://www.fws.gov/refuge/JN_Ding_Darling/)

**Where:** On Sanibel Island.

**Get There:** I-75 or US-41 to Sanibel Causeway (toll \$6). Right onto Periwinkle. At end of Periwinkle, right onto Tarpon Bay Rd, then left onto Sanibel-Captiva Road.

**When:** Daily except Fridays and national holidays.

**Admission:** \$10 per car to drive 4-mile Wildlife Drive. \$1 for hikers or bikers.

**What:** 6,400 acres of mangrove forest, submerged seagrass beds, marshes, and hardwood hammocks.

One of America's largest undeveloped mangrove ecosystems.

4 mile one-way drive with spectacular views of lakes and bayous.

## Ding Darling National Wildlife Refuge

- Habitat of 245 bird species.
- Many birdwatching opportunities. Especially December through March.
- Home to raccoons, bobcats, river otters, alligators, and marsh rabbits.
- Hiking trails.
- Small exhibit building.

White  
Ibis



## Ding Darling 4-mile Wildlife Drive

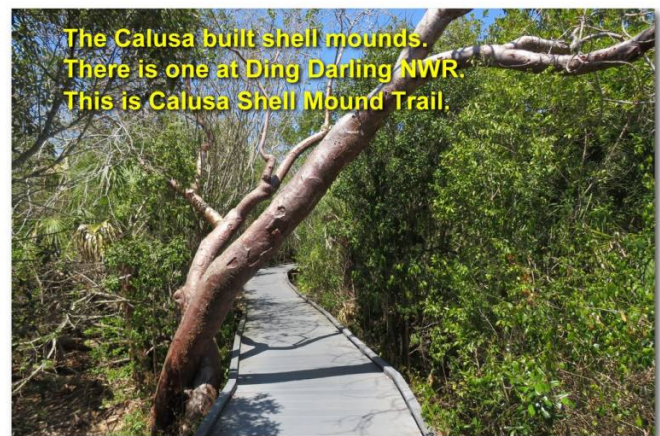
- Wulfert Keys Trail
- Calusa Shell Mound
- Observation Tower
- Cross Dike Trail
- Mangrove Overlook
- Indigo Trail



Start of  
Drive

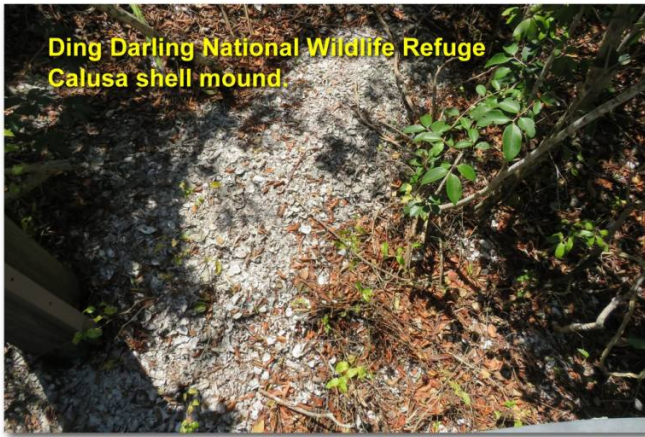


Ding Darling National Wildlife Refuge



The Calusa built shell mounds.  
There is one at Ding Darling NWR.  
This is Calusa Shell Mound Trail.





Ding Darling National Wildlife Refuge  
Calusa shell mound.



## Sanibel Bailey Homestead

**Bailey Homestead Preserve, Sanibel**  
Managed by Sanibel-Captiva Conservation  
Foundation.

**Website:** [https://www.sccf.org/preserves/  
bailey-homestead-preserve](https://www.sccf.org/preserves/bailey-homestead-preserve)

**Get There:** 1300 Periwinkle Way, Sanibel,  
FL 33957.

**When:** Trail open dawn to dusk.

**What:** Historic home, garden center, 0.9  
mile walking trail, preserved land.

**28 acres of which:**

- Front 9 acres include the Homestead, retail garden center, the Shipley Trail.
- 19 acre wildlife corridor that includes freshwater wetlands and interior ridges.
- Historic 1896 Bailey family home and 1908 windmill.
- The Baileys were Sanibel farming pioneers, business people (packing house, grocery, hardware store), and conservationists.
- Home is open only for events.



Bailey Homestead - 1896



1908 Windmill



## Sanibel Lighthouse



**Sanibel Lighthouse**  
98 Feet.  
First lit 1884.  
Still operating.

Damage from  
Hurricane Ian (incl  
replacement of one  
of the four legs)  
has been repaired.

Sadly, the  
lighthouse  
keeper's  
cottage was  
lost to Ian.



**Sanibel Lighthouse - 1884**  
Operated by US Coast Guard.  
Grounds open to public.  
Lighthouse itself not open.

This historic lighthouse  
keeper's cottage is gone.



