



CENTENNIAL

Journal

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SARASOTA CENTENNIAL: A Poem by Clarissa Thomasson



Poet Clarissa Thomasson

Sarasota Centennial

When Sarasota first began,
Bill Whitaker came to our land.
He farmed the land and hunted game.
The nearby Bayou bears his name.

When Scots arrived to start a town,
They found instead just barren ground.
So John Gillespie came to stay
And start the town we love today.

New land purchased by J. H. Lord
Required new settlers come on board.
Chicago's Tribune spread the news—
Designed to make buyers enthused.

When Bertha Palmer saw his ad,
She brought her brother, son, and dad.
In 1910 they came to town
Where A.B. Edwards showed them 'round.

Ten thousand acres Palmer bought
And spurred the growth the small town sought.
She had the Seyboard add a branch
And built a home, estate, and ranch.

Soon wealthy visitors came down
And made a city from the town.
But despite good weather, land and beach
Selling the town seemed out of reach.

New autos needed roads—not rails
So Palmer sought to pave the trails.
New advertising plans were made—
Supported by the Board of Trade.

The Palmers lent both corporate pros
And funds to print the ads they chose
To lure new settlers, guests and more
To our fair town—from shore to shore.

As new car owners traveled down
To see the beautiful new town
No hard-topped roads were to be found—
Just paths through sandy, flooded ground.

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A Note From Our Chair

Sarasota County Centennial 2021 Steering Committee

Executive Committee

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Vice Chair, Treasurer

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Secretary

Don Bayley
*Communications
Coordinator*

Marilyn Gerkin
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Harry Klinkhamer
*Chair, History &
Preservation Coalition of
Sarasota County*

John McCarthy
*Vice President of Historic
Spanish Point Campus,
Selby Botanical Gardens*

Committee Members

David Baber, Rob
Bendus, Thomas
Bowers, Priscilla Brown,
Kathryn Chesley, Walter
Gilbert, Olivia Haynes,
Ellen India, Thomas
Jones, Kim Manning,
Cathy McGuire, Betty
Nugent, Clifford Smith

2021, Sarasota County's Centennial year, has finally arrived, and both the Centennial 2021 Steering Committee and the county government's interdepartmental Committee on Centennial Planning are hives of activity.

The Steering Committee is nearly finished producing three centennial auto tours that feature historical sites in various parts of Sarasota County and which can be accessed by smart phone. Several others are being developed.

"In March the Steering Committee plans to erect two historical markers detailing the formation of the county. The locations of these markers has yet to be determined, but will possibly be in the Sarasota and Venice areas." The unveiling of the markers will take place on the same day with participants riding from one site to the other in vintage autos along the historic Tamiami Trail. More details will appear later.

Many groups interested in learning about the Centennial and ways to participate have scheduled Zoom sessions with speakers from the Centennial's Educational Lectures Program. More information can be found on our website sarasotacountycentennial.com.

The county government's centennial group, chaired by Director of Libraries, Renee DiPilato, also is announcing plans. They are erecting a marker at the Courthouse designating the building as a county land mark. The library system's One Book/One Community selection this year will be related to the Centennial. Altogether the county committee is planning a large number of special events and activities for the 100 days preceding the county's birthday on July 1, 2021.

Many of our more than 80 partner organizations are making progress with their Centennial projects. Let me mention a few. The Historical Society of Sarasota County has commissioned a play on the founding of the county that is currently in rehearsals. The Venice Area Historical Society has devoted its entire 2021 Betty Intagliata Lecture Series to Centennial topics. The Society has arranged to tape the lectures so members of the public can view them via the internet. I am honored to deliver the opening lecture on Sarasota County's fight for independence on January 19. Check the Centennial Calendar on our site for more information on Centennial events, many of which will be open to the public.

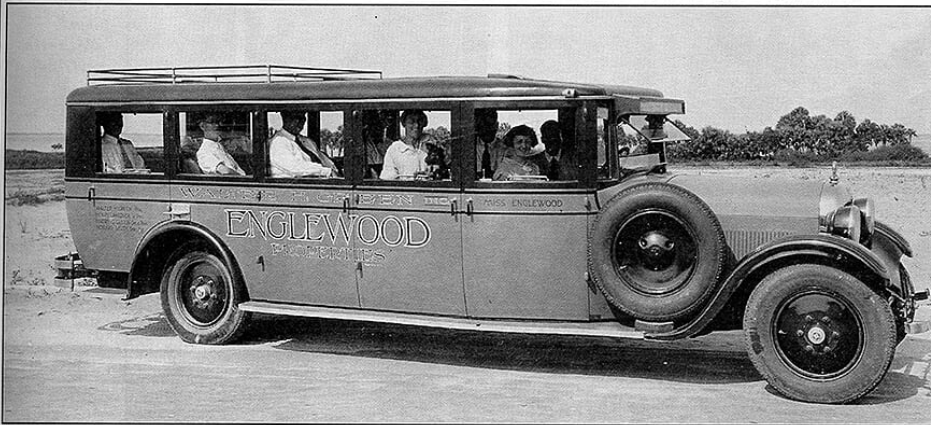
In closing, I am happy to report that public interest in the Centennial is growing as this new year begins. Major stories about our work have appeared in several newspapers, and others are scheduled. The Steering Committee was particularly pleased by the special attention given to the Centennial by the Tiger Bay Club of Sarasota. A Zoom webinar viewed by 200 influential leaders in the community featured John McCarthy, Kathryn Chesley, and historian Jeff LaHurd, all of whom are members of our organization. The response was very positive, and we expect a lot more media coverage in the months ahead.

Remember, it is not too late to get involved!

Dr. Frank A. Cassell, Chair
Sarasota County Centennial 2021
Steering Committee

SARASOTA COUNTY AUTO TOURS

THE FIRST 'MISS ENGLEWOOD'



Walter H. Green's wonderful 21-passenger Studebaker bus, "Miss Englewood," brought prospective real estate buyers from Sarasota daily. The photo was probably taken on Englewood beach with Lemon Bay in the background. Photo circa 1925, courtesy of Jack Tate.

Our Auto Tours are currently being beta-tested.

When they are ready for you to enjoy we will post a link on our website and in the Newsletter.

The ENGLEWOOD tour is sponsored by the Englewood Museum and the Lemon Bay Historical Society.

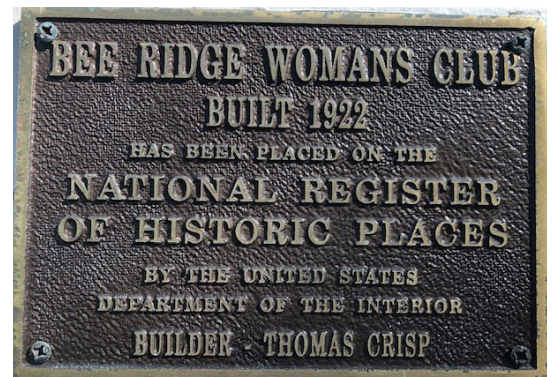
Here's a preview of the stops:

1. Decagon buildings
2. Movie Stars & Mosquitoes
3. The Tamiami Trail: Boom & Bust
4. Yale Street: Where Englewood Began
5. Englewood Museum at the Historic Lampp House
6. Veterans Memorial
7. Buchan's Landing
8. Dearborn St: Zeigler's Hardware
9. Indian Mound Park
10. Green Street Church Museum & Lemon Bay Cemetery

BEE RIDGE



AUTO TOUR



The BEE RIDGE tour is sponsored by the Mabry Carlton Ranch.

Bee Ridge stops will include:

1. The Wilson House at Urfer Park
2. Albritton Citrus
3. Site of the Gillespie School
4. Historic Churches in Bee Ridge
5. The Original Womens Club Building
6. The Maine Colony Phillippi Crest Club

Become A Partner

We invite you to view "A Special Invitation" to join the celebration on our website: www.sarasotacountycentennial.com or on YouTube youtu.be/uo9U5fbm0PM

Join Our Partners

In every issue we will feature some of our Partners.

Sarasota Magazine



SARASOTA GARDEN CLUB



Venice Heritage
Florida



Tree Fort Productions

Venice Civil War Round Table



CELEBRATING 10 YEARS
1 UNIDOS NOW
AÑOS



SARASOTA CENTENNIAL: A Poem by Clarissa Thomasson

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Since Manatee was slow to act
Some Sarasotans formed a pact
To build the roads and bridges sought
And tax themselves for those they bought.

A caravan was sent to rate
The best road surface in the state.
A Roads committee studied how
To fund the roads they needed now.

When Mayor Edwards swung the gavel,
The town proposed new roads for travel.
But Manatee Board's master plan
Gave north county the upper hand.

So Palmer, Edwards, and Higel
With Lamar Rankin worked until
A bond issue that they proposed
Would provide for the needed roads.

Rose Wilson's Times gave full support.
The bond had passed was the report.
But Manatee called, "Wait, not yet!
This plan is too elaborate!"

The bond proposal they rewrote
At last received the county's vote.
With roads and bridges underway,
'Til World War I brought a delay.

A hope that U.S. 41
Would pass through town was soon undone
As county leaders backed a plan
To bring it through north county land.

As cross-state road plans quickly soared,
South County found its needs ignored.
A meeting was soon called to see
A way to break from Manatee.

Then Joseph Halton led the cry:
"We will be milked until we're dry!"
We really have no time to wait.
"We want to move and not stagnate!"

When Owen Burns then took the floor,
The district leaders said, "No More!"
A campaign formed to break away—
But circumstances caused delay.

At last a bill to separate
Sent Augustus Wilson to the State.
Although the bill seemed a good fit,
The Legislature tabled it.

A team with Edwards at the fore
Brought separation up once more.
Rose Wilson brought the good news home
"All obstacles are overcome."

By May 12, nineteen twenty one
The separation bill was won.
The news they'd hoped to hear for years—
Brought whistles, sirens, horns and cheers.

The June fifteen vote went our way
And formed the county we love today.
On July 1 of twenty-one
Sarasota County was begun.

Our thanks to Palmer, Edwards, Lord
And all the folks who came on board
A century has passed—and yet—
Our brave founders we won't forget.

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Thank You To All Our
CENTENNIAL SPONSORS



**SARASOTA COUNTY IS
RATIFIED BY VOTERS**

Tampa Tribune
June 16, 1921

In 1921 the citizens of the Sarasota district won their battle for independence from Manatee County to become Florida's 62nd county. Next year in 2021, the entire Sarasota County community including Sarasota, Venice, North Port, Longboat Key, Osprey, Nokomis, Englewood, Newtown, Miakka, and Laurel will celebrate our 100th birthday. Representatives of local historical organizations have formed the Sarasota County Centennial 2021 organization to plan events and raise awareness regarding this important anniversary.

Thanks to people like you, the Sarasota County Centennial will be a historic event to remember. We invite you to be a sponsor of this very important community initiative! Your contribution will help support the entire Centennial effort, including the community events, history programs and a website to share all of the various opportunities for the community to participate. You or your business will be promoted through our marketing efforts online and in print.

Please view our levels of sponsorship. Go to our website sarasotacountycentennial.com or print and fill out the Application on the next page to secure your sponsorship. Friends of the Sarasota County History Center dba Sarasota County Centennial 2021 is a 501(c)3 charitable organization. Your contribution is tax-deductible to the extent provided by law.*

Your support is critical to celebrating this once in a lifetime milestone!

HISTORICAL SPOTLIGHT

In each of our Centennial 2021 Newsletters, we will focus on some of our “Partners.” Currently we have 83 ..but we eventually hope to have 100 marking the 100th Anniversary of Sarasota County!



Laurel Civic Association began 50 years ago to represent the needs of the community to help shape the development of the Laurel-Nokomis area. At the time the focus was on streetlights and access to water; now Laurel Civic provides innovative and vital programming resources for residents in Sarasota County.

The Adult Programs work to help people meet the challenges of living on the margins of society. We provide services to prevent hunger and homelessness and empower and support families to enhance the skills that lead to self-sufficiency. This includes food distribution, rental and utility assistance, computer access to state and federal programs that provide assistance, workforce development and life skills cultivation and a financial education program to empower individuals to meet their needs and achieve financial wellness.

The Empowering Youth Programs help youth learn, grow and avoid risky behaviors. The prevention program focuses on low-income youth ages 5-18 who are at high risk of disengagement from the economic and social mainstream. This includes after-school feeding and homework assistance, summer teen empowerment program, and reading and literacy programs. Programs address the need for equal educational and social opportunities to help children develop into their best selves.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Laurel Civic has collaborated with several organizations to broaden

its reach, including the Florida Department of Health in Sarasota County to provide early testing for south county, All Faiths Food Bank to host drive-thru food distribution events, Season of Sharing to facilitate getting assistance into the hands of laid-off workers, and businesses, foundations and corporations to provide personal protection equipment, utility assistance and food to local families.

Laurel Civic programs are all aimed at realizing its mission to equip, educate, and empower all to be responsible and compassionate citizens.



Laurel Civic Executive Director Michael Fluker (center) works with volunteers to distribute frozen turkeys and pre-bagged side dishes to more than 155 families during the 2020 Free Turkey Dinner Distribution. The 2021 Thanksgiving Dinner Distribution, scheduled for November 19, has been designated a Sarasota County Centennial event.

www.laurelcivic.org

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

This month we are featuring the Center for Architecture's exhibit "Designing Sarasota, an Architectural History," now through May 13th.

Gallery Hours

Tuesday – Friday
12:00pm-5:00pm
Saturday
10:00am-2:00pm

265 S. Orange Ave.
Sarasota, FL 34236

(941) 350-5430
<https://cfasrq.org/>



CENTER FOR ARCHITECTURE SARASOTA PRESENTS

DESIGNING SARASOTA

AN ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY

January 12, 2021 - April 17 2021



CENTER FOR ARCHITECTURE SARASOTA

experience it



SARASOTA ALLIANCE FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION



AIA Florida Gulf Coast



An exhibit of Sarasota's unique architecture, from the earliest native Americans, through the settlement and early development of Sarasota to the international fame of the Sarasota School of Architecture and today's talented architects. This exhibit is designed for visitors and area residents alike.

See how environmental factors helped create a unique type of architecture. Get acquainted with the historic neighborhoods, which remain preserved today. Admire the beauty and clarity of the Sarasota School of Architecture, a movement that brought world-wide recognition to Sarasota. Understand the multi-generational mentorship of architects that continues today.

How Sarasota County Came To Be

SarasotaCountyCentennial.com

Be sure to visit our website to watch the video of Dr. Frank Cassell sharing the story of how Sarasota came to be, its break from Manatee County and the people involved.



A Community Celebration of 100 Years of Sarasota County
January 9, 2021 – July 4, 2021
Sponsorship Information

_____ Presenting (\$10,000) _____ Platinum (\$5,000) _____ Gold (\$2,500)
_____ Silver (\$1,000) _____ Bronze (\$500) _____ Individual (\$250)
\$ _____ Other Donation Amount

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Preferred Telephone #: _____ Email: _____

Name for listing in event materials and website: _____

Link to your website: _____

Do you have a logo for use in event materials and website: Yes _____ No _____

If yes, please also send a PDF or JPG file to sarasota2021@gmail.com

Please make your check out to "Sarasota County Centennial 2021" and mail to: SC Centennial 2021, P.O. Box 91, Venice, FL 34284. To pay via credit card, go to SPONSORS page on **www.sarasotacountycentennial.com** for information.

If you have any questions, please call Marilyn Gerkin at 941-922-8730



BECOME AN

Ambassador

Centennial 2021 Ambassadors are people who agree to become knowledgeable about the evolving Centennial celebration and talk to neighbors and friends about the importance of the Centennial. Ambassadors can also agree to serve as volunteers at Centennial events, help distribute Centennial promotional materials, and help the development of Centennial Neighborhood Associations.

A. The Roles and Functions of a Centennial Ambassador

1. To become a knowledgeable advocate of the Centennial 2021 by learning about the historical events surrounding the creation of Sarasota County as well as the plans for the 2021 celebration.
2. To promote and foster interest in the Centennial with neighbors, friends, groups and organizations to which you may belong. To lead discussions on the upcoming Centennial.
3. Possibly to serve in volunteer capacities at Centennial 2021 events.
4. Possibly to become active in forming or joining a Centennial 2021 Neighborhood Association where you live and help plan neighborhood Centennial 2021 events or to help prepare a history of your neighborhood.
5. To encourage attendance at the Centennial 2021 lecture series and other Centennial events.
6. Possibly to speak about Centennial activities before local groups.
7. To be sure your local library is stocking Centennial 2021 materials in its pamphlet racks. Possibly distribute pamphlets and other Centennial items to local chambers of commerce, visitor centers and interested businesses.

B. Who can apply to be a Centennial Ambassador?

Ambassadors must be at least 18 years of age and live or work either full- or part-time in Sarasota County. Application forms can be filled out on line at the Sarasota County Centennial 2021 website. Ambassadors must be reliable when volunteering to work at Centennial 2021 events. All applicants must be approved by the Centennial Steering Committee.

C. What do Ambassadors receive for their efforts?

1. Their names are listed on the Sarasota County Centennial 2021 website.
2. A name badge for use when working as an Ambassador.
3. Each Ambassador receives an appropriate Centennial 2021 certificate.
4. The satisfaction of helping the Sarasota County Community mount a meaningful celebration of its 100th birthday.

Please fill out the application below:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ ST: ____ Zip: _____

Email: _____ Website: _____

Briefly tell us why you want to become an Ambassador _____

Mail to: Sarasota County Centennial 2021, PO Box 91, Venice, FL 34284

Thank you! Please remember that your application will be reviewed by the Sarasota County Centennial 2021 Steering Committee. Also, if you or your group wishes to organize a Centennial event, it must be approved by the Centennial Steering Committee before it is entered on the Centennial Calendar.