

**EVERGLADES SOCIETY FOR
HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

Dedicated to our Unique History

P O Box 46, Everglades City, FL, 34139

email: ESHP@hotmail.com

The *Town Crier* newsletter is issued periodically to keep ESHP members and the public informed of our activities. We welcome news and feedback.

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ESHP, Inc. is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit corporation. The Society is concerned with **preserving all historic sites, structures, documents, artifacts, and memories** within the Everglades area.

TOWN CRIER

**Newsletter
of the
EVERGLADES
SOCIETY FOR
HISTORIC
PRESERVATION**

MARCH 2008
VOLUME 4, NUMBER 2



sketch courtesy of Jurg Furrer

ESHP ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual (\$25) | <input type="checkbox"/> Family (\$40) |
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I would like to help with

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> fund raising | <input type="checkbox"/> Historical Library |
| <input type="checkbox"/> special events | <input type="checkbox"/> merchandise sales |
| <input type="checkbox"/> publicity/website | <input type="checkbox"/> historical research |
| <input type="checkbox"/> legal/financial | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering/architecture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> other _____ | |

DATE _____ signature _____

"Tea with Tommie"

ESHP will host an afternoon talk about Tommie Barfield on **Thursday, March 20**, at 2:00 p.m. in the New Theater at the Museum of the Everglades. The event is presented by Betsy Perdichizzi, who is active in the Marco Island Historical Society and the author of a biography of Tommie Barfield (see article inside). Refreshments including tea, of course, will be provided by ESHP. Everyone is welcome. For info and to RSVP, phone Pat at 695-4642 or Jean at 695-0202.

NEW WEBSITE

The Tamiami80 committee have launched a website www.tamiami80.com as part of the build-up to the big celebration on **April 26/27** for the 80th anniversary of the opening of the Trail. The new website has histories of the Trail, County, City, and Museum which all have anniversaries this year. There is also a schedule of events which is updated periodically as plans advance.

Church Celebrates 95th

The Chokoloskee Church of God has produced a commemorative cookbook to mark its 95th birthday. Besides recipes, the book has a history of the church and tributes to its two oldest members, Margaret Webb and Bea Brown Rogers. Copies at \$10 each are available from Martha Dantin, 695-3735, or Lessie Raffield, 695-4626.

MEMBERSHIP

We have 76 members but 16 of those have not renewed for 2008. Reminders are being sent with this newsletter.

We send the newsletter by email to 62 members, saving over \$25 per issue in postage. If we do not have your email address, please send a brief note to ESHP@hotmail.com. We also send our news to 50 other historical societies, politicians, and VIPs.

Welcome to new members:

- James D. Brown, Jr., Coral Gables
- Jill & Charles Erickson, Naples
- Anne Gallagher, Marco Island and Oak Bluff, MA
- Susan Morgan & Joe Scott, Naples and Walpole, ME
- Arita Parker, Everglades City



TOMMIE BARFIELD



Tommie Barfield was a strident voice from the wilderness, pleading for progress, in an era when women were seen but not heard. She is important to us because of her advocacy of the Tamiami Trail and the formation of Collier County but she also played a vital role as a community leader on Marco Island.

According to a quote from the *Tampa Tribune* of May 10, 1923, referring to the legislation which created Collier County, "Mrs. Barfield of Caxambas is being given much credit for the passage of the bill by the House last Thursday night ... As a lobbyist, Mrs. Barfield has few equals ...".

"Tommie" Camilla Stephens was born in Georgia in 1888 and moved to Marco Island with her family in 1901. She married James Barfield, a pineapple farmer, and helped to run the general store and hotel they owned. She was instrumental in having a road built across the island between the villages of Caxambas and Marco and in getting a ferry to the mainland. But, as well as her public petitioning, she was known locally for her kindness to her neighbors during times of hardship.

You can read more about this remarkable woman in "A Girl Called Tommie; Queen of Marco" by Betsy Perdichizzi & Kathryn Kirk. Betsy herself is extremely active on Marco Island, having spearheaded the drive to build an historical museum which would be suitable for the repatriation of the famous Marco Cat from the Smithsonian.

Betsy says her interest in history goes back to her youth in Texas and Oklahoma when she traced her ancestors back to the early 1700s in Virginia and gained an appreciation of how hard pioneer life must have been. She will have copies of her books available for sale after the presentation on March 20.

McLeod Park Anniversary

Among the many anniversaries we are celebrating this year is the 40th for McLeod Park which now encompasses the playground, pavilion, and tennis courts next to City Hall. In 1968 the Lions Club offered to help the City with a park (Council Minutes Book, 10/1/68) which was finally named a few months later in honor of long-serving Mayor D. W. McLeod.

Daniel William McLeod (1888-1960) came with his wife Lucy McKeown McLeod (1892-1963) by boat from the Florida Panhandle in 1923. According to their grandson, James D. Brown, McLeod "*was somewhat of a land expert at the time, which Mr. Collier needed for the development of Collier County. Lucy became an expert by on-the-job training. Needless to say, they were both very intelligent. My Grandmother used to tutor me in algebra when I was in Jr. High School.*"

Besides operating the only property abstracting and title service in the new county, D. W. McLeod was also the tax assessor. He became the first Mayor of the town of Everglades in 1923 and was elected unanimously in 1953 as the City's Mayor during the Council's first meeting on July 7. He continued in office until December 1, 1959, when his last act was to swear in his successor, Dr. Kenneth Synder. Unfortunately, McLeod died less than a year after that.

Both the McLeod's are remembered fondly by local residents for their kindness and leadership. They lived in the house on Broadway at the river's edge, opposite the Rod & Gun, and Lucy buried her pet parakeet Cheri in the median.

ESHP has offered, after encouragement from the McLeod grandchildren and the present Mayor, to build a monument with brass plaque commemorating the McLeods that will be placed in the park. The plan is to hold the unveiling during the Tamiami80 celebrations on April 26/27.

New Logo

We are working on a new logo for ESHP which will include other historic buildings in the area. Unfortunately, we can't have all of them! The sketch will feature on cards and Tshirts that will be available for sale during the next winter season.

The artwork has been generously donated by Hannah Ineson whose watercolors are available around town.

