

Five Collier County Museums

Presentation by Paul Pacter

www.PaulVisits.com

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Five Collier County Museums

www.colliermuseums.com



All good!
All free!



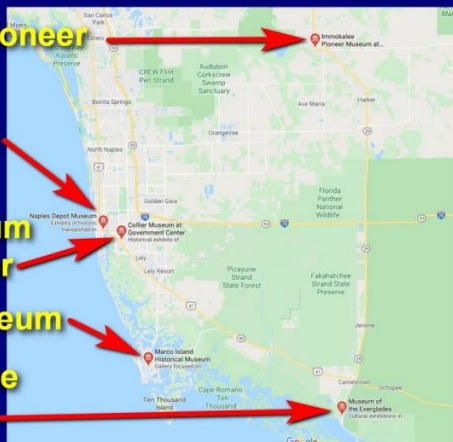
Immokalee Pioneer Museum

Naples Depot Museum

Collier Museum at Govt Center

Marco Is Museum

Museum of the Everglades



When:

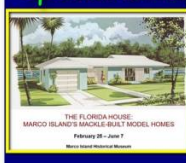
- All 5 Museums Tues-Sat 9am to 4pm.
- Closed Sundays and Mondays.

Special Exhibitions and Events:

- Online Calendar:

<https://colliermuseums.com/events>

Special Exhibits - Examples



Online Collections Database

<https://colliermuseums.pastperfectonline.com/>

Search by keywords or terms.

Categories of Collections:

Archives: Documents and Post Cards

2,940 items*

Libraries (publication series) 3,059 items*

Photos 7,416 items*

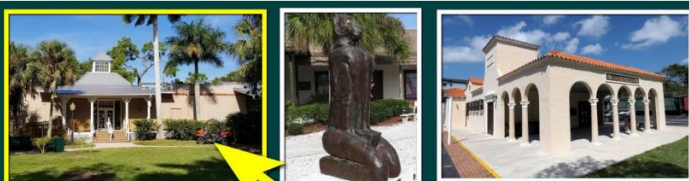
Objects 1,272 items*

*As of May 12, 2025

For each item: Photo, description, date, etc.

Online Collections Database - Examples

Library
Archive
Photo
Photo
Object



Collier Museum at Government Center



Collier Museum at Government Center

Website: www.colliermuseums.com

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

Get There: South on US-41, left on Harrison Rd (just before Wal-Mart), Follow signs.

When: Tues-Sat 9am to 4pm.

Admission: Free.

What: Exhibits and galleries that present local prehistory, native civilizations, settlement, and development.

Examples of exhibits:

- Colossal sharks.
- Prehistoric mastodons.
- Calusa Indian civilization.
- Indian Wars.
- Seminole people.
- Collier pioneers and developers.



Buildings include:

- Main gallery: 10,000 sq feet of displays.
- Native gardens.
- Restored Naples cottages.
- Archaeology lab.
- Seminole Wars army fort.
- Calusa Indian camp.
- Original Keewaydin Ferry Boat to Keewaydin Barrier Island.
- 1915 logging train.
- Very early Swamp Buggy & Garage.



**Collier County Museum
Main Exhibit Building**



Sabre-toothed Tiger

**Sabre Cats
with 9-inch
fangs in SW FL**



**Discovery
of Florida**

**JUAN PONCE DE LEÓN
Discoverer of Florida**

The former governor of Puerto Rico and a sailing companion of Columbus, Juan Ponce de León is credited with leading the first European expedition to Florida in 1513.

Spanish slave hunters and unknown mariners almost certainly reached Florida's shores before him, but left their voyages unrecorded.

Attracted by the prospect of finding gold and adventure, Ponce set sail from Puerto Rico in March 1513 and made landfall on April 2 somewhere along the Atlantic coast near present-day St. Augustine. He named his new discovery La Florida (the "flowery land") in honor of Easter Week.

During the next several months, Ponce's three ships sailed south around the tip of Florida, exploring the Gulf coast as far north as Charlotte Harbor and charting the Gulf Stream, Florida Keys and Dry Tortugas for the benefit of future navigators. Local historians believe that Ponce may have put ashore at Cape Romano or at Caxambas on Marco Island to resupply his crews with fresh drinking water.

Although met by hostile Indians wherever he landed, Ponce returned safely, unharmed by Calusa warriors.

Juan Ponce de Leon led the first European expedition to Florida in 1513. Same year he sailed around the tip to SW FL.

In the summer of 1565, King Philip II of Spain sent a powerful armada of ships and soldiers to America to prevent French settlers from establishing a rival.

16th Century Weapons



Spanish Olive Jar - 1700





Barron Gift Collier

- Born Memphis 1873.
- 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.



- 1915: State wanted a road from Tampa to Miami.
- No money for Naples-Miami section. In 1923, Collier offered to build the road if the State would split Lee County in two and name the lower half Collier County. State agreed.
- Tamiami Trail cost him \$13 million to build 1923-1928.
- He built Everglades City. County Seat to 1962.
- Collier died 1939 New York City.



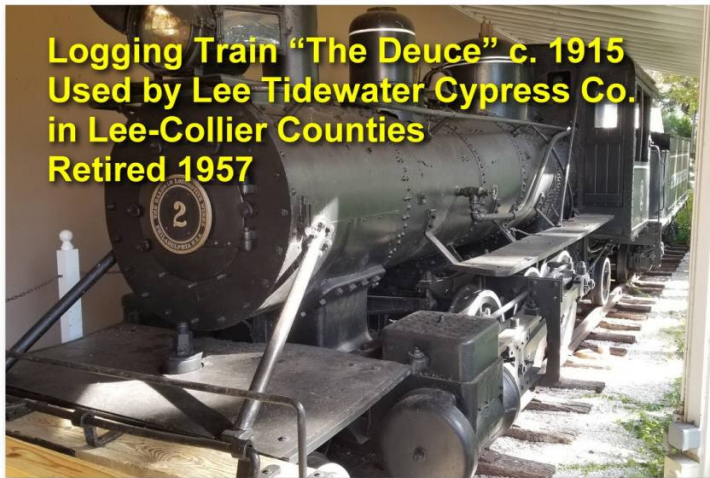
Collier Memorial at Collier-Seminole St. Park



In Collier-Seminole State Park you can see a 1924 walking dredge used to build Tamiami Trail.



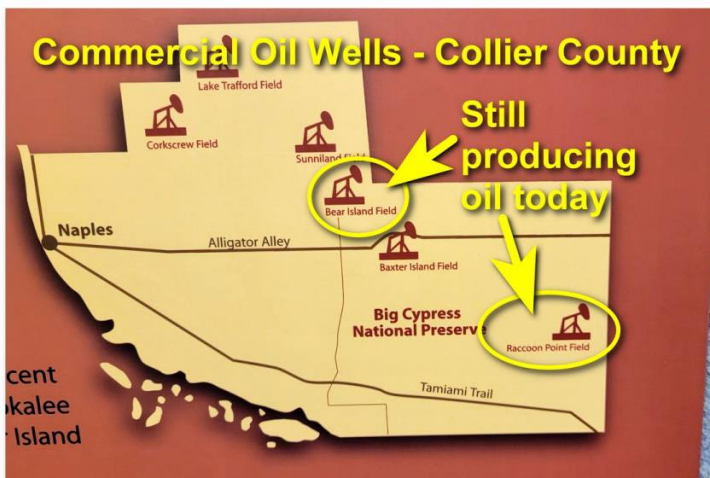
Logging Train "The Deuce" c. 1915
Used by Lee Tidewater Cypress Co.
in Lee-Collier Counties
Retired 1957



Naples Army Air Field WW2



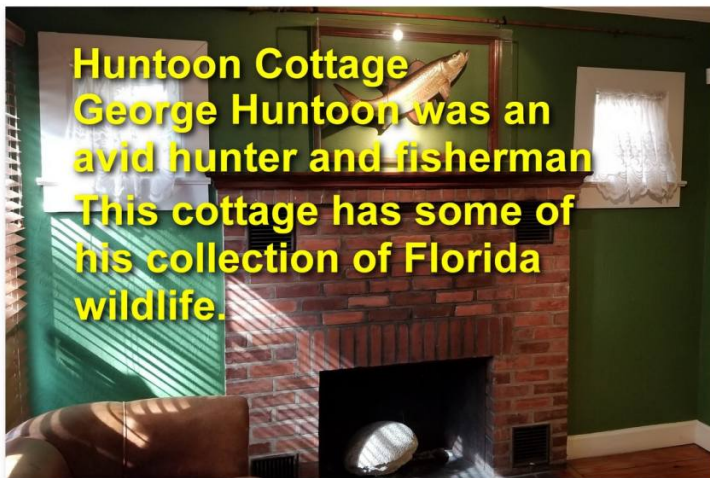
Commercial Oil Wells - Collier County



Huntoon Cottage
1940s



Huntoon Cottage
George Huntoon was an
avid hunter and fisherman
This cottage has some of
his collection of Florida
wildlife.



Local Fish and Birds

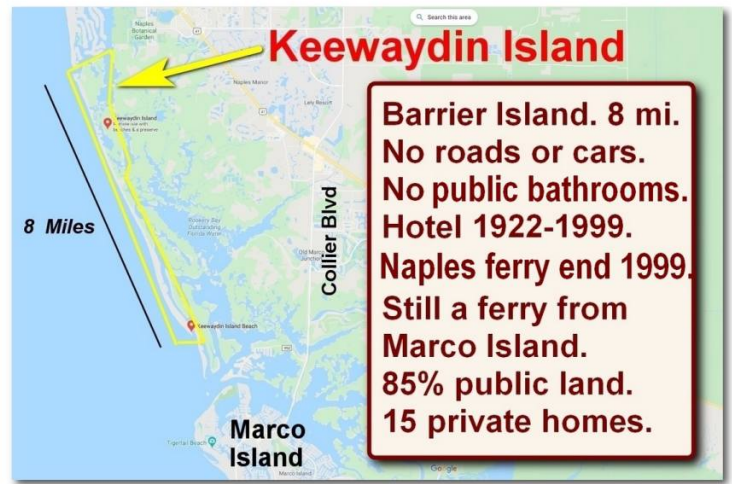


Florida Panther, Bald Eagle





More Local Fish and Birds



Keewaydin Island

**Barrier Island. 8 mi.
No roads or cars.
No public bathrooms.
Hotel 1922-1999.
Naples ferry end 1999.
Still a ferry from
Marco Island.
85% public land.
15 private homes.**



Keewaydin Ferry Boat - 1934



Keewaydin Ferry Boat - 1934



Swamp Buggy early 1920s



**Collier County Museum
Craighead Laboratory
Archaeology Research**



**Typical Naples Cottage of 1920s
Built 1926. Pine.
Originally stood Airport Rd at US 41.**



Typical Naples Cottage - 1920s



Sherman Tank - WW2



Seminole Wars between US Army and Seminoles 1817-1858

Seminole War Fort



Seminole Camp



Calusa Indian Mound Ritual Platform



Everglades Cabin



Naples Depot Museum



Naples Depot Museum

Naples Depot Museum

Website: www.colliermuseums.com

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

Get There: One block east of US-41 downtown.

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.*

What: History Museum set in 1927 depot used by two railroads: **Seaboard Air Line** and **Atlantic Coast Line**.

1927: Both railroads began passenger and freight service to Naples.

1930s: Freight service ended (due to opening of roads into Naples).

1971: Passenger service ended.

Depot: Is now on National Register of Historic Places.

Naples Depot Museum includes:

- Railroad memorabilia, photos, artefacts, interactive exhibits.
- Restored rail cars.
- Seminole dugout canoes.
- Mule wagon.
- Antique swamp buggy.
- Old cars.

After
1967
Merger

Today

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



Trains arrived in Fort Myers in 1904. But the train line from Fort Myers south to Naples was not built until 1926.

Felley Brothers, Inc., of Saint Paul, Minnesota, was brought in to begin grading and laying track on February 8, 1926 for the Seaboard's new 26-mile extension from Fort Myers to Naples. The last extension from Fort Myers to Naples. Six steam spikes were driven in December 1926. Six steam spikes were driven in December 1926. Six steam spikes were driven in December 1926. Six steam spikes were driven in December 1926.

In 1929 the track's last owners, the Seaboard Coastline Railroad, abandoned the Naples line and converted the rails.



"The first trains arrived at Punta Gorda in 1886 and reached Naples forty years later."



"Without doubt the greatest factors in Florida's life are her railroads."
—Florida Governor Edward A. Perry, 1927

Railroads, more than any other form of transportation, were once seen as the highways on which civilization could reach even the remotest parts of Florida. For the first time in the state's history, pleasure and prosperity could travel together at top speed. Even so, remote Southwest Florida was one of the last regions in the South to get railroad service.

The first trains arrived at Punta Gorda in 1886 and reached Naples forty years later – the result of a decades-old rivalry between the Seaboard Air Line Railroad and the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad.



Tea/Coffee Service on the Seaboard Air Line Trains to Naples



Train Line Reached Everglades City in 1928



The ACL ultimately reached Everglades City by absorbing the 14-mile-long Deep Lake Railroad, originally built by John Roach and Walter Langford in 1914 to haul grapefruit to market. A Ford automobile engine mounted on rail wheels served as the locomotive.

Barron Collier had the track straightened and rebuilt for the Atlantic Coast Line in 1928.

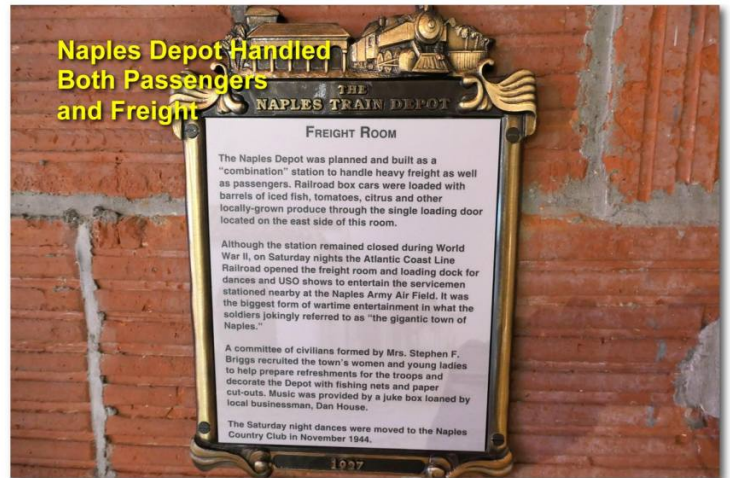
Seaboard and Atlantic Coast Line Memorabilia



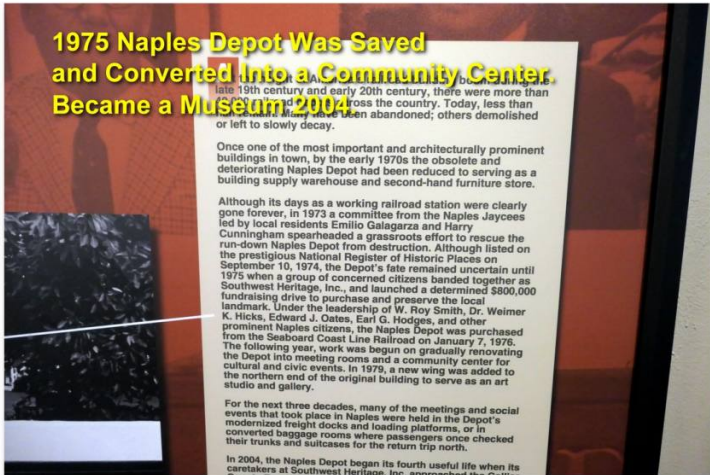
Dining Car Menu

Table d'Hôte Dinners	
First Course: Potage à la Reine, Chicken or Beef Soup, Roast Chicken or Beef, Potatoes, Gravy, Seasoned Vegetables, Fruit. Second Course: Roast Chicken or Beef, Potatoes, Gravy, Seasoned Vegetables, Fruit. Third Course: Roast Chicken or Beef, Potatoes, Gravy, Seasoned Vegetables, Fruit. Fourth Course: Roast Chicken or Beef, Potatoes, Gravy, Seasoned Vegetables, Fruit. Fifth Course: Roast Chicken or Beef, Potatoes, Gravy, Seasoned Vegetables, Fruit. Sixth Course: Roast Chicken or Beef, Potatoes, Gravy, Seasoned Vegetables, Fruit. Seventh Course: Roast Chicken or Beef, Potatoes, Gravy, Seasoned Vegetables, Fruit. Eighth Course: Roast Chicken or Beef, Potatoes, Gravy, Seasoned Vegetables, Fruit. Ninth Course: Roast Chicken or Beef, Potatoes, Gravy, Seasoned Vegetables, Fruit. Tenth Course: Roast Chicken or Beef, Potatoes, Gravy, Seasoned Vegetables, Fruit.	
Silver Melior	
First Course: Potage à la Reine, Chicken or Beef Soup, Roast Chicken or Beef, Potatoes, Gravy, Seasoned Vegetables, Fruit. Second Course: Roast Chicken or Beef, Potatoes, Gravy, Seasoned Vegetables, Fruit. Third Course: Roast Chicken or Beef, Potatoes, Gravy, Seasoned Vegetables, Fruit. Fourth Course: Roast Chicken or Beef, Potatoes, Gravy, Seasoned Vegetables, Fruit. Fifth Course: Roast Chicken or Beef, Potatoes, Gravy, Seasoned Vegetables, Fruit. Sixth Course: Roast Chicken or Beef, Potatoes, Gravy, Seasoned Vegetables, Fruit. Seventh Course: Roast Chicken or Beef, Potatoes, Gravy, Seasoned Vegetables, Fruit. Eighth Course: Roast Chicken or Beef, Potatoes, Gravy, Seasoned Vegetables, Fruit. Ninth Course: Roast Chicken or Beef, Potatoes, Gravy, Seasoned Vegetables, Fruit. Tenth Course: Roast Chicken or Beef, Potatoes, Gravy, Seasoned Vegetables, Fruit.	
A la Carte	
First Course: Potage à la Reine, Chicken or Beef Soup, Roast Chicken or Beef, Potatoes, Gravy, Seasoned Vegetables, Fruit. Second Course: Roast Chicken or Beef, Potatoes, Gravy, Seasoned Vegetables, Fruit. Third Course: Roast Chicken or Beef, Potatoes, Gravy, Seasoned Vegetables, Fruit. Fourth Course: Roast Chicken or Beef, Potatoes, Gravy, Seasoned Vegetables, Fruit. Fifth Course: Roast Chicken or Beef, Potatoes, Gravy, Seasoned Vegetables, Fruit. Sixth Course: Roast Chicken or Beef, Potatoes, Gravy, Seasoned Vegetables, Fruit. Seventh Course: Roast Chicken or Beef, Potatoes, Gravy, Seasoned Vegetables, Fruit. Eighth Course: Roast Chicken or Beef, Potatoes, Gravy, Seasoned Vegetables, Fruit. Ninth Course: Roast Chicken or Beef, Potatoes, Gravy, Seasoned Vegetables, Fruit. Tenth Course: Roast Chicken or Beef, Potatoes, Gravy, Seasoned Vegetables, Fruit.	

Naples Depot Handled Both Passengers and Freight



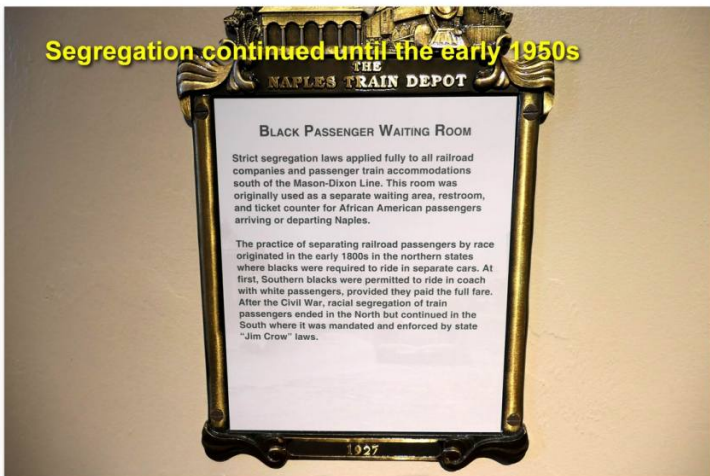
1975 Naples Depot Was Saved and Converted Into a Community Center. Became a Museum in 2004



African-American Workers on the Railroads Serving Naples



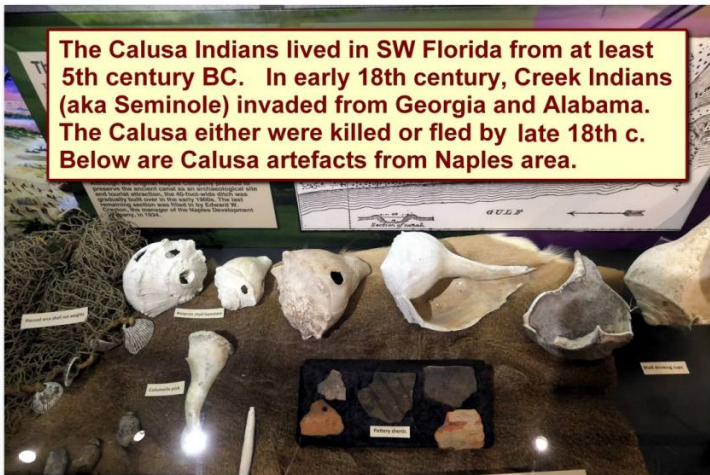
Segregation continued until the early 1950s



Naples Area Relics 8,000 Years Old Mastodon teeth, mammoth teeth, bison bones, arrowheads.



The Calusa Indians lived in SW Florida from at least 5th century BC. In early 18th century, Creek Indians (aka Seminole) invaded from Georgia and Alabama. The Calusa either were killed or fled by late 18th c. Below are Calusa artefacts from Naples area.



THE SEMINOLE

Seminoles

Three 19th c. Seminole Wars (against US Army) killed or evicted most of the 6,000 Seminoles. Only about 300 survived the 3rd Seminole War 1855-58.



Settlement of Naples

1874: First white settler was Roger Gordon. (Gordon Pass, etc.). Until road from Fort Myers opened 1914, only way into Naples was by boat.

1876: Naples' first year-round residents John and Madison Weeks.

1881: Hamilton Disston purchased 4 million acres of Florida land from the government. **Largest land purchase in world history! 11% of Florida!**

1887: Two Kentucky businessmen purchased the land that is now downtown Naples, named it Naples, and began selling lots. Developed a winter resort.



Hamilton Disston

Two men from Kentucky purchased a large amount of land in Naples in 1887, named the place Naples, and began developing and selling the land.

THE ITALY OF AMERICA



Naples' future changed dramatically in June 1887 when Civil War General John S. "Carry Gordon" Williams, a Kentucky war hero and U.S. Senator, purchased 40 lots of land in Naples for himself, and another 40 lots for Walter N. Haldeman, the owner and publisher of the Louisville Courier-Journal. Other prominent Louisville statesmen and business leaders followed suit and backed the Naples venture by taking over the company in 1887.

Work began on building a small, twenty-room hotel at Naples, six miles from the coast, and a 600-foot pier to bring in construction crews, passengers, and cargo. A wooden trolley, running the length of the pier was used to shuttle luggage and supplies up to the hotel. The company also opened new offices in Boston, Philadelphia and St. Paul, Minnesota, and used the power of Walter Haldeman's newspaper to sell the idea that Naples offered the same exotic beauty, relaxation and warmth printed on Louisville Courier-Journal press, travel and promoted insurance a chance to escape the "chilling bluffs of the winter north" by curing their bronchitis, asthma and hay fever.

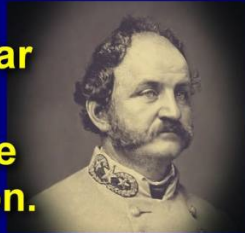
So who were the two Kentuckians who founded, named, and developed Naples, Florida in 1880s?

John Stuart Williams

– 1818-1898.

– Confederate Civil War General.

– Elected to US Senate 1879. Lost re-election.



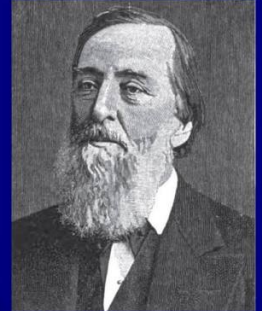
Walter N. Haldeman

– 1821-1902.

– Pro-secessionist newspaper editor.

– Founded Louisville Grays 1876 – National League baseball team.

Grays were involved in a betting scandal (fixing games). Out of business in 1878.



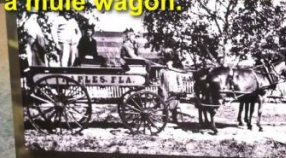
History of the Naples Pier - First Built 1888

THE NAPLES PIER



NAPLES TAXI

The "taxi" in Naples in 1915 was a mule wagon.



Mule-drawn wagons could travel over sand, brush and palmetto roots and proved a practical way to get around town for William J. Pulling (standing) and his family, seen here on an outing in 1915. Naples' streets were originally built from beach sand and oyster shell hauled in from the shell mound at Gordon's Pass and remained unpaved until the early 1930s. Third Street South and Fifth Avenue South were the first streets to be surfaced with asphalt. The only sidewalks in town were built around the Naples Hotel.

William J. Pulling, from Windsor, Canada, made his first visit to Naples on a hunting and fishing trip in February 1912 and immediately made it his permanent winter home.

The idea for beautifying Naples' streets with coconut palms was the brainchild of Pulling and his close friend, John Nachreiner. The two men eventually transplanted some 3,000 palms from Marco and nearby islands to Naples at their own expense.

Naples Mule-Drawn "Taxi" 1915



The Original Naples Hotel and Naples Beach Hotel



As the depth of the Great Depression, Cincinnati businessmen and politicians, Alton Smith, head of the Western Union company, bought the ruins of the abandoned hotel and transformed it into the Naples Beach Hotel and Golf Club. The two men eventually transplanted some 3,000 palms from Marco and nearby islands to Naples at their own expense.



Naples' First Auto Garage The First Building on 5th Ave South – 1927

NAPLES IN THE AUTO AGE

Automobiles, railroads and electric power transformed Southwest Florida during the 1920s and early 1930s and gradually began reshaping Naples with gasoline stations, a telephone exchange, general store, diners, and several small mom-and-pop hotels.

A depot "hack" built on Henry Ford's sturdy Model T chassis, was provided by the railroad to carry passengers and their baggage to and from the Naples Hotel. The hotel also operated a ten-passenger bus to meet the train in Fort Myers and Bonita Springs before the Naples Depot was opened in 1927. A one-way trip to Naples over the crushed shell, "two-cut" or trail often took four hours or more. Passenger comfort was minimal and travelers recalled that the old bus had most of the springs in its seat cushions "ticking up through the upholstery."

This 1922 Ford Model T, 4-door depot hack was a gift from the City of Naples, the Honorable Bill Barnett, Mayor.



In 1927, a young mechanic from Bonita, Ed Frank, filled in a "letter hole" for Henry Ford's Model T chassis and built a depot hack. The hack was built by the railroad to carry passengers and their baggage to and from the Naples Hotel. The hotel also operated a ten-passenger bus to meet the train in Fort Myers and Bonita Springs before the Naples Depot was opened in 1927. A one-way trip to Naples over the crushed shell, "two-cut" or trail often took four hours or more. Passenger comfort was minimal and travelers recalled that the old bus had most of the springs in its seat cushions "ticking up through the upholstery."

1922 Ford Model-T Hack (Taxi-Bus)



Early Schools in Naples

Although the Naples Community donated a site for a one-room schoolhouse, the school was not built until 1905. One teacher taught all of the grades. Lee County contributed \$25 per month for the school's upkeep.

A larger, five-room school was built in 1924 on Fourth Street South to accommodate Naples' 55 students. A small library divided the boy's and girl's restrooms and doubled as the principal's office and a public library. Arthur Stewart, the son of Naples' postmaster Captain Charles Stewart, was the first and only high school graduate in the class of 1928. By 1932, the graduating class had grown to two students.

The school was dismantled and divided into four private residences in 1938 when a new school was constructed on Third Street South, where Gulfview Middle School now stands.



Naples High School on Fourth Street South in 1934.

The teaching staff at Naples High School in 1928. Pictured left to right are Principal Ernest Bridges, Alice Porter (Bowling), Irene Hall, and Lillian Barnes. Bottom row: Lela Canant, Lucille Buckles (Howell), and Maxine Songer.

Each teacher taught two grades, first through twelfth.

Lela Brinson Bryan Canant, a 1927 graduate of the Georgia State College for Women, was among the first teachers in Collier County. Her teaching career in Naples spanned forty-one years, from 1928 until her retirement in 1969. She died in 2006 at the age of 100.



A group of local boys, the entire 8th grade graduating class of Naples High, pose in front of their school in May 1928.

Bus from Ft Myers to Naples - 1914 Failed after one season. Re-established 1926.



Fort Myers entrepreneur, Harvie Heitman, introduced the first hack line to Naples in 1909, carrying travelers three times a week by mule wagon for a \$2.50 charge each way. The Naples & Fort Myers Transportation Company took over the route in 1914, but failed after one season because of the poor road and lack of customers. Barron Collier established a more reliable, same-day-return bus connection to Fort Myers in 1926 with his Tamiami Trail Tours.

Third Street South - 1928 Naples' First Grocery Store Plus Gas Station Plus Post Office

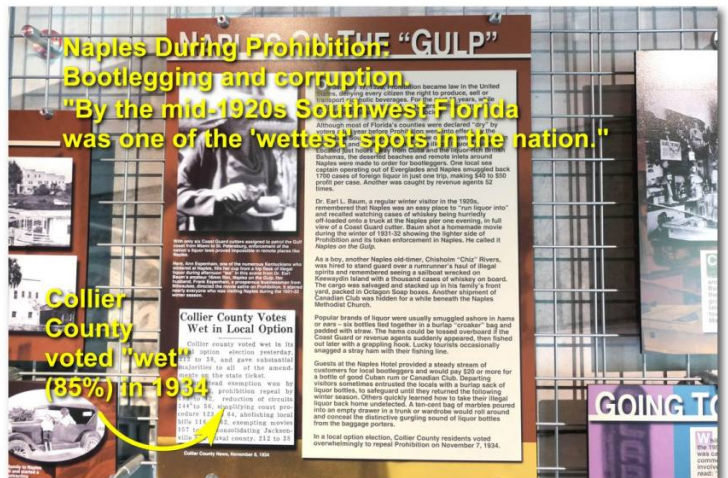
Schoolhouse 1924

Naples still lacked a downtown when this picture of the Commissary on Third Street South was taken during the winter of 1928. The first grocery store and the oldest commercial building in Naples, the Commissary opened with a barn dance in November 1919, before the shelves were stocked. Groceries were delivered by horse and wagon. A room at the northwest end of the building served as a post office.

The shed behind the Commissary building was used as a feed storage room. The gas pumps were located in front. Above and to the left is the schoolhouse built in 1924.

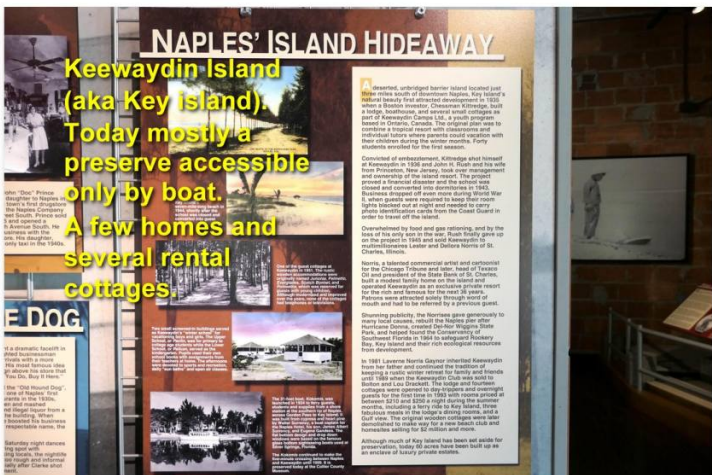
The Commissary was renamed the Bowling Brothers Store by its new owners in 1926 and became The Seminole Market in 1946. The store closed in 1958.

Naples During Prohibition: "GULP" Bootlegging and corruption. "By the mid-1920s Southwest Florida was one of the 'wettest' spots in the nation."



Collier County voted "wet" (85%) in 1934.

Keewaydin Island (aka Key Island). Today mostly a preserve accessible only by boat. A few homes and several rental cottages.



Naples Airport was established in 1942 as Naples Army Airfield by the US Army Air Forces. Used for pilot and gunnery training. Privatized in November 1945.



Naples Airlines – 1960s and 1970s Flew to Naples from Tampa, Punta Gorda, Miami



1977 Route Map



The traffic to Naples had reached a respectable 8,000 year. The demand for service was so great that bought an extra, ten-seat Lockheed 10 Electra. By per traffic on the airline had increased 25% in just the airline expanded its daily shuttle service with flights from Marco Island to Miami, and Fort Myers to vintage Douglas DC-3s were added in 1968 when the an flying its Naples-Tampa route.

airline's fleet included three DC-3s, several Piper Cherokees, and the Lockheed 10 Electra, shown in red-striped livery, gliding out over the Naples with Naples Airport in the background.

Naples Airlines Plane at Naples Airport 1968



ALLIGATOR ALLEY Construction of Alligator Alley Now I-75 1964-1968



In the late 1950s and early 1960s, the idea for a new highway across the Everglades gained popular support in both Collier and Broward Counties, despite opposition from a powerful group who felt the Tamiami Trail should be improved before road moneys were spent elsewhere.

Opponents to the new road included the American Automobile Association which threatened to route its members clear of the proposed highway. The AAA dubbed the road "Alligator Alley" as an expression of supreme contempt for the two-lane highway which it said was "designated with a flagrant disregard for safety..." and that charged a lot besides. Newspapers applied the name "Spunkler", "Death Row" and "Chicken Outlets" among others.

When suits were brought to stop construction, the Senate Tribe of Florida successfully intervened in support of the road as a valuable element in establishing business in the Big Cypress Reservation.

The "Alley" was built from both ends toward the middle. For five months survey crews equipped with helicopters, airboats and amphibious vehicles labored to mark out and align the roadway through one of the most impenetrable areas in the country.

Actual construction began in 1964 when huge dredges started stripping away the top layers of sawgrass and mud. Barge-mounted dynamite drills were hoisted in barges to blast the black line rock out of the solid Everglades floor. The dynamited rock was accepted as fill to form a compacted roadbed 8 1/2' thick. Over this, the final surface material was laid. Broken gravel bridges had to be built to permit the natural flow of water to the south, southwest.

The Everglades Parkway, as it was officially titled, was dedicated on February 11, 1968. Construction had taken a time over three years, a remarkable feat compared to the thirteen years it took to complete the Tamiami Trail.

This road sign was presented to Margaret T. Scott, Collier County's Clerk of Courts, by the Florida State Road Department on February 16, 1968.

Hurricane Donna September 1960



Naples Community Hospital - Built 1956 Until then, closest was Lee Memorial (Ft Myers)

The cities have benefited so richly from the "silver mile" - or "silverbird" - as Naples, in a town attempting to cope with growing needs and too few people (only a 461-year round residents in 1950), many of these part-time Neapolitans formed close and sympathetic connections with local causes and added their money, political clout, and business knowhow to the community's betterment.

Although originally promoted as a healthful haven for the old and seriously sick, by the end of World War II the closest hospital to Naples was still the Lee Memorial Hospital, forty miles away in Fort Myers. When plans to build a small emergency clinic in Naples fell through in 1950, Mrs. Stephen Foster Briggs, a seasonal resident and wife of inventor and founder of the Briggs & Stratton Motor Company, stepped in as hospital board president and took on the challenge of raising \$500,000. Nearly half of the cost of the new hospital. Over 300 into the community to raise the rest. Nearly every Naples family pledged what they could, including Lawrence Tibbett who contributed his \$300 in winnings from a TV quiz show.

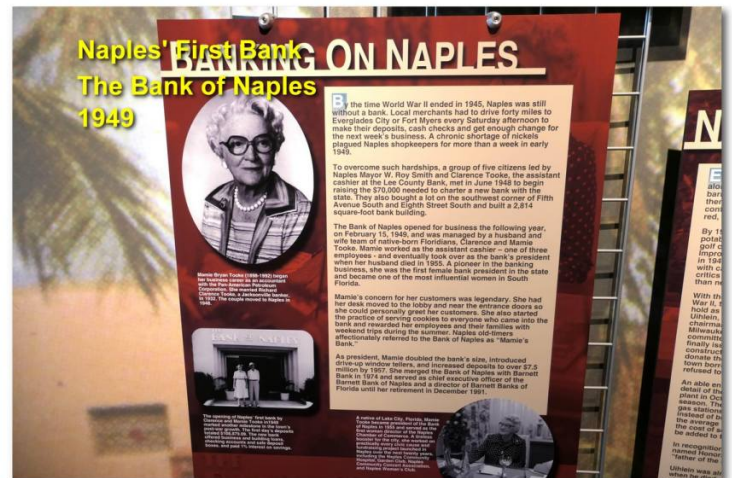
The plan called for a 25-bed, then 30, 40, and finally a 50-bed facility to be built on two city blocks between Seventh and Eighth Streets North, with ample room left for future expansions. By 1955, ground had been broken and the name had been changed to Naples Community Hospital to "better express" its purpose.

A crowd rivaling the size of the Swamp Buggy races turned out for the hospital's dedication on March 4, 1956. The first baby was born at the hospital the next day.



The main entrance to the Naples Community Hospital is located on the corner of 10th Street and 1st Avenue. The building is a two-story structure with a prominent entrance. The text on the right side of the image describes the hospital's history and the role of the community in its construction.

Naples' First Bank The Bank of Naples 1949



By the time World War II ended in 1945, Naples was still without a bank. Local merchants had to drive forty miles to Everglades City or Fort Myers every Saturday afternoon to make their deposits, cash checks and get enough change for the next week's business. A chronic shortage of nickels plagued Naples shopkeepers for more than a week in early 1949.

To overcome such hardships, a group of five citizens led by Naples Mayor W. Roy Smith and Clarence Tooke, the assistant cashier at the Lee County Bank, met in June 1948 to begin raising the \$70,000 needed to charter a new bank with the Avenue South and Eighth Street South and built a 2,814 square-foot bank building.

The Bank of Naples opened for business the following year on February 15, 1949, and was managed by a husband and wife team of native-born Floridians, Clarence and Mame Tooke. Mame worked as the assistant cashier - one of three employees - and eventually took over as the bank's president when her husband died in 1955. A pioneer in the banking business, she was the first female bank president in the state of Florida.

Mame's concern for her customers was legendary. She had her desk moved to the lobby and near the entrance door so she could personally greet her customers. She also started the practice of serving cookies to everyone who came into the bank during the summer. Naples old-timers affectionately referred to the Bank of Naples as "Mame's Bank."

As president, Mame doubled the bank's size, introduced drive-up window tellers, and the bank deposits to over \$7.5 million in 1967. She merged the bank with the First Bank of Naples in 1974 and served as chief executive officer of the merged Bank of Naples and a director of Bank of Florida until her retirement in December 1981.

Naples Depot Museum Has 3 Restored Rail Cars

- Caboose.
- Freight Car.
- Passenger Car.



Baggage car will be restored as Naples black railroad history museum.

Seaboard Line 1947 Budd Passenger Car Completely Restored



**Seaboard Line 1947 Budd Passenger Car
First-Class Lounge**



**Seaboard Line 1947 Budd Passenger Car
Dining Car and Bar**



**Naples Lionel Train Museum
Open (not closed due to Jan)
Behind Naples Depot Museum
10-train Indoor Layout**



**Naples Lionel Train Museum
Open Fri-Sat Mid-Oct to End-April**



**Naples Train Museum
Outdoor
Train Ride**



Museum of the Everglades

Museum of the Everglades

Websites: www.colliermuseums.com
<https://evergladesmuseum.org/>

Where: 105 West Broadway, Everglades City.

Get There: South on US-41, right on US-29. 35 miles from central Naples.

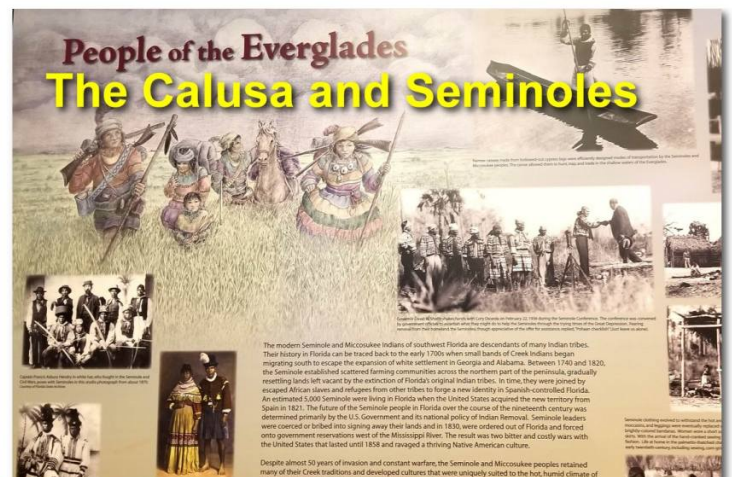
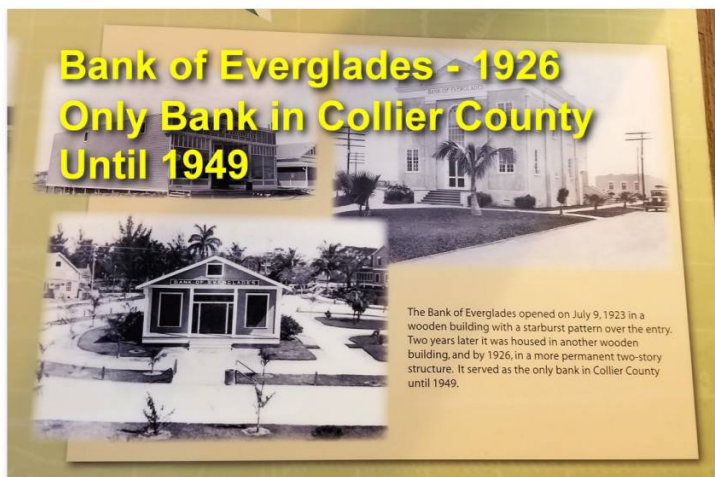
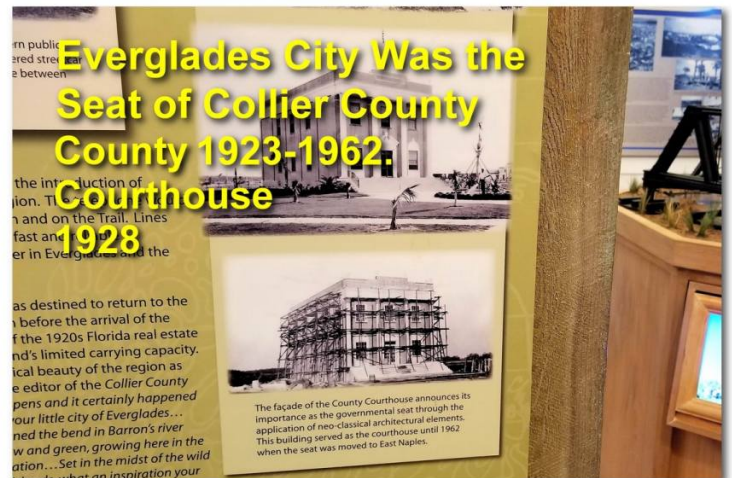
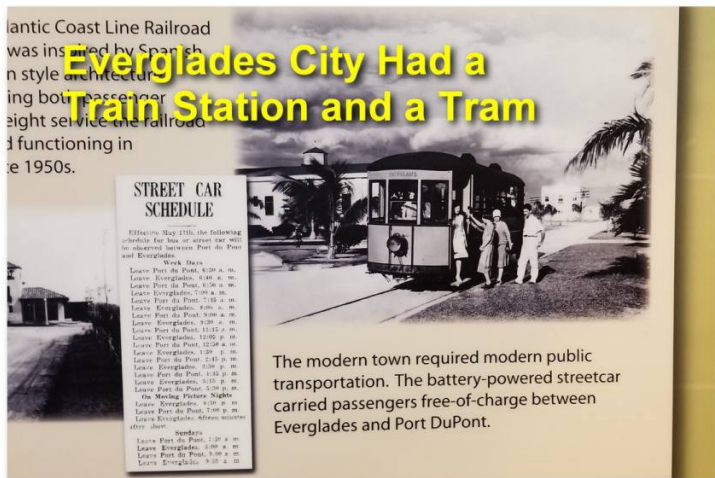
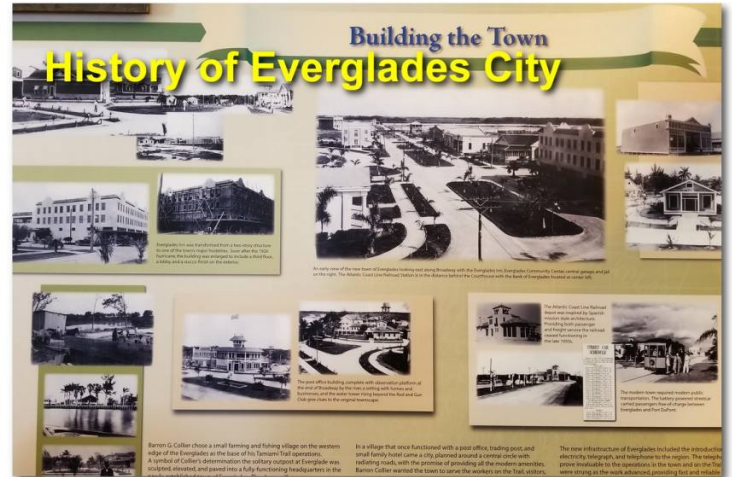
Admission: Free.

When: Tues-Sat 9am to 4pm.

What: History of Everglades City including:

- People of the Everglades: Calusa and Seminoles.
- Founding and History of Everglades City.
- Building the Tamiami Trail.
- Illegal Trades: Moonshine.
- Opening Everglades National Park.
- Fishing.
- The Python Problem.
- Several excellent videos.





Seminoles

John Francis Ashbur, Hendry in white hat, who fought in the Seminole and graph from about 1870.



Seminole women frequently wore multiple necklaces of brightly-colored glass trade beads, as shown in these pictures from about 1915.



Building the Tamiami Trail



Building the Trail

Opening Day Motorcade Tamiami Trail Opening - 1928



The Tamiami Trail opening in April 1928 was celebrated with a motorcade from Tampa to Miami. Celebrants arriving in the town of Everglades were treated to a parade and three-day county fair. Boy Scouts march on Broadway toward the Barron River. The three-story Everglades Inn is festooned in bunting to the left of the picture April 26, 1928.



The Tamiami Trailblazers helped to publicize the Trail in 1923 by attempting to drive the Trail's proposed route. They and their original cars were given lead positions among the 500 automobiles in the celebratory parade.

The Tamiami Trail officially opened with a grand and fitting flourish—a large motorcade traveling the length of the trail from Tampa to Miami, greeted by crowds of celebrating townsfolk and visitors along the entire route. From April 24 to April 26, 1928, the procession traveled an estimated 26 mph through spruced-up cities and towns after with decorations designed to show each place at its best. And the town most resplendent with bunting, electric lights, and fireworks was Everglades, where motorists stopped for two hours to enjoy Collier County's first fair and a barbecue.

Opening Everglades National Park - 1947



President Truman

Everglades National Park

December 6, 1947

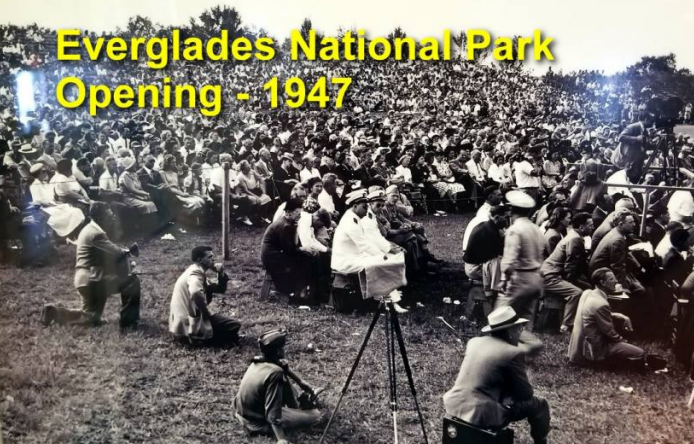
Everglades National Park and Club

Everglades, Florida

Ceremony Memories

Seminole leaders Cory Osceola and William McKinley perfectly made patchwork shirt to the President and a piece Mrs. Truman at the Everglades National Park dedication.

Everglades National Park Opening - 1947



Rod and Gun Club Menu 1961

Dinner at the Rod and Gun Club

Appetizers

Fresh Orange Juice .50
Steak Cooked (to order) 1.95

Steaks and Fowl

New York Strip with Onion Rings 6.95
Broiled or Fried "T-bone" 3.95
Chopped Sirloin Steak with Grilled Onions 3.95

Entrees include Fresh Garden Salad, Potatoes, Vegetable, Coffee or Tea

CHILDREN'S PLATES (under 12 years)

Chicken or Fish Fried Chicken 1.95
Served with Potatoes - Salad - Rolls - Tea or Milk

Fresh Fish and Sea Food

Broiled Atlantic Lobster Tails with Drawn Butter 7.95
Native Fish Fillets 3.50
Seaford Platter 4.25
Fried Jumbo Shrimp with Sauce 4.25
Broiled Red Snapper with Lemon Butter 4.00
Stewed Crab Claws (to order) 5.95
Tender Deep Sea Seafood 4.50

Entrees include Fresh Garden Salad, Potatoes, Vegetable, Coffee or Tea
Blue Cheese .25 Extra

Desserts

Ice Cream .50
Assorted Fats .25
Sherbet .50
Specialty Desserts 1.00

Rod & Gun Club, A Member of the Atlantic Group

Rod & Gun Club Restaurant

Fishing



Fishing

The Python Problem HOW BAD IS IT?



Photo courtesy National Park Service

DEVASTATING THE FOOD CHAIN

HOW MANY ARE OUT THERE?

Although the low detectability of pythons makes population estimates difficult, most researchers propose that at least 30,000 and more likely upwards of 300,000 pythons occupy Everglades National Park, the Big Cypress National Preserve, and the Collier-Seminole State Forest. With no natural predators in the region, the invasive Burmese python population continues to grow with no end in sight.

Illegal Trades Moonshine and Drugs

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

Square Grouper

Nickname given to bales of marijuana thrown overboard or out of airplanes by smugglers in South Florida in the 1970s and 1980s.

Why was South Florida the drug smuggling capital of US?

- 5,000 miles of coast and coastal waterways.
- Proximity to the Caribbean and Latin America.
- Replace lost commercial fishing income.

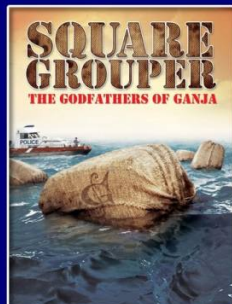


"Square Grouper - The Godfathers of Ganja"

2011 Documentary about 3 groups of drug smugglers:

- Miami: Ethiopian Zion Coptic Church of Jamaica.
- Miami: Black Tuna Gang.
- Everglades City: Two large DEA raids in 1983 and 1984 led to the arrest of nearly 80% of the adult male population of Everglades City.

80% Try to see this movie. Was on Netflix.



Immokalee Pioneer Museum at Roberts Ranch



Immokalee Pioneer Museum at Roberts Ranch

Website: 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."



Originally home to cattleman Robert Roberts and his family.

13-acre historic site and museum illustrate the daily working life on a Southwest Florida pioneer homestead and citrus grove from the early 1900s.

Exhibits and 15 carefully preserved original buildings tell the story of the cow hunters, ranchers and pioneer-spirited families who struggled to tame this vast wilderness on the edge of a swamp.

**Pioneer Museum at Roberts Ranch
Immokalee
Main exhibit hall
Built as 1st Baptist Church 1916**

People from Collier County posing in front of their home, Oklawaha, Oklawaha National Monument, 1900. Photo by the Florida Historical Society, circa 1900. Photo by the Florida Historical Society, circa 1900.

Rural Settlements in Collier County Second half of the 19th Century

People from Collier County posing in front of their home, Oklawaha, Oklawaha National Monument, 1900. Photo by the Florida Historical Society, circa 1900. Photo by the Florida Historical Society, circa 1900.

Collier County Settlements

A colorful mix of hunters, trappers, gamekeepers and Indian traders established the first permanent settlements in the area by 1850 and provided much of its early frontier character. The town changed its name to 1887 from Allen after John William Allen, its innkeeper. Its first post office opened on October 9, 1886 with John Allen Post Office. The town grew into a community of twenty families in the early 1880s and probably took its name from the twisting creek that ran nearby.

By the early 1880s, settlers such as Robert Roberts, John Whidden and Robert Caran were grazing herds of Florida "cattle" on the high, open-rangeland and around swamps and Corkscrew Swamp. The country, then consisting of one-seventh of the state, was mostly undeveloped. The "big game" deer with bones sticking out for enough to hang a hat on?

Collier County

Florida Counties

"There were very few families throughout the country and nearest neighbors were eight and ten miles apart."

Farming in Immokalee

AGRI-BUSINESS

ENTERPRISES

Fresh From Florida

The photograph shows a museum exhibit titled "SEMINOLE" in large, bold, white letters on a dark blue background. The exhibit is divided into several sections:

- Top Left:** A photograph of two Seminole women in traditional dress, one standing and one sitting. Below it is a small yellow informational panel.
- Top Right:** A large black and white photograph of a group of people, including men and women, standing in a field. Below it is a smaller black and white photograph of a group of people in a field.
- Middle Left:** A photograph of two men in military uniforms standing in front of a building. Below it is a small yellow informational panel.
- Middle Right:** A large black and white photograph of a group of people in a field. Below it is a smaller black and white photograph of a group of people in a field.
- Bottom Left:** A large yellow informational panel titled "Unconquered People" with text and a small map of Florida. Below it is a smaller yellow informational panel titled "Gopher Ridge" with text and a small map of Florida.
- Bottom Right:** A large yellow informational panel titled "Cushie Indians" with text and a small map of Florida. Below it is a smaller yellow informational panel titled "Seminole Indians" with text and a small map of Florida.
- Far Right:** A large black and white photograph of a group of people in a field. Below it is a smaller black and white photograph of a group of people in a field.

Roberts Ranch

Robert and Sarah Roberts

IMMOKALEE PIONEER MUSEUM at Roberts Ranch



Robert and Sarah Roberts, owners
(Robert & Sarah Roberts, approx 1920)

Pole Barn

This pole barn was built in 1905 to store and protect farm machinery. The roof is original and now shelters equipment that was once used to maintain the Roberts' orange grove. A small grove had already been planted here when Robert Roberts acquired the land from Charles W. Garner in 1914. Considered to be one of the oldest groves in Collier County, some of the trees growing here are descendants of those original orange trees.

Robert Roberts gradually expanded his grove operations and was fortunate enough to have his citrus crop survive the devastating statewide freeze in 1960.



Granero de Troncos

Esta granja de postes fue construida en el 1905 para almacenar la maquinaria de la granja. El techo es original y ahora sirve de almacenamiento para las herramientas que se utilizan para mantener el sembrado de naranjos de los Roberts. Una pequeña arboleda estaba ya sembrada cuando Robert Roberts adquirió los terrenos de Charles W. Garner en 1914. Considerada para ser una de las más antiguas sembradas en el Condado de Collier, algunas de esas arboles que ha crecido aquí son descendientes de los árboles originales.

Robert Roberts eventualmente expandió la operación de su cultivo y fue muy afortunado de mantener su cítricos y sobrevivir al devastador frío en 1960.

**Roberts Family Home
1924**

**Home to Robert and Sarah Roberts
and their Nine Children**

**Roberts Family Home
Kitchen
1924**

Roberts Family Home
Kitchen
1924

A photograph of the interior of the Roberts Family Home kitchen in 1924. The room features a round wooden dining table with six chairs, a large wooden cabinet, a dark door, and a large window. A stove is visible on the right side of the image.



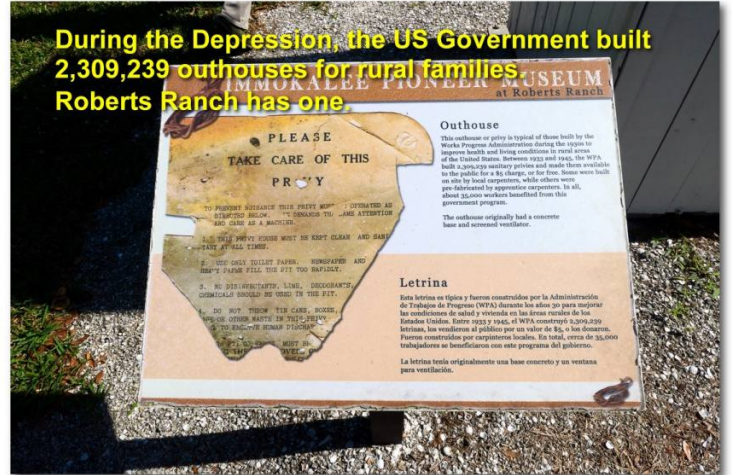
**Roberts Family Home
Living Room
1924**



**Roberts Family Home - 1924
Main Bedroom**



**Roberts Family Home - 1924
Dining Room**



**During the Depression, the US Government built
2,309,239 outhouses for rural families.
Roberts Ranch has one.**



**Outhouse built by US Government for rural
families 1933 to 1945.**



**Roberts Ranch
Horse Stalls and Barn
Early 1940s**

**Roberts Ranch: Horses, cattle, oranges, and sugar.
At its peak was 100,000 acres.
On National Register of Historic Places.**



**Roberts Ranch
Horse Barn Interior**



**Roberts Ranch
Pole Barn for Machinery Storage
1943**

**Roberts Ranch
Smokehouse
1926**



**Roberts Ranch
Hide House
1950**



**Roberts Ranch
Bunk House
1930s**



**Roberts Ranch
Bunk House
1930s**



**Roberts Ranch
Sugar Cane Mill
(Press)**



**Roberts Ranch
Sugar Cane Boiler
1921**



**Roberts Ranch
Well - Dates from 1870s**



Oranges Still Grow at Roberts Ranch



Annual Event Sponsored by Museum



Immokalee Cattle Drive and Jamboree - March 8, 2025.
 Drive goes thru Immokalee. Ends at Roberts Ranch.
 At Ranch: Traditional demonstrations, music, craft and food vendors, alligator wrestling, petting zoo, games.



Marco Island Historical Museum



Marco Island Historical Museum

Website: 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



On exhibit is the famous Key Marco Cat: one of the most remarkable and influential discoveries in North American archaeology.

On loan from Smithsonian.
 Wooden. Carved by Calusa.
 Cat statuette, less than 6" high.
 Estimated to have been made 500 to 1,500 years ago.
 Discovered 1896.
 Exhibition includes other Pre-Columbian artifacts.



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 Seminoles 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. Still stands.

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).

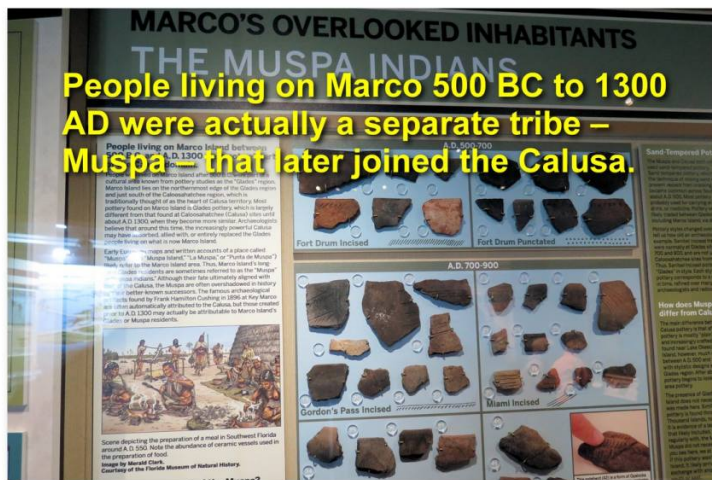
1960s: Mackell Bros. bought most of Barron Collier's land. Development took off.



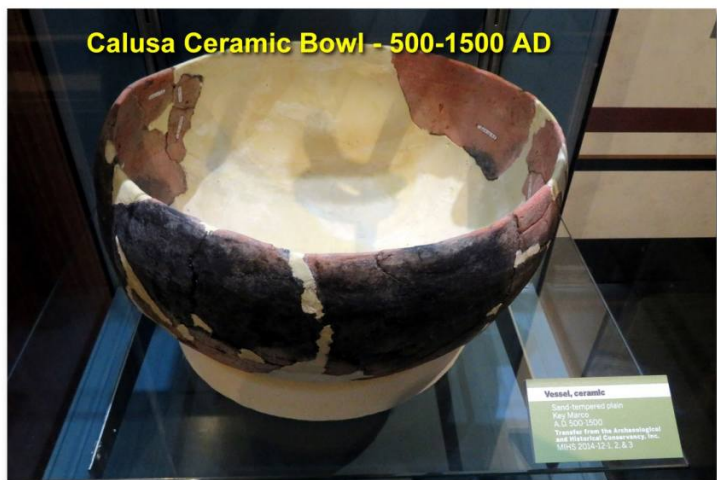
Museum has extensive history of the Calusa and other early native Marco Island people including 200 pre-Columbian artifacts.



"Archaic Indians" means 7,500 to 500 BC Pre-Calusa

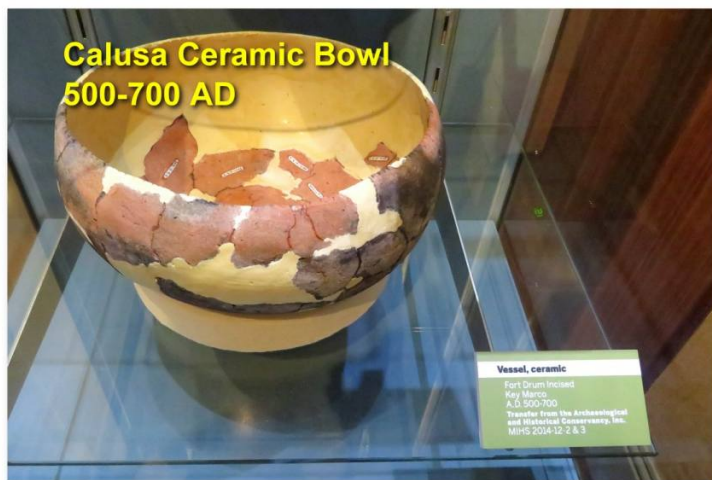


People living on Marco 500 BC to 1300 AD were actually a separate tribe – Muspa that later joined the Calusa.



Calusa Ceramic Bowl - 500-1500 AD

Vessel, ceramic
Fort Drum Incised
Key Marco
A.D. 500-700
Transfer from the Archaeological
and Historical Conservancy, Inc.
MHS 2014-12-2, 2 & 3



Calusa Ceramic Bowl
500-700 AD

Vessel, ceramic
Fort Drum Incised
Key Marco
A.D. 500-700
Transfer from the Archaeological
and Historical Conservancy, Inc.
MHS 2014-12-2 & 3



Map Showing Territory of Calusa and Others Living in Florida Before Spanish Arrival Mid-1500s



Calusa Tools - 13th-16th centuries

