

**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 tell tourists what to do and see in our historic surroundings.



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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.

Barron Gift Collier, a rich streetcar advertising mogul, bought out the Storters. He built up the town of Everglades as the seat of his new County, established 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 *Preservation* magazine (image left).

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

FUNDRAISING

We are actively searching for grants, some of which require matching funds. To raise money, we will hold events and appeal to local businesses.

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

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS

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

It was surveyed by an architect and a structural engineer. We have hired an architectural firm that specializes in historic preservation and have obtained insurance. The first job is to replace the roof and we have contracted with a firm for that.

MEDIUM TERM ACTIONS

As funds become available, the foundation will be repaired and we will recreate the original Palladium window above the front door. Other windows will be replaced with impact glass in frames similar to the 1927 originals (photo left).

LONG-TERM ACTIONS

Once the building is stabilized, we will tackle the interior.

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 retail shops, offices, and artists’ studios.