

1984

Full Issue

Sunland Tribune

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarcommons.usf.edu/sunlandtribune>

Recommended Citation

Tribune, Sunland (1984) "Full Issue," *Sunland Tribune*: Vol. 10 , Article 1.
Available at: <https://scholarcommons.usf.edu/sunlandtribune/vol10/iss1/1>

This Full Issue is brought to you for free and open access by Scholar Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Sunland Tribune by an authorized editor of Scholar Commons. For more information, please contact scholarcommons@usf.edu.

THE
SUNLAND  TRIBUNE.

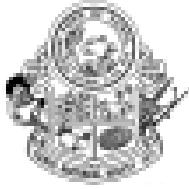
Journal of the Tampa Historical Society



Sp/Coll
Regional
F
319
.T2
S88
v.10

Vol. X

December, 1984



THE SUNLAND TRIBUNE

Volume X December, 1984

The Official Journal of
TAMPA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Tampa, Florida

Sunland Tribune
James W. Covington, Editor

1984 Officers
Richard S. Clarke
President

Wayne Bevis
Vice President

Annie Kate Carpenter
Recording Secretary

Howell McKay
Treasurer

Laura Melton
Corresponding Secretary

L. Glenn Westfall
Executive Director

Board of Directors
Leland Hawes, Jr.
Robert Logan
Laura Melton
Annie Kate Carpenter
W.S. Bruton
Charlie Knight
Ed Rood, Sr.
Mary Howell
James Covington
Molly Corum
Joe M. Klay
Nancy Skemp
J.B. Hickey
Zoe Marvil

TAMPA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
KNIGHT HEADQUARTERS
245 S. Hyde Park Avenue
Tampa, FL 33606
813-259-1111

Table of Contents

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT By Richard Clarke	inside front cover
ACTIVITIES OF THE PAST YEAR By L. Glenn Westfall	5
WINGS OVER TAMPA - AND FLORIDA By Wayne Bevis	8
TURN TO GREATNESS By Hampton Dunn	12
HELL HARBOR By L. Glenn Westfall	16
PORT TAMPA - 1935 By Louis Fritze	21
FREE LOVE AND THE LONG-HAIRED QUACK By Gary Mormino	22
DEATH OF A PRINCESS By M. C. Bob Leonard	23
THE TAMPA BAY HOTEL: THE PALACE OF A PRINCE By Gerald S. Bernstein	25
BALLAST POINT: A PHOTOGRAPHIC ESSAY By Pattie Dervaes	27
THE D.B. McKAY AWARD	30
BOOK REVIEW	32
LIST OF ADVERTISERS	32
1984 PATRONS OF THE SUNLAND TRIBUNE	inside back cover

COVER PHOTO: Ballast Point Pavilion, 1921. See Patty Dervaes' pictures.

The *Sunland Tribune* is the official annual publication of Tampa Historical Society, distributed to members each year. Non-members may receive limited edition issues by contacting the Society at 259-11,11.

Individuals interested in contributing manuscripts for consideration should send them to the headquarters no later than August 1 of each calendar year. The *Sunland Tribune* Committee will review, accept or reject articles and will return all photographs and materials not selected for publication. All manuscripts should be no more than twelve double-spaced typed pages in length and should include footnotes, lists of sources as well as captions for all photographs submitted.

ACTTIVITIES FOR 1984



T.H.S. members were treated to a private showing in the University of Tampa's Scarfone Gallery. "Images of Tampa Bay Hotel" was presented prior to our First Annual Membership Meeting.



The Honorable E. J. Salcines, guest speaker for our First Annual General Membership Meeting, Wednesday, January 25th.

1984 was another busy year for the Board of Officers and Directors of Tampa Historical Society. In our efforts to serve you, our



T.H.S. revived the classic all talkie film, "Hell Harbor" in March, celebrating its 55th anniversary. (See article in this issue)

-photo courtesy of Robert Vande Weghe

members, we held several extremely successful events. By our charter, we are required to hold three annual general membership meetings. Our first meeting was held at the University of Tampa, January 25.

This was a gala two part event: from 6:00 to 7:15, there was a special opening of the Scarfone Gallery exhibit, "Images of the Tampa Bay Hotel." Members and their guests were served wine while they strolled through the display of photographs and artifacts pertaining to the grand era of the magnificent Tampa Bay Hotel. The gallery presentation was followed by a lecture in the Grand Ballroom by the Honorable E. J. Salcines, an illustrated lecture presentation on the "History of West Tampa". Mr. Salcines, a native of West Tampa, thrilled



Maria Julia Martinez Ybor and Joanne Cimino prepare to greet the hundreds of guests for our Open House. Other hostesses included Mrs. Donn (Guelda) Gregory, Ann Tuttle, Elizabeth Wolfe, Gail Albertson, Doris Rosenblatt, Mercedes Ybor and Kathy Parrish.

-photo courtesy of Robert Vande Weghe

the audience with a rousing presentation which made the history of Tampa come alive. Several members of the audience shared some experiences of growing in West

Tampa, and after the presentation, guests were treated with several historical documents. The first was an extremely rare 1908 lithographic poster-print of the "West Tampa Optimo Cigar Factory" discovered in a Connecticut Lithographic Collection by Dr. L. Glenn Westfall. A series of documents on display were newspaper articles from the "Tampa Times & Tribune". They included photographs of West Tampa boys who had served their country during World War II. Audience members identified friends and family members. These original newspaper



Wine, cheese and hors d'oeuvres greeted guests in the Victorian garden. The event was enhanced with magnificent roses used for the decoration which came from the garden of Adele Clarke.

-- photo courtesy of Robert Vande Weghe



Howell McKay, center photograph, greets the crowd of guests who came to the Open House.

-- photo courtesy of Robert Vande Weghe



Kaky Parrish (hidden behind a guest) greeted members as they entered the Knight Headquarters.

-photo courtesy of Robert Vande Weghe



Members had the opportunity to stroll through the headquarters' Victorian garden located in the rear of the office headquarters.

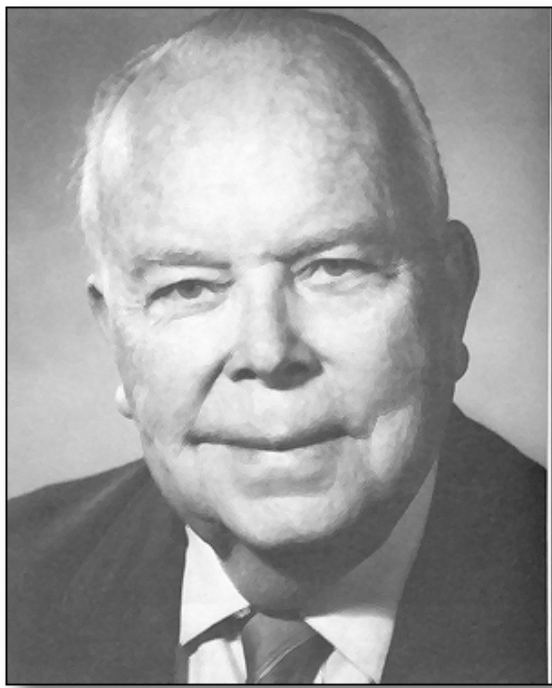
-photo courtesy of Robert Vande Weghe



love story filmed in Tampa during the advent of the Depression (see article in this issue on Hell Harbor). Members of T.H.S. and community guests enjoyed an evening of entertainment at the beautiful Tampa Theater, an historical landmark of Tampa.

FRIDAY, APRIL 27, 1984, Tampa Historical Society cordially invited its members to attend our annual OPEN HOUSE, one of our most successful events. While wine and cheese were being served, guests strolled through the house and garden. T.H.S. volunteers assisted guests, served refreshments and registered members. In addition, charter T.H.S. member and former president Tony Pizzo was honored with the dedication of a sundial in his honor.

OUR SECOND GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING was held at the Tampa Public Library auditorium. Thanks to



clippings were part of a collection of the Salcines family.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 28, 7:30 p.m., Tampa Historical Society celebrated the 55th anniversary of Hell Harbor, a torrid

the efforts of former Board member Joe Hipp, arrangements were made for an exciting evening of memories related to Tampa's aviation history. Vice President Wayne

Bevis, retired from Eastern Airlines and an active T.H.S. member, shared with us his memories and experiences with Eastern while working here in Tampa. (See Wayne's article in this issue).

Wayne has served on the Board of T.H.S. for several years and is currently vice president. His presentation was attended by numerous persons who shared their memories of Tampa's fascinating connection to the airline industry, past to present.

Our third General Membership meeting was held Wednesday, September 19th at the Ballroom, University of Tampa. Guest Speaker and past president of T.H.S. Hampton Dunn gave a rousing presentation entitled, "Florida, Huguenots to Astronauts" to an enthusiastic audience. Hampton, an expert on the local history of our area, has written numerous books not only on Tampa but other Florida communities. Members and their guests were delighted with Hampton's fascinating illustrated lecture presentation.

OLD TIMERS REUNION CELEBRATES ITS 61ST YEAR AT T.H.S.

Continuing a tradition which T.H.S. began almost a decade ago. The Old Timers Reunion was held at our Headquarters, Sunday, October 20th. (See the December, 1983 issue for details of the organization in the 60th anniversary article).. Members of the community who have resided in Tampa for 50 years or longer are awarded a ribbon entitled "FIFTY YEAR CITIZEN." Guests strolled through the house, met old friends



and made new ones. This annual event is second only to the Open House in the number of participants which come.



WINGS OVER TAMPA - AND FLORIDA

Only a handful of Tampons, blessed with long lives and memories, can recall the earliest flights to and over our city. The records are faded or destroyed, but perhaps we can recapture some of the brighter - or lighter - moments from the material available. Join me for a flight back to the early days of daring bird-men, who pioneered the air as their forebears had pioneered the new continent and the 11 new frontier" of Florida.

Before we focus on Tampa itself, we should put the picture in perspective by a brief account of aviation activity in other parts of Florida. The first anticipation of coming events was an ordinance put forth by the City Council of Kissimmee to regulate flying over their airspace. The detailed ordinance (actually written by an attorney who was side-lined with an injured leg) covered every then conceivable aspect of air travel, contemplating airships which could carry a thousand passengers. It astutely forbade the discharge of any substance, fluid or solid, over the city's territory; and provided that the town marshal should have a "speedy pursuit plane" with which to apprehend any violators. The publication of this document, in 1908, attracted both derision and serious attention all over the United States, as well as in South America and Europe. Ironically, Kissimmee has never had the scheduled air service which the city fathers were trying to attract by exempting common carriers from regulation for fifteen years.

The next year, 1909, saw more visionary activity in Florida. A doctor at the naval base in Pensacola devised an air ambulance, in which the patient was to be carried alongside the doctor-pilot and evacuated to suitable care facilities. The plane -crashed in

its first trial flight, with no injuries, and the unimpressed War Department refused to support further experiments despite the doctor's lobbying efforts in Washington.

Jacksonville, under the leadership of Cadillac dealer Claude Nolan, formed the first aviation association in the southeast. One member, Bob Kloeppel (later known as a hotel operator and civic leader) built his own plane and crashed it in Jacksonville in December, 1909 - escaping without serious injury but with diminished enthusiasm for pioneer piloting. In those days, a good pilot was one who didn't make the same mistake once.

The first successful flights over Florida were made in February 1910 by Lincoln Beachey, who earned \$1500 for flying over the grounds every day at the Orlando Fair while it was in progress. In May of 1910, Claude Nolan of Jacksonville was the first Floridian to fly as a passenger - a thrill enhanced by the fact that one of his Cadillacs beat an



Tony Jannus' seaplane as it landed on the Hillsborough River on its inaugural flight, January 1, 1914. The picture was taken near the present Platt Street Bridge by Mrs. J. J. Lunsford, with notations made later by one of her daughters. The Mugge Building - erected as a liquor warehouse and converted into the Bay View Hotel after the Prohibition Act passed - is shown in the extreme right background.

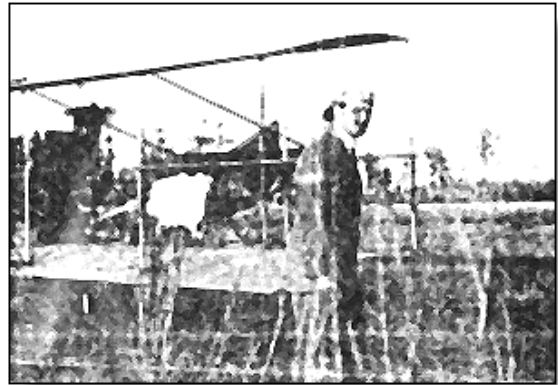
aeroplane in a five-mile race at Daytona Beach. Later in 1910, a Lt. Ely made the first successful takeoff from a ship at Pensacola, and in 1911 this same aviator landed on the modified deck of a moving warship.

Aviation progress continued apace in 1911, with the first experiments in "wireless" communication between ships and planes taking place at Palm Beach. These groping efforts were the foundation of the communication system which we all take for granted today, and which has made possible world-wide travel by air, in safety and comfort.

The year 1911 got off to a flying start in February, when the renowned Lincoln Beachey, of Orlando fame, came to the Tampa Fair, took off from the race-track oval in the fairgrounds, and flew - wonder of wonders!! - at night 11 gracefully over the astonished city". This was the state's first night-time flight.

Miami saw its first aeroplane in 1911 also, just 15 years after Henry Flagler brought the first railroad service to that area. And in September of that year, according to my information, one Bob Fowler left San Francisco on a transcontinental flight which took 155 days and involved 65 landings - most of them unplanned. He finally landed, on purpose this time, at Jacksonville Beach in February of 1912. To improve this record, a pilot named Rodgers crossed the United States in only 49 days, but required 68 stops for repairs and overnight rest. The dates of this achievement are unknown to the writer. As the first World War loomed on the international horizon, we began to see its~effect in Florida. Ample undeveloped land, plus a mild climate year-round, brought about the establishment of training bases at Dorr and Carlstrom Fields near Arcadia.

Here "Boss" Kettering, who later headed General Motors, and Mr. Sperry of Sperry Microwave experimented with radio control of planes in flight. Other notable achievements of that period included a parachute jump, without oxygen or a pressure suit, from an altitude of 20,900 feet. This feat, by a Lt. Hamilton of the Army Air Corps, set a record which stood for two decades.



In this 1929 picture, Walter Beechman, founder of the Beechcraft Corporation, is shown beside an early model aeroplane at Plant Field. Land had not yet been cleared west of the city for the nucleus of Tampa's principal airport.

Our own city of Tampa was busy with aviation matters in the early 'teen years of this century. On January 1, 1914, Tony Jannus established the world's first scheduled airline service between St. Petersburg and Tampa, landing his Benoist seaplane in the Hillsborough River just north of the present Platt Street bridge. While his venture lasted only a few months, it set in motion a train of events which have been recognized with increasing success by the Tampa Chamber of Commerce during the past twenty years. Since 1964, an annual award has been presented to an individual making outstanding contributions to commercial aviation, at a banquet which has become one of the most prestigious events

of the aviation world. The list of honorees is a veritable "Who's Who" of air transportation, and includes great men from a number of countries. On the local scene, your reporter was privileged to know Tony Jannus' mechanic, J.D. Smith of St. Petersburg, during that man's lifetime; and another pioneering Jannus mechanic, J.L. Seale, attends the annual banquets as an honored guest, enjoying himself hugely despite the encroachments of ninety years. Tony Jannus himself left commercial aviation to teach flying to the Russians during World War I, and was killed in a crash in 1915.

Also in 1915, a pilot who shall remain nameless took off from Plant Field (then part of the fairgrounds and now within the University of Tampa campus) as was the custom in those days, and flew low and slow into the front of the old Gordon Keller Hospital on North Boulevard. He was able to walk into the hospital to seek first aid.

The actual entry of the United States into World War I took its frightful toll of Tampa's young men, but also afforded flight training to some who would later develop our commercial airlines and win fame in other fields as well. Prominent among these were U.S. Senator Spessard L. Holland and Peninsular Telephone Company president Carl D. Brorein. Both were Marine Corps flyers during World War 1, and became supporters and customers of commercial aviation throughout their lives.

The finish of "the war to end wars" in 1918, and the surging growth of Florida in the '20s, saw scores of leftover warplanes made available for barnstorming pilots, and almost as many attempts to set up airline operations. Among these were the "Florida Airways" - a venture of Edward V. Rickenbacker, Reid Chambers, and Vic Chenea, all of whom went on to rewarding careers in airlines or other types of business. However, Florida Airways, dependent like all its contemporaries on air mail contracts for 95 % of its revenue, was spectacularly unsuccessful when it tried to link Jacksonville, Tampa, and Miami in 1926. The public still regarded airplanes as exciting to watch, but not a very good way to go anywhere.

To go back a moment, to a time when we must rely on verbal reports and sketchy records, there was a small airport known as "Benjamin Field" about 1920, located west



Seen in this 1930 picture are members of the Tampa Jaycees Aviation Committee, which had just paved the area around Tampa's airport building. Left to right are John Bize, C. G. Wilkinson, Lewis H. Hill, Jr., G. L. Reeves, and Emilio Pons, Chairman.

of Howard Avenue at the present site of the National Guard Armory. When the hurricane of 1921 struck Tampa, pushing five feet of water into Bayshore homes and stranding one of the Favorite Line steamers high and dry in Plant Park, it also wreaked havoc with the small planes based at Benjamin Field. Among these was a plane belonging to Charley Wall, the local gambling czar. It was blown clear off the field, according to reports, and deposited in a nearby swampy area. Other aeroplanes, although tied down, were bounced around by the gales so that most of them were severely damaged or destroyed.

Not all Tampans were "sold" on aviation, as evidenced by the action of the City Council when it declined to accept a deed to Drew Field, the nucleus of today's Tampa International Airport. Unfortunately, this foreshadowed another and more serious decision by the same body, which will be covered later.



This photograph shows a group of students from the Florida State College for Women who made news by commuting to Tampa for Christmas holidays with area families in December 1939. Left to right: Betsy McMichael Gilmore, Lucille Lowry Logan, Edna Earl Wilson, Helen Iserman, Betty Langston Phipps, Mary Regar McCoy, Virginia Alley, Mildred Anderson Lewis, Gloria Johnston Sparkman, Ann Wilson King, Helen Skipper, and Ann Simpson.

The middle and latter "twenties" saw the development of a group of aviation enthusiasts in Tampa, who had some vision of the future awaiting the fledgling industry. Prominent among these was Emilio Pons, son of a leading cigar manufacturer, whose long memory, voluminous records, and generous spirit have done much to make this account possible. Now well into his eighties, this life-long civic and financial leader of the community still maintains, and shares, his enthusiasm for aviation, as he did sixty years ago. Mr. Pons was among the founders of the Tampa Aero Club, and - along with B. L. Hamner, Kelley Jones, George B. Howell, Truman Green, and many other prominent Tampans - staged an "Aviation Banquet and Ball" on Washington's Birthday in 1928. Ninety-six airplanes were on hand for the races and flying exhibitions, featuring local and national figures from the world of flight. Tickets, at \$1.50 per couple, entitled holders to the ball at the Davis Island Coliseum, and to chances on twenty free airplane rides donated by participating aviators.

Using the names of individuals in this recital is sure to result in the narrator falling into the "sin of omission", but so be it. Herbert J. Drane of Lakeland was our Congressman in those days, and local leaders - Jerry Waterman of Maas Brothers among them - enlisted Congressman Drane's help in striving for recognition for Tampa. The City Council, unwilling to own the airport, leased Drew Field for five years at \$500 per year, but money to remove stumps and clear the land was not easy to find, and for a while Tampa lost its airmail service to Lakeland, which provided a safer landing place for the planes.

An outstanding enterprise at Drew Field in the late twenties was the A.B. McMullen Flying School. (This was not the late Tampa

attorney of the same name, but a life-long aviation figure who later headed the Florida Aviation department and was prominent in national aviation activities in Washington.) The flying school had to shut down in 1929 or 1930 - dates are not certain - because of field conditions. Operations were resumed when the grounds dried out, since there were no paved runways.

It was Col. McMullen's flying school which expanded into a full-fledged - albeit small-scale - manufacturing plant producing the "MAC Airliner". Once again exact records are not at hand, but pictures of the "airliners" indicate that they probably carried three passengers. Only a few were produced before the operation was sold to the Stinson aircraft interests.

Old Drew Field, in those early days, was the birthplace of the first fueling system for airplanes. A gasoline tender, composed of a hand-operated pump and metal drum mounted on a truck, served to replace the tedious and dangerous method of filling the gas tanks of planes by using five-gallon cans, hand-carried and poured into the plane. This crude rig has, now evolved into a mechanical monster, capable of pouring thousands of gallons of fuel into the wing-tanks of jets in a few minutes.

Early international flights were made almost exclusively with flying boats, largely because of the lack of dependable landing strips at most destinations for larger, long-range planes. Tampa was a stop on the short-lived New York, Rio and Buenos Aires airline, which operated amphibian planes. The cautious pilots quite understandably preferred the smooth, inviting waters of Hillsborough Bay to the stumps and mudholes of Drew Field, and their passengers arriving or leaving at Tampa were transferred by small boats at

Ballast Point or (on at least one occasion) in the bay in front of the Bayshore Royal Hotel. Leland Hawes of the Tampa Tribune has written fully and interestingly of this phase our aviation history.

"Tampa Airport" - touted as "the third largest in the nation", was despite its deficiencies, a source of pride to many citizens. The local Jaycees paved the terminal area, and a citizens management group was appointed. A contest was held to choose "Miss Tampa Airport", heralding a partnership between airplanes and pretty girls which has never flagged. Items appeared in the national press, and an airport manager was appointed at the extravagant salary of \$175.00 per month. The local cigar industry fashioned a costume of the best Havana tobacco for a local beauty, who posed for pictures with a small plane also made of cigars -and a few years later accompanied the Tampa Jaycee chapter to a national convention in Washington where she appeared in her aromatic attire. Tampa was on the way!!

Once again exact dates are elusive, but about this time there was a concerted effort to bring the Beech Aircraft plant to Tampa, which Walter Beechman had visited many times. Local attorney H. Blaine Peacock was close to Mr. Beechman and helped in the effort to relocate his manufacturing plant to Tampa, but without success.

One exciting possibility of that era was the prospect for Pan-American Airlines (which had absorbed the New York, Rio and Buenos Aires line and was growing impressively) to serve Tampa and establish a regional base here. Once again the myopic City Council refused to make any concessions to bring the airline into our city, and a grand scheme for dredging up an island in the bay between Davis Islands and

Ballast Point was abandoned. In a personal slant on this episode, long-time National Airlines sales manager Robert A. (Red) McKay once told the writer that the only time he ever heard his father, Mayor D.B. McKay, curse was when the elder McKay came home from the City Council meeting at which Pan-American's proposal was turned down.

It was in 1928 that our Hillsborough County historian, Tony Pizzo, had his great adventure with aviation. Then a typical teen-ager, Tony had formed his own junior aviation club which painted a large arrow on his father's garage, pointing toward the Drew Field "airport". One eventful day Tony saw a "huge" Ford Tri-motor lumbering over Ybor City, heading west toward the field, and without bothering to get his father's permission took the family Hupmobile and raced out to the airport. There he found the Ford Tri-motor standing in lonely splendor, while the crew wondered how they would get into town from the deserted facility. Tony took them in tow, glowing over the promise of a ride in the plane in return for his ground transportation. The stay lengthened into several days, to include New Year's holidays with the hospitable Pizzo family; and all of them got to ride in the Ford Tri-motor, which was the giant of its day. Captain of the flight was Harold Gray, who later became operating head of Pan-American Airways. The group was returning from Mexico City, where they had taken Mrs. Charles A. Lindbergh Sr. to visit U.S. Ambassador Dwight W. Morrow and his family. The Morrow's daughter, Anne, and famed aviator Charles Lindbergh Jr. were married the next year and became America's most prominent young couple.

As the decade of the thirties approached, scheduled airline service for Tampa became a reality with National Airlines (then based

in St. Petersburg) flying to Lakeland, Orlando, Daytona and Jacksonville. Eastern came in from Atlanta and Tallahassee, but was able to offer northbound flights only until World War II. Drew Field was surpassed in runways and facilities in 1935 by Peter O. Knight airport on Davis Islands, with its modern terminal and control tower. The location was on the south end of Davis Islands, commanding the long curved "arm" which enclosed the seaplane docking area, reflected the earlier interest of both airlines and local citizens in amphibian aircraft; and probably reminded many Tampans of "what might have been". However, the growth of good landing strips, and the improvement of land-based planes with retractable gear, greater aerodynamic efficiency, and economy, spelled the doom of seaplanes except for highly specialized usage.

The late thirties, when the winds of war were rising again, saw Tampa along with the rest of the nation, and Florida especially, feeling the impact. Drew Field was taken over by the Army Air Corps, enlarged and improved beyond recognition, and put on a full-time training schedule. The Air Corps staged maneuvers at Drew Field in 1938, while the "top brass" took a preliminary look at what would become MacDill Field, dominating the southern end of the Interbay peninsula. Two movies featuring the Air Corps were made at Drew Field, as Tampa Tribune readers recently saw in Leland Hawes' historical feature.

Once MacDill Field became a reality, the Federal government connected the two air bases with Dale Mabry Highway. Old-timers grumbled about the tax dollars spent for "a concrete road that nobody will ever use after the war is over". Even optimists could not foresee the surging growth of both aviation and our whole community which lay ahead.

At Peter O. Knight Airport, where Eastern and National continued their commercial service, every effort was made to attract new travelers to the airlines. Typical of the public relations efforts was an item in Eastern's company publication dated January 1940, featuring a dozen young women students at (then) Florida State College for Women in Tallahassee, who commuted by air to the Tampa area to be at home for the holidays at Christmas, 1939. This magazine was given to the writer by Betty Phipps of the Tribune staff, who was one of the young women in the photograph.

Generals and statesmen saw this inevitable death-struggle between the Axis powers, dominated by Adolf Hitler, and the forces of freedom. A tremendous build-up of military force was unleashed. Once again Florida's climate and terrain made it a center for feverish preparations. The entry of the United States into World War II, just as 1942 dawned on an anxious and suffering world, brought unity and grim purpose to our national attitude.

The global conflict, with its insatiable demands for air transportation as well as all other methods of moving men and materiel, brought about a wartime seat priority system within jurisdiction of the newly formed civil reserve air force. Half of the transport fleets of the airlines were put into government service, along with their crews, for the duration. Passengers who wanted the remaining scheduled seats on the airlines were allocated space under an elaborate system of priorities, ranging from "DD" or "Dirty Dog" to "AA" or "Awful Awful". The "Dirty Dogs" were minor functionaries on government business, or essential suppliers on needed trips; while the "Awful Awfuls" went to transport pilots on important missions. Would-be passengers without priorities, on personal business or pleasure

trips, frequently found themselves unceremoniously removed from flights.

Let the reader remember that no four-engine aircraft went into general air transportation service until after that global convulsion; and that fully-pressurized "above-the-weather" flights were offered only after the conflict was won. Equipment and facilities which had been developed for that one over-riding purpose were made available to a public newly aware of air transportation as a swift, dependable way to travel. The lives of many - perhaps most - of us were dramatically altered in the years, beginning with 1946.

On this note, it behooves us to close with a reminder that the early years, in our city, state, and nation, were a chronicle of pioneer effort - a diary of individual achievement for the most part. In a later issue of the Sunland Tribune, if the fates are kind, perhaps we can review together the incredible growth of air power, both in military and civilian pursuits; and its effect on our lives during these decades of uneasy peace.

POSTSCRIPT:

Having acknowledged the great contribution of Tampan Emilio Pons to this chronicle, and the source of many items from local newspapers, I should also speak of my indebtedness to "Wings In the Sun" - a great reference work by William Lazarus. Bill was a Floridian who lived and worked in aviation through many of the years we have tried to cover here, and told the story fully and well in his book. We salute him along with so many others who have now earned their eternal wings.

WAYNE BEVIS

August, 1984

TURN TO GREATNESS

By HAMPTON DUNN

One fine spring day in 1885 the sleepy village of Tampa woke up.

That was the day, May 7th, when a body of inspired citizens organized an enthusiastic Board of Trade which set about to transform a tiny fishing hamlet into a productive metropolis.

The citizens were no longer content to reside in a faded military outpost by the water, an isolated spot with deep sandy streets, a few board sidewalks, frame buildings and no industry or commerce to speak of.

The truth is at that moment the rank and file of citizens were not aware that the community stood on the threshold of development. Henry B. Plant had brought his railroad from Sanford a year earlier, providing a lifeline to the outside world. Tampa would no longer have to depend on a creaky stage coach from Gainesville, or on even slower boats from Key West or Cedar Keys, or ox-cart transportation over primitive trails.

A fabulous new industry was just a-borning: phosphate pebbles had been discovered in Tampa Bay.

Even though the platform was set for action, the civic performers had been hesitant- to swing out. Most of the local folk had lived through a long period of gloom. Tampa appeared doomed to dry up and blow away, what with the closing of Fort Brooke, the military installation which had been the reason for the town's existence in the first place. Indeed, in the period of the 1870's ... the "dismal decade", if you please ... the village had shrunken to something like 726



Dr. John P. Wall

souls when the 1880 census was taken. But with the advent of Plant's railroad, growth came suddenly, a population explosion as it were. By 1885, Tampa's population had multiplied to nearly 3,000 residents.

That's the way it was, on that May 7th, when a mass meeting was called at Branch's Opera House for the purpose of forming a Board of Trade, predecessor to today's Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce. The top people were on hand, and twenty-seven early birds were enrolled as charter members that first meeting. There were dentists, physicians, druggists, printers, painters, storekeepers, insurance and real estate men, watchmakers and jewelers.

Dr. John P. Wall, a highly respected medic and an outstanding Floridian was chosen to lead these boosters in their crucial first year. There was a big job to be done in Tampa, so the townspeople gave it to their busiest man.



Captain John T. Lesley



Vicente Martinez Ybor

Those pioneers moved swiftly and accomplished much. In its first year of operation, the Board of Trade compiled a fantastic record. What a year! The force of civic activity in 1885 provided a pivot for the area's history.

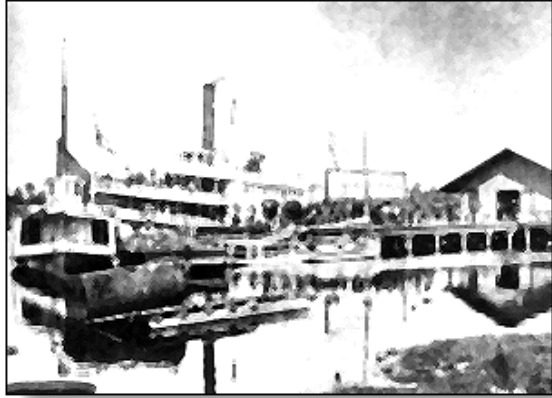


The Tampa Board of Trade thrived in its formative years and by 18%, it issued "stock" to its members, this certificate issued to E.M. Hendry, prominent Tampan. J.H. Fessenden was president and H.J. Cooper was secretary-treasurer.

-photo from Ham ton Dunn Collection

They led the movement to support a city water works, obtained an ice-factory and erected a bridge across the Hillsborough River to facilitate construction of the Plant Hotel. In addition, the civic leaders knocked down opposition to the hotel project, which had been ridiculed by some and fought by a few downtown merchants who wanted the hostelry built on the east side of the river where the people were. The Board of Trade pitched a lavish gala reception and banquet for Mr. and Mrs. Plant to show the town's appreciation of Plant's contributions to progress and was successful in obtaining its first major industry - the Ybor cigar factory - thereby saving the town's lone bank which seemed certain to fold momentarily.

This was the year the Board of Trade prompted the U.S. Government to speedy settlement of its claims upon land formerly occupied by Fort Brooke so that the growth of the town would not be retarded. Congress was memorialized for an appropriation for a survey of our ship's channel and a fund



Tampa's waterfront showed much activity in 1885, when the community's population was given as 600. That's a Morgan Line steamer docked at the foot of Jackson Street.

-photo from Hampton Dunn Collection



This rare photo shows a yacht race on the Hillsborough River in 1885. Scene is about where the Platt Street Bridge now crosses, with Hyde Park seen at right, and the grassy keys which became Davis Islands are shown in background.

-photo from Hampton Dunn Collection



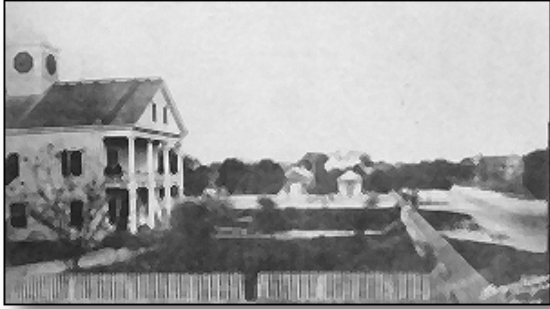
This was Tampa in 1885, the year the Board of Trade was organized. This is Florida Avenue, looking south from the Palmetto Hotel. Ruts made in the heavy sand by ox carts and mule teams are plainly shown.

-photo from Hampton Dunn Collection



T.C. Taliaferro came down from Jacksonville in 1883 and opened a bank in this shack on Washington Street, near Franklin Street. Its first name was the Bank of Tampa and it later became the First National Bank of Tampa. (Some artist printed the name in this photo). Taliaferro soon became discouraged and was ready to go back to Jacksonville when the Board of Trade succeeded in obtaining the cigar industry with its lucrative payroll for Tampa.

-photo from Hampton Dunn Collection



This handsome Hillsborough County Court House was erected in 1885, and served the community for 30 years. The home of Capt. James McKay, Jr., is shown at the right.

-photo from Hampton Dunn Collection



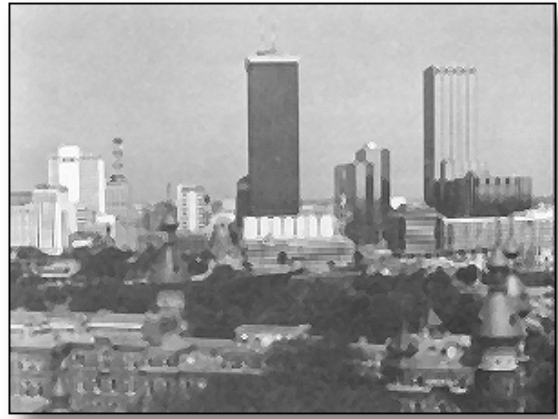
Henry B. Plant brought his railroad to Tampa in 1884 and extended it to Port Tampa where he built the Port Tampa Inn. Guests could fish out of their windows, or go boating around the hotel. The docks served Plant's steamship line.

-photo from Hampton Dunn Collection



The Bank of Tampa erected the city's first brick building in 1886 at Franklin and Washington Streets. Note the deep sand streets. When the photographer came around, everybody got into the picture, including that dude atop the structure. Building later was used by The Tampa Daily Times until it was sold to The Tampa Tribune in 1958. Then it became the home of the Merchants Association of Tampa. The structure was torn down to make way for "the quad block" in the 1970s.

-photo from Hampton Dunn Collection



As the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce celebrates its 100th Anniversary in 1985, the city looks like this with more skyscrapers coming. The University of Tampa, formerly the Tampa Bay Hotel, is shown in foreground.

-Bryn-Alan photo from Hampton Dunn Collection

raising effort provided relief for victims of the then recent conflagration in Key West.

Surely, this year was the turning point in the area's history.

Much of the success of the early days of the Board of Trade undoubtedly was due to the enlightened leadership furnished by that human dynamo, Dr. Wall. This incredible man, a former editor of the Sunland Tribune, a former mayor of Tampa, was in the forefront of every progressive move, reached the climax of his colorful public service career in that year 1885.

That same year, he served as president of the Florida Medical Association, represented Hillsborough County in the State Legislature, and, very importantly, as a delegate to the Constitutional Convention which drafted the basic document that was to continue in effect until January of 1969.

Greatly concerned about public health and the welfare of his fellow Floridians, Dr. Wall crusaded for a State Board of Health. Reaching the pinnacle of oratorical heights, he admonished, "The duty of preserving the health and lives of its citizens from the causes of disease is as incumbent on the state as that of suppressing rapine and murder." A Board of Health was subsequently created at the state level. Dr. Wall played a leading role in fighting the yellow fever epidemic which struck Florida a short time later and was credited with being one of the first to link the scourge to mosquitoes.

Meanwhile, back in Tampa, the Board of Trade at its first session after its organizational meeting named a committee to "do all possible for the success of the election on the City Water works" and planned a public meeting to promote the

project. Captain John T. Lesley, vice chairman of the Board of Trade, delivered an eloquent and forceful address in support of the water works.

Almost immediately, the civic leaders turned their attention to the major problem of the local fishing industry, a lack of ice for packing fish for shipment on Plant's new railroad. The Board of Trade voted to spend \$38 to advertise for ice factories in such papers as the New York Times, the Chicago Inter-Ocean and the Boston Herald. Attracted by the advertisements, an ice plant was soon moving in.

By September, 1885, the Board of Trade presented a 500 signature petition to the county commissioners asking them to build the bridge to serve Plant's hotel. The site selected by a bridge committee later became Lafayette Street (Now John F. Kennedy Boulevard). The wooden span cost \$13,500 and was completed in 1888, dooming the ferry which Jesse Hayden had operated at this point. Hayden, however, had fared well in dealing with Plant, selling the 60 acre hotel site for a good sum. Hayden had acquired the property 20 years before in a swap for a white horse and a wagon.

Construction of the bridge was a precondition for building the Tampa Bay Hotel (now Plant Hall, part of the University of Tampa). Dr. Wall and other civic leaders also brushed aside criticism of the hotel project. Some Tampans claimed the Tampa Bay Hotel would look more at home in Arabian Nights than in what was then considered modern Tampa.

One day in October, it was the 5th, an excited Board of Trade governor called a special meeting. Concise minutes of the meeting tersely tell what was up:

"The meeting was called for the purpose of making some arrangements in order to retain the cigar factory for Tampa. Mr. Ybor who proposes to build the factory here and is about to buy lands from Captain Lesley could not agree on the price, the difference being about \$4,000. On motion it was ordered that the Board of Trade pledge themselves to guarantee Mr. Ybor \$4,000 in land an money provided he (Mr. Ybor) will meet all necessary requirements."

W. C. Brown, A. J. Knight and W. B. Henderson were named as a committee of three to scare up this large sum. The sale price for the 40 acres Ybor liked was \$9,000. It took several months to do it, but the Board of Trade raised the four grand, thus cinching the badly-needed cigar industry for Tampa.

One immediate effect of obtaining the cigar industry was the saving of the city's lone local bank. This was the Bank of Tampa, later to become the First National Bank, started in 1883 as an affiliate of Ambler, Marvin and Stockton of Jacksonville. But business was so slim, the young cashier in charge, T.C. Taliaferro, came within a hair of leaving town. In fact, he'd already packed the fixtures and was ready to return to Jacksonville when the good news came. Mr. Ybor and Mr. Haya called on Banker Taliaferro to assure him the cigar industry was here to stay, and it meant big payrolls for the community. Not only did the Bank of Tampa stay open, but soon it was occupying the first brick structure in town on the southwest corner of Franklin and Washington streets where the Merchants Association building now stands. And the bank received its national charter on May 6, 1886, one day before the first anniversary of the founding of the Board of Trade.

At the crossroads of development, 1885 was the year an obscure fishing village turned toward greatness.

HELL HARBOR'S 55TH ANNIVERSARY

By L. GLENN WESTFALL
Hillsborough Community College

March 28, 1984 was a very special evening for over 300 persons who visited the Tampa Theatre in honor of the 55th anniversary of the making of "Hell Harbor". Several hours before the presentation, guests crowded the theatre lobby to view a display of photographs, documents and other film memorabilia which was loaned by Tampa collector, Mr. Bob Kaiser. The guests included a number of persons who were extras in the film or who had gone to the film location at Tampa's Rocky Point in 1929. Other guests were simply curious to see the film and catch glimpses of what Tampa looked like over a half a century ago.

The movie was based on Rida Johnson Yong's novel, *Out of the Night* and was adapted for film by producer Henry King. It was filmed entirely on location in fall, 1929, during the time when the stock market crash initiated changes in American lifestyle which lasted for nearly a decade. The new picture was made by Inspiration Films, a branch of United Artists, and was promoted as the first all talking film made in Florida.

Producer King had already achieved a renowned reputation prior to filming *Hell Harbor*. He was considered "one of the most original of motion picture directors."¹ He decided to make the film in Tampa after being told of Tampa's ideal setting by New York actor, Tom Migham. The convincing conversation between the two men took place at the New York Lambs Club. Mr. Migham, so kindled the producers interest in Tampa that King wrote a letter to the Tampa Chamber of Commerce. He inquired

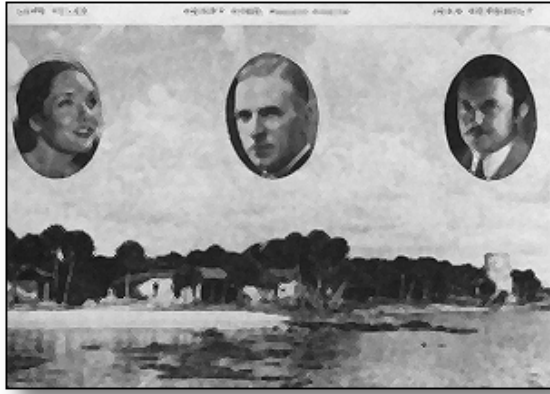


Producer Henry King was a noted film producer for low budget, high sales pitch films. He decided to make Tampa the location of *Hell Harbor* after the Tampa Chamber of Commerce enthusiastically supported his request for their support.

-photo from Bob Kaiser Collection

whether or not the town would welcome him and his Hollywood crew, and was astounded by the warm reception offered him. Mr. King later stated while Mussolini had given him overwhelming support in making a film in Italy entitled "*White Sister*," the dictators' response was nothing in comparison to the enthusiastic response by the Tampa Chamber of Commerce.²

Once the site of the film was decided, King made elaborate plans to move the set and actors across the continent from California. Inspiration Films was willing to make such a long and arduous move because it "wished to give its motion picture audience a sense of reality, rather than a 'paper mache illusion' of a site."³ Over 100 stage workers and designers were sent from the security of



A commemorative post card was made by Inspiration Pictures to promote the film. This photograph was taken on the west side of Rocky Point.

-photo from Bob Kaiser Collection



This cantina scene gave local Tampan Rondo Hatton (center of photograph with a cigarette) national attention and he later starred in numerous films made in Hollywood.

-photo from Bob Kaiser Collection

a Hollywood studio to Tampa where they began construction at a furious pace. Soon Rocky Point was transformed from a Florida palm covered peninsula to a Caribbean pirate community, complete with lookout tower, houses, stores and cantinas. Interior and exterior settings were built on location. Cigar chairs were purchased from local factories and were placed inside the cantina where the first part of the film was made. Building supplies not brought from

Hollywood were purchased from local lumberyards and hardware stores.

The task of preparing the film was monumental; seven freight cars of sound and technical equipment were sent from Hollywood by train. Expenditures ran into the "many thousands."⁴

While construction was underway, local Tampans' favorite weekend activity was to visit the movie setting where they often had their photographs taken in front of the hastily constructed Caribbean stores and

houses. Once filming began, Tampans were often hired as extras for the film. They not only had an opportunity to see the famous Hollywood actors but were able to be in the movies, a thrill to the numerous young Tampans who were photographed as Caribbean island children.

Former Hillsborough High School football star Rono Hatton was discovered in Tampa as an extra and later acted in numerous Hollywood films. Imported from England for the film, Gibson Gowland married local Tampan Rachelle Dervaes. They both gave up their native homes for the glitter of fame and fortune in Hollywood.⁵

After the set was completed and the extras hired, it took three months to film Hell Harbor. Fortunately, Mother Nature cooperated with warm and sunny weather, and the lack of rain allowed producers to follow a routine schedule. The most serious threat to production came from a rooster, whose continuing crowing interrupted a -scene supposedly shot far out in the ocean. The film crew had to reshoot this scene



Rachelle Dervaes, a local Tampan, met Gibson Gowland, part of the array of stars to come to Tampa. The couple moved to Hollywood where this picture was taken of the couple in the 1940s in Hollywood.

-photo from Pattie Dervaes Collection

several times before the rooster was finally quieted. Other than this amusing incident, the production went extremely well.

In an age in which stars were treated like Gods and Goddesses, Tampans were awed with the presence of Hollywood notables in their own back yard. This adulation was clearly evident when the female star of the film, the Latin bombshell Lupe Velez arrived to Tampa by train. When she stepped off the traincar, Florida Governor Carlton greeted her. According to Lupe, this was the first time a Governor had honored her. Speaking with a distinctive Spanish dialect, she said, "I am ver' please to meet you, senior Governor. But why dees beeg crowd?"⁶



Lupe was a favorite of Tampa's Latin Community, and when she arrived for the filming of Hell Harbor, thousands of Latin well wishers greeted her. Her image as a "hot blooded Latin" made Lupe a box office favorite across the continent. This scene from the movie shows her in her defiant but beautiful mood which she portrayed throughout the film.

-photo from Bob Kaiser Collection

After her victorious arrival, Lupe was rushed off to the Floridan Hotel for a gala reception, but the welcome was not yet over. The next stop was Plant Park, where a crowd of 5000 well wishers and dignitaries gave Hell Harbor, according to the star, "the most cordial greeting of her life."⁷ Overwhelmed by the attention given to her, Lupe said of the warm attention given her, "It makes ze flesh goose pop out on my skin!"⁸

Producer Henry King received an equally warm reception in Tampa, but he always "stepped back at all the parties to let the light fall fully upon the jet black hair of his Mexican star."⁹ As the weeks of filming passed, almost all Tampans were on the lookout for stars in their local stores and streets.

After eight weeks of filming, Lupe's role was complete, but the film crew remained an additional two weeks. Lupe boarded a train

for Hollywood November 10, 1929. She took with her two over-sized trunks of clothing, a bull dog, and an oversized memory book as her mementos from Tampa. Prior to her departure, she gladly gave an interview. When asked what she liked most about Tampa, the Mexican star responded; "I cannot understand why they (the Tampa women) go to New York to shop. Such bargains I have found in Tampa and such marvelous styles!"¹⁰

Lupe left behind the memories of a beautiful star in the minds of Tampans, and her memory was rekindled when the premiere of the film was made in Tampa January 24, 1930. Tampa's Victory Theatre was the site of the gala event and reservations for the first showing were made weeks in advance. Although Lupe did not grace the town with her presence at the premiere, her memory was still in the minds and hearts of the city. "If Lupe were here," the Tampa Morning Tribune said, "there would be no rest for the traffic squad, but even without Lupe in the flesh, her figure flashing across the screen will help make it a worth-while film event."¹¹

Fifty-five years later Tampa Historical Society was honored to sponsor the film's anniversary. The widow of Mr. King, Mrs. Ida King planned to attend the anniversary but was unavoidably delayed by a court hearing on her recently deceased husband's estate. She wrote to T.H.S. President Richard Clarke:

Dear Mr. Clarke,
Thank you for thinking of me at this time, when Tampa Historical Society is presenting the fifty-fifth anniversary showing of my husbands picture Hell Harbor. I would like so very much to be there as its been years since I've seen it. It was a good picture but



The issue of the Tampa Tribune advertised the gala world premiere of Hell Harbor at the Victory Theater. Although Lupe did not attend the gala, the theater had a capacity crowd for the event.

-photo from Bob Kaiser Collection

do wish you had known Henry and some of his fine pictures he made after Hell Harbor.

There will always be a soft spot in my heart for Hell Harbor as it was made in my beloved home - Tampa, Florida.

Thank you again for your lovely invitation will be thinking of you on the evening of the 28th. That happens to be our twenty-fifth wedding anniversary too.

Very Sincerely,
Ida King¹²

Tampa Historical Society hopes to be able to contact persons who still remember the

filming of Hell Harbor. If you or a friend have any memories, photographs or other items of interest related to the film. Please call us at 259-1111, leave your name and address, and we will be in touch with you shortly.

NOTES

¹ Hell Harbor Promotional Book, The Longacre Press, Inc., New York 1930, p. 3

² Tampa Morning Tribune, September 16, 1929.

³ Hell Harbor Promotional Book, p. 3.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Oral Interview, Pattie Dervaes, Tampa, Florida, March 29, 1984.

⁶ Tampa Morning Tribune, September 16, 1929.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Tampa Morning Tribune, November 10, 1984.

¹¹ Tampa Sunday Tribune, January 19, 1930.

¹² "Hell Harbor Memorabilia Files", Tampa Historical Society Headquarters, Tampa, Florida.

PORT TAMPA - 1935

By LOUIS FRITZE

My reason for being in Port Tampa in late 1934 and 1935 for a short time was in attempt to ship out in the merchant marine. During the depression shipping was very slow. If one did not have proper papers and did not know anybody in the shipping companies, it was impossible, unless one took the last chance and stowed away on a ship. I had exhausted all avenues. A determination to see Europe was the inspiration to finally stow away successfully which I did, but that is another story.

I roomed at the home of Mrs. Faull on Macotte Street and Ingraham. It was a two story house built in the early part of the century. Alongside was a large cistern for holding rain water. It is gone today but the house still stands.

Mrs. Faull was the wife of a German baker who settled in Port Tampa and had a bakery during the Spanish American War. Mrs. Faull originally came from Savannah, Georgia. Her son, John Faull, was the last town clerk before being annexed by the City of Tampa.

Mrs. Faull was one of the kindest women I have met. I told her of my plans. Although I had enough funds, she refused to take any more money from me as she said I may need it. I could pay it back when I was working. She baked pies every week for her family and always gave me one from the different fruits she used. If a cold spell came along, I would be given another blanket. Her husband was still living at the time but he died shortly after.

I had plenty of time to walk around Port Tampa, visiting the ships that came in.

There were three phosphate elevators on the west side of the channel where during the Spanish War the transports were loaded for the invasion of Cuba. Most of the ships loaded at the most southern elevator which was quite modern for the time. Most of the Lykes ships loaded at Port Tampa as well as those of the old Mallory Lines.

Port Tampa was always active with moving freight cars. One could hear the old switch engines to late at night. These locomotives were originally built for the Russians. At the change of government there, they were adapted for American rails.

At the east end of the channel was a passenger terminal for ships going to Cuba. Special trains brought the tourists from Tampa to meet them. I recall the round trip fare to -Cuba as \$19.95. Cabins were extra. They stopped at Key West on the way. When World War II came along, the two ships were taken for transports. Only one survived.

There was only one restaurant in Port Tampa at the end of Commerce St. Since then, it has been moved across the street and is still there. Close by was the largest grocery store - Toffaltis, one of the old families of Port Tampa. There was another one on Kissimmee St. run by Mr. Gordo just down the street from the Masonic Temple.

I was a law abiding citizen but I did get to see the town jail. The constable had taken in a couple of characters who had left a ship and had made some trouble in a bar. They had roomed at Mrs. Faulls. The constable gave them a day to get out of town or stay in jail. They went.

Mrs. Faull knew my background. Her neighbors next door knew friends of mine in St. Petersburg. However, the leery constable took other means to find out about me. After all, I was seen walking around the docks, etc. A car drove up to Mrs. Faull's with the constable in the back seat and two immigration officers. They asked for identification papers and I went back in the house and got my driver's license and birth certificate which I was fortunate to have when I did sail to Europe as a stowaway. I resented one of the officers in his manner and told him so and the other softened the situation. Then I told him that the constable didn't have nerve to question me directly and used them for it. Then he mentioned that he could put me in jail, then I told him he would be sorry if he did as I had plenty of friends in St. Petersburg and Tampa. That quieted him down. After it was all over, Mrs. Faull was indignant that they did not come to her for information.

I thought it was a good idea to get in the good graces of the constable and paid him a visit in his office and the two-man jail. He was gracious and showed me around. That is how I got to see the jail. Port Tampa was always a close knit community and everybody knew one another. It was only outsiders that made trouble which was quickly taken care of. It stayed that way until Port Tampa City was annexed.

I recall a barber shop on Commerce Street. The barber was a Negro. I don't remember any other. I played basketball one night at the high school which is still there.

It was a nice ride into Tampa on the trolley which went along Inter-Bay Blvd. to Ballast Point Park and then along Bay Shore Drive to Rome, Swann, Southern Boulevard etc. to Franklin Street. Bay Shore Blvd. ended at Magnolia.

I recall some beautiful singing at a Negro Church, close by to Mrs. Faull's.

Mrs. Faull told about one of her Negro tenants, a hard working man. He heard someone demanding him to come out of his house. It was night, and not knowing who it was, and seeing the intruder armed, shot the man. It turned out to be some peace officer who had been drinking. The white community was upset and Mrs. Faull smuggled her tenant out of town and got him off to her sister living in Savannah until he was cleared. That was the kind of women Mrs. Faull was.

To close this little history, when I went to New York after my adventures, as there was no work to get in St. Petersburg, to make a living, my first spare money went to Mrs. Faull for my rooming. I visited her with my wife when I settled in Florida for good.

FREE LOVE and THE LONG-HAIR QUACK

By **GARY MORMINO**
University of South Florida

Tampa has sheltered its share of bohemians and eccentrics, but for pure unabashed zaniness, Dr. Frederic N. Weightnovel deserves a permanent exhibit at the County Commission.

Weightnovel's origins are as obscure as his morality was base. The physician claimed to be a Russian exile, having escaped from a Tsarist Gulag by swimming across a Siberian river. Arriving in Tampa in the early 1890s, the self-confessed nihilist immediately organized a Free Love Society. His choice of Tampa as an asylum may seem strange, but in fact, Tampa appealed to the emigre. A small colony of Spanish anarchists inhabited Ybor City, while in Fort Brooke, a less discriminating audience preferred adulterated whiskey and painted women over the polemics of free thinking.¹

Tampa had never been a puritanical city. In 1855, in fact, the Tampa Debating Society argued the question: "Would it be good policy to compel all bachelors and old maids to reside together?"² But the presence of the long-haired Russian doctor leading a Free Love Society parade, followed by his disciples adorned in virginal white sashes, pressed Old Tampa's tolerance.

Weightnovel's libertine notions of morality raised eyebrows in Victorian Tampa, especially when the amorous doctor hosted the Free Love Banquet. Held in the Old Havana Hotel in Ybor City, the orgiastic feast featured Oriental teas laced with aphrodisiacs and bottomless mulatto

waitresses. Tampa's Vice Squad busted this ribald marriage of Bacchus and Aphrodite.

Weightnovel championed the cause of squatters as well as the anguish of lovers. After the federal government deactivated Fort Brooke, squatters moved into the garrison area. The Russian hoisted their standard, heading a group of the great unwashed and renaming the garrison "Moscow!", evoking the contemporary spectre of Jacob Coxey's march on Washington.

When not leading Tampa's version of Coxey's Army, Weightnovel could be found relaxing at Picnic Island or at the theatre. One of his legitimate talents was an ability to float on his back for hours, during which he casually read newspapers and snacked on oysters with the aplomb of an otter from a plate resting on his chest. A devotee of the fine arts, Weightnovel occupied a front-row seat during the theatrical season.

Weightnovel diversified his passions and energies in Tampa, never passing an opportunity to decorate his boudoir or portfolio. In an age of medical nostrums, the doctor peddled patent medicines bearing his striking visage, elixirs guaranteed to cure baldness, soothe female complaints, and purge catarrhs. In 1892, a Tampa Grand Jury indicted Weightnovel for practicing medicine without a certificate, but finally, in 1895, the Florida Board of Medical Examiners granted him a license. He

claimed to have secured his degree from the University Of Moscow.³

What a pity that the political exile turned gay blade did not write an autobiography, for his role in the last chapter of the Weightnovel novel is clouded in mystery and tragedy. If the Free Love Banquet represented his most blatant public performance, his illegal abortion clinic terminated a madcap career. In June, 1902, Weightnovel was charged with manslaughter for the death of eighteen-year-old Miss Irene Russell of Quincy, Florida. It is believed Miss Russell had been drugged and violated by a young Tampa man, whereby Weightnovel performed an abortion resulting in her death.⁴

The trial scandalized Tampa. An outraged citizenry discovered how the mad Russian was allowed to bring his black valet to prison, where the doctor's food was specially prepared. A whirligig fanned his famous locks of hair. A court reporter described him "wearing a white duckcoat, a collarless silk shirt, light gray trousers, a gay red bouton-nierre, and wielding a palm-leaf fan."⁵

Meanwhile, Tampa ministers thundered from pulpit and street corner about the plight of their unholy city. Parishioners at First Methodist Church heard a stinging sermon, "Tampa Over a Volcano," while Presbyterians listened to the jeremiad, "Tampa, a City to Weep Over." A crowd of 400 demonstrated at the Courthouse Square to hear the superintendent of school's pontificate, "We swing the rope from the tree limb and feel that he deserves his fate. Should not the scoundrel who entraps a young girl and robs her of her virtue, meet the same punishment?"⁶

Convicted to six years of hard labor, Weightnovel was sent up one river he could not swim, and he died in jail in May 1906.⁷ The Tribune eulogized, "It is said that with this old man, died many secrets, which, made known, would shake the social fabric of Tampa."

NOTES

¹ "Pioneer Florida," Tampa Sunday Tribune, Nov. 10, 1946, Jan. 6, 1957.

² Florida Peninsular, Dec. 29, 1855

³ Tampa Daily Tribune, May 23, 1892; Tampa Morning Tribune, April 12, 1895.

⁴ Tampa Morning Tribune, June 19, 20, 22, 1902.

⁵ Ibid., July 1, 3, 1902.

⁶ Ibid., June 22, June 27, 1902.

⁷ Ibid., Jan. 27, 1903, Feb. 3, 1903.

DEATH OF A PRINCESS

The Mystery of Mercy Argenteau

By M.C. LEONARD
Hillsborough Community College

There once was a Princess who lived in seclusion in Belmont Heights, Tampa, and who died a mysterious death. For over fifty years, Tampanians have searched in vain for clues to uncover the facts of her fate.

Her name was Princesse de Montglyn Rosalie Francoise Adelaide Caroline Eugenie Marie Argenteau, Countess de Mercy Argenteau. She was the last member of one of the oldest Royal lines of Belgium.

Although she lived in relative obscurity on a limited income after she came to Tampa in the early 1920's, it was not long before people throughout the city were talking about an alleged fortune in jewelry, paintings, and artifacts that she kept in her modest house on the southwest corner of 30th Street and Hargrove Avenue.

It was not just her exotic past and personal wealth which made her a favorite conversation topic in Tampa. She had a strange relationship with her landlord, her half-brother John H. Werne, alias John H. Casey. Her story was documented not only by her interviews with neighbors, but in a blunt autobiography called Last Of A Race, and in a stormy battle in the probate court of Hillsborough County six years after her death.

Princess Argenteau was born in Argenteau Castle, on July 18, 1862, the only child of Eugene d'Argenteau and Princess Louise de Caraman Climay. Her parents wanted a male heir and never let her forget their

disappointment by leaving her with strict governesses and tutors. At twenty, she was pressured into marrying Herbert Marquis d'Avaray in a massive wedding attended by the King of Belgium, Archduke Ferdinand of Austria, and the Duke of Edinburgh. She was deluged with priceless gifts which one day would grace a West Coast Florida museum. Although they had a son Antoine Rousseau, Herbert and Mercy shared little in common and she soon spent months traveling with friends to avoid her husband.

On a trip to Bangkok, she became addicted to opium, but claimed in her autobiography to cure herself by using her father's smelling salts as a substitute stimulant. The fear of losing her beloved Antoine in an impending divorce settlement probably curtailed her abuse with drugs. She shifted her resentment of her life of aimless privilege from traveling to raising championship show dogs.

Another strange event changed her life. Her father confessed to her on his death bed that she had a half-brother living in the United States. She promised to locate him and reunite the Argenteau family. She moved to America to search for her lost relation while her grown son Antoine remained in Europe as an automobile racer.

In 1910, one of her lawyers summoned her to Havana, Cuba, to meet a drifter who fit the description of the missing half-brother.



The favorite photograph of Mercy Argenteau, the "Princess of Belmont Heights".

"He was full of hard living with Irish blue eyes and a brusque manner," she noted in her book, "but we found much in common and I felt that I was making headway with him. His mother had drowned in North Carolina and he was reluctant to make confidences in return."

She convinced this John H. Casey to join her in New York and help her breed championship dogs. He became her partner, but in a few years her happiness was forever destroyed by two tragic events. The Germans in World War One destroyed Argenteau Castle and most of her investments, while soon after the war, Antoine was killed in a European Grand Prix. The Princess returned to her traveling ways, first

moving with Casey to Southern California, then to Polk County, Florida, and finally to Tampa.

Casey rented a house and took a job at the Oscar Daniels Shipyard at the Tampa Estuary, while the Princess retired to her past. Her Belmont Heights neighbors watched her take daily walks in an out-dated dress and a floppy hat. She enjoyed old casual clothes, but insisted on wearing expensive jewelry and a French perfume that cost eight dollars an ounce.

Rumors of her wealth circulated around Tampa, still a small city despite the Florida Land Boom. French consul E. W. Monrose told his friends that he had to get the Princess a special permit to bring some of her treasures past United States customs. When some neighbors heard she was having financial troubles living off her monthly income from Europe, she was offered money for her jewelry.

The Princess told Mrs. Amos L. Harris that "she would rather starve than part with any of her treasures."

There was indeed treasures at the Argenteau residence, as noted by neighbor Mrs. Raymond L. Young who told Tampa Times owner and local historian D. Brenham McKay that the house was "a museum of artifacts, particularly the diningroom with its massive oval table, lifesize portrait of the Princess, and furnishings with blue Argenteau monogram and crest.

"I was given a showing of some of her jewelry," Mrs. Young recalled. "She kept them in an old bag hanging on a closet door knob with an old coat hanging over it. She had many earrings, but I particularly remember one pair. The emerald bases were a half-inch square with a diamond in each



This bust of Mercy Argenteau graced the foyer of her Belmont Heights residence and later the lobby of the Argenteau Castle in St. Petersburg.

corner as large as a match head. She had many strings of pearls, some two or three strings together. One string was about four feet long - she put this about her neck four of five times."

Every room of the house was filled with antiques and gifts. There were screens of inlaid ivory given by an Arab sheik, a gown with silver trim from the King of Spain, and expensive furniture. The walls were lined with every one of the ninety-five dogs she raised as winners.

Neighbors soon discovered that the Princess was living in fear of her half-brother. She confessed to Emma N. Gaylord, who spent five months typing the Argenteau autobiography, that she was "never fully

satisfied that he (Casey) was the son of her father. She didn't trust him. She was robbed several times and suspected Casey when he tried to place the guilt on neighborhood boys."

Miss Julien Soule, another neighbor, told D. B. McKay that the Princess not only feared Casey was a fraud, but also believed he had given or sold many of her jewels to Mrs. Madeline Gill, a family friend. Despite her suspicions, she never approached her lawyer James J. Lansford to investigate Casey's identity or any other matter.

In April of 1925, the Doran Publishing Company of New York City published *The Last Of A Race*, and the New York Times Sunday edition printed episodes from the autobiography. In accordance with Casey's wishes, she did not mention him, her Tampa life, or her present feelings. Still, the blunt manner in which she exposed the foibles and emptiness of European high society and the intimacy in which she confessed her adventurous past helped the book gain respectable reviews. Since the publishing house closed its doors, it is not known whether the Princess received substantial payments for the book.

On Saturday evening, July 25, 1925, the Princess had a violent headache and Casey summoned Mrs. Gill to come over. They gave her a cup of tea and put her to bed at ten o'clock. The next morning, when Casey came downstairs from his bedroom, he found his half-sister lying at her bathroom door. She was dead before the physician arrived.

The death of Princess Mercy Argenteau was buried in the obituary page on a day when William Jennings Bryan also died, but her story would soon reopen when Casey and Mrs. Gill emptied the Tampa residence of all

its valuables. Six months later the name "Princesse de Montgylon Argenteau, Countesse de Mercy Argenteau" appeared on a door plate on a large isolated mansion at Pinellas Point in St. Petersburg. For \$1.50 a tourist could enter "Argenteau Castle", a split-level nouveau museum, at 72000 Serpentine Circle.

Who was the proprietor and owner of this unusual museum? None other than Mrs. Drury J. Gill, wife of the Vice-President of the West Coast Grocery of Tampa. The exhibits featured the jewelry, clothing, paintings, furniture, silverware, china, and momentos of the Princess. Upstairs were even stranger attractions. The hallway featured a diamond studded dog collar, photographs of her animals, and an open, velvet-lined casket in which lay a stuffed dog, given to her by the Tsar of Russia. One bedroom presented the letters and momentos the Princess had kept of her beloved son Antoine. There was even a photograph of the racing car which took his life.

The Argenteau Museum was a financial failure, for the Florida Land Bust and the building's poor location limited the number of tourists. In three years, the museum closed. In 1933 Albert F. Lang, popular St. Petersburg Mayor, purchased Argenteau Castle and converted it into one of the showplace residences on the Florida West Coast.

The closing of the museum only intensified the concern of Tampa's Dutch consul Jean R. Van Blinck, who had long believed that the priceless heirlooms of the Argenteau estate should be returned or sold to the National Museum of Belgium. When the Princess died without a will, leaving Casey as owner of the collection, Van Blinck had tried to negotiate a transaction between Casey and some interested Belgian officials.

The consul was worried about the influence the Gills had on Casey, who was in poor health with cirrhosis of the liver.

By December of 1927, Casey was under the almost daily care of Dr. Linwood Gable of St. Petersburg. On a visit to Miami three months later, Casey suddenly died. Van Blinck insisted in having Casey's body exhumed and the autopsy indicated that a probable cause of death was poisoning by laudanum, a preparation of opium. A fatal dosage of 300 to 400 mg to a habituated drug user, however, would yield symptoms of a feeling of warmth and intoxication and be undetected by a victim.

The Dutch consul tried to convince police officials that Casey's overdose might not have been self-induced. He described the death of the Princess, but officials rejected his contentions by showing that Casey had a history of drug abuse. This left Van Blinck with just one recourse: to gain administration of the Argenteau estate now in the -hands of the Gills.

Van Blinck instituted a four year court battle by applying first in Pinellas and later in Hillsborough for the status as administrator of Eugenie de Mercy Argenteau's estate. In a confidential report, he explained his suspicions about the deaths of Princess Argenteau and John Casey and argued that the estate should be reopened to evaluate its jewelry and artifacts.

Tampa lawyer Alonzo B. McMullen, a friend of the Gills, opposed Van Blinck's petition and gave Hillsborough County Judge G. H. Cornelius twelve reasons why the petition of administration should be denied. His strongest grounds included the fact the estate had no surviving heirs or known legal descendants, nor were there any creditors to the estate, nor was Van Blinck

entitled to any preference as administrator. There was no real estate involved in the Casey name.

McMullen concluded that "(Van Blinck's) allegations are so vague, so uncertain and indefinite, and the same is so poorly and loosely drawn that this Honorable Court would not be justified in making an appointment of an administrator. "

At a hearing on July 27, 1931, at Hillsborough County Courthouse, Judge Cornelius rejected without comment the Van Blinck petition. Thus ending, if not unsatisfactorily, the conflict over the Argenteau estate. When the Gills left Tampa, the treasures of the Argenteau left with them. But the Princess of Belmont Heights remains in Tampa, in a secluded and small grave at Myrtle Hill Cemetery.

The Tampa Bay Hotel: The Palace of a Prince

By **GERALD S. BERNSTEIN**
Brandeis University

An 1897 promotional brochure advertising the then recently opened Tampa Bay Hotel in Tampa, Florida described the luxury resort as "...the palace of a prince."¹ In the purple prose common to the period the hotel was characterized as combining "...in an almost lavish degree every known convenience, luxury and necessity of human life."² Although the old Tampa Bay has long since ceased to function for the purpose for which it was built, and has served for more than fifty years as the primary facility of the University of Tampa, its "subtle fascination"³ continues to bequele the observer and it remains a pre-eminent example of American nineteenth century eclectic architecture.

What were the factors that led to the creation of this magnificent structure? The selection of the site and the choice of the exotic architectural style was a complex combination of economic practicality and romantic escapism. The decision in the mid-1880's by Henry B. Plant, financier and founder of the Florida West Coast Railway to extend his railroad to Tampa where it would link with his already successful steamship line was an effort to create a vibrant transportation system for the underdeveloped state of Florida. The construction of a 511 room luxury hotel on sixty acres of land on the west side of the Hillsborough river fulfilled Mr. Plant's dream of an elegant centerpiece for his expanding economic empire.⁴ It also represented a significant response by Mr. Plant to the challenge extended by his

longtime rival, Henry M. Flagler, who during the same period was developing the Florida East Coast Railway. Flagler's selection in 1885 of, the New York architectural firm of Carrere' and Hastings "to design the Ponce de Leon Hotel in St. Augustine had introduced into Florida the gaiety of Spanish Renaissance stucco decoration."⁵ Plant's competitive spirit may well have been the motivation for him to construct at a cost of more than two million dollars the sumptuous and luxurious Tampa Bay Hotel.

The architectural style chosen for the enormous structure was said to have "...many suggestive reflections of the Alhambra in sunny Spain."⁶ However, as we shall see, the building was only superficially related to the Moorish fortress in Granada and can be more accurately described as an eclectic blending of a variety of Islamic-inspired elements.

Although the attempt to connect the Tampa Bay to the Alhambra may not be architecturally correct, a more significant relationship between the two structures can be found in their tropical surroundings. From the early 19th century and the publication of Washington Irving's Tales of the Alhambra⁷, the Moorish palace has symbolized the exotic in architecture. Its influence grew so pervasive that the term "Moorish" became synonymous with any variant architecture inspired by Islamic forms.

The origin of the so-called Moorish revival can be traced to 18th century landscape designs where ornamental mosque-like garden pavilions added exotic accents to the picturesque terrain. In the early 19th century, European colonial activities in the Near East and North Africa stimulated popular interest in fanciful buildings. Travellers to the Orient discovered the romantic potentials of the complex decorative ornament associated with Islamic architecture. The adaptation of Moorish forms by western architects was made easier by the fact that the Islamic style was itself an eclectic mode composed essentially of screen-like facades placed over traditional structures. The intricate linear patterns were adapted to all manner of buildings including domestic, commercial and religious structures.⁸

Although examples of Islamic inspiration can be found in a wide range of building types its primary identification was with the architecture of pleasure and the concept of the "oriental pleasure dome." From theaters and music halls to exhibition pavilions and bandstands, the romantic fantasy of the Arabian Nights seemed ideally suited to buildings designed for entertainment.

These structures were executed in various materials ranging from wood to iron and were characterized by an overall application of geometric ornamentation. The appearance of horseshoe arches and bulbous domes were another feature common to the eclectic style. Because the Islamic mode was never subjected to the same codification in 19th century pattern books as were other borrowed styles, such as the Greek or the Gothic, architects who chose Islamic were not restricted to archaeologically correct usage, but rather were able to express an almost unlimited freedom of invention.

One of the earliest examples of the inventiveness of Islamic inspired buildings in England was John Nash's Brighton Pavilion.⁹ Designed for the Prince Regent in 1815, the structure was composed of a multitude of bulbous domes and spikey minarets. Although the selection of the Oriental style was said to reflect England's imperial interests in India, in actuality the royal seaside pavilion was a whimsical exercise in romantic escapism.

The influence of Nash's imaginative design was pervasive and by mid-century had found its way to America. In 1848 the architect Leopold Edilitz created a similar conglomeration of domes and minarets for the home for the famous showman P.T. Barnum in Bridgeport, Connecticut.¹⁰ Once again there was no archaeological source for the style but rather the mysterious fantasy of the East.

Although whimsy may have been the determining factor in the selection of Moorish motifs in domestic architecture, the choice of exotic forms for theaters and resort, hotels were more closely associated with the eclectic principle of "appropriateness". For in the Victorian mind the mysterious East was associated with romantic fantasy. Whether the intricate designs were cast in iron or sculpted in stucco, the repetitive patterns of arabesque ornament created the proper ambiance for a pleasure pavilion.

Henry B. Plant's decision in 1888 to build his new luxury resort hotel in the Moorish style was therefore an appropriate choice for the pleasure palace he envisioned. He selected the New York architect J.A. Wood¹¹ to design a facility that would rival Flagler's Ponce de Leon in St. Augustine both in size and grandeur. For to Henry Plant the Tampa Bay was to "...stand

pre-eminent among all others ... a dream of magnificence indescribable.”¹²

The hotel with its distinctive minaret-like towers was open to the public in January 1891. The five-story brick structure was over 1200 feet long and was fronted by an elaborately carpentered horseshoe arched veranda which ran the full length of the buildings. A contemporary account in the New York Journal of Commerce called the hotel "a miracle of human invention which dazzles and astonished the senses."¹³

The interior was richly decorated and furnished with "...paintings, statuary, cabinets and bric a' brac from many lands."¹⁴ The intricate Islamic ornament found throughout the building led one early writer to attribute the hotel's style to an Arabian Nights fantasy. But with true Victorian pride he went on to point out that "what the Saracen created in words and fancies, the late 19th century seeks to create in reality, with the aid of wealth, steam and electricity.”¹⁵

Recent speculation concerning, the source of the architectural style of the Tampa Bay Hotel has suggested a specific local influence. David Nolan in his book Fifty Feet of Paradise contends that the Moorish style of both the Ponce de Leon and the Tampa Bay can be traced to a private home built in St. Augustine in 1882. The Villa Zorayda designed by Franklin W. Smith for his winter residence was according to Nolan "...a veritable textbook for an architectural style..."¹⁶ Although a strong connection can be made between the two St. Augustine buildings both in their stylistic reflection of Florida's Spanish colonial heritage and their similar use of concrete and coquina, construction, the Tampa structure would seem only remotely related. For J.A. Wood's design did not rely on Hispano-Moresque examples, but rather was a personal

interpretation derived from a variety of Islamic sources.¹⁷

The success of various forms of Islamic inspired buildings in the late 19th century is well documented, but the Spanish variant was particularly popular in the semi-tropical climate of Florida and California. The choice of a so-called Hispano-Moresque style for the St. Augustine resort as well as a recently completed resort hotel in Pasadena, California was justified as an appropriate reflection of the two regions' Spanish heritage.¹⁸

However, the exotic style for resorts was not restricted by climate or historical linkage, and by the 1890's hotel facades in Philadelphia, Boston and Washington, D.C. featured the ubiquitous horseshoe arcades.¹⁹ Even when the exterior of hotels were designed in a more conventional western revival style, Moorish decorative motifs could be found as part of the interior decor, often as the ornamental setting for so-called "Smoking Parlors."²⁰

As the 19th century drew to a close Islamic-inspired motifs continued to appear on buildings associated with entertainment. Even in the early years of the 20th century the exotic ornament of the Alhambra became a prototype for countless movie theaters throughout the country. But of all the pleasure palaces built in the so-called Moorish Revival none ever surpassed the luxurious fantasy of Henry Plant's creation. For as a contemporary writer so aptly states, the Tampa Bay Hotel is where "...a gentleman's residence is exaggerated to a scale of positive magnificence."²¹

NOTES

¹ Tampa Bay Hotel, (a promotional brochure reprint), Press of Wynkoop, Hallenbeck, Crawford Company, Albany and New York, 1897, p. 2.

² Ibid, p. 2.

³ Ibid, p. 2.

⁴ Harris H. Mullen, A History of the Tampa Bay Hotel, University of Tampa Foundation, Tampa, Florida, 1981, p.2.

⁵ Barbaralee Diamondstein, Buildings Reborn: New Uses, Old Places, Harper & Row, 1978, p. 198.

⁶ Tampa, op. cit., p. 2.

⁷ Washington Irving, The Alhambra; a Series of Tales and Sketches of the Moors and Spaniards, Carey & Lea, Philadelphia, 1832.

⁸ Gerald S. Bernstein, In Pursuit of the Exotic: Islamic Forms in Nineteenth Century American Architecture, (unpublished doctoral dissertation), University of Pennsylvania, 1968. pp. 88-151.

⁹ Patrick Conner, Oriental Architecture in the West, Thames and Hudson, London, pp. 131-153.

¹⁰ Clay Lancaster, Architectural Follies in America, Charles E. Tuttle Co., Rutland, Vermont, pp. 87-97.

¹¹ Bernstein; op. cit., pp. 119-120. Wood was also the architect of two other Islamic inspired buildings in Tampa, the Old Hillsborough County Court House and the DeSoto Hotel. Unfortunately both have been destroyed.

¹² Tampa, op. cit., p. 12.

¹³ W. C. Prime, "The Tampa Bay Hotel", New York Journal of Commerce, 1896, p. 22.

¹⁴ Tampa, op. cit., p. 2.

¹⁵ Prime, op. cit., p. 22.

¹⁶ David Nolan, Fifty Feet of Paradise, Harcourt Brace, Jovanovich, New York, 1984.

¹⁷ Bernstein, op. cit., p. 120. Besides the Tampa Bay Hotel's connection to the Moorish palace of the

Alhambra some architectural historians have noted that the jig-saw motifs of the ornate veranda may have been influenced by Indian mogul sources. See: Clay Lancaster, "Indian Influences on American Architecture of the XIXth Century." Marg (Pathways), Bombay, 6:20; 1953.

¹⁸ David Gebhard, "The Spanish Colonial Revival in Southern California (1895-1930)", Journal of Architectural Historians, 26:132, 1967. The Pasadena Hotel cited by Prof. Gebhard as having "...as much Islamic as Mission" influence was the Green Hotel designed by Frederic Louis Roehrig.

¹⁹ Islamic decoration appeared in three Philadelphia hotels designed by Angus Wade in the 1890's. The Washington, D.C. example was called "The Cairo" and was built in 1894. In Boston, J.L. Faxon's "Hotel Victoria" was designed in 1886 with elaborate Islamic terra cotta detail. The building is still extant.

²⁰ Bernstein, op. cit., p. 132. An example of a so-called "Moorish Smoking Parlor" could be found in Boston's "Flower Hotel", designed in the early 1890's by the architect Louis Haberstroh. op. cit., p. 23

²¹ Prime,

BALLAST POINT: A PHOTOGRAPHIC ESSAY

By **PATTIE DERVAES**

During the 1890's and the early 1900's Ballast Point was little known, sparsely settled, a cattle pasture around the point and the peninsula. There were few automobiles, even fewer roads.

Ballast Point was the "in" place for Tampons to go on a Sunday afternoon, with the family picnicking, beautiful walkways for the ladies to stroll and admire the tropical plants and flowers, and to swim in the clear Hillsborough Bay around the oriental Pavilion.

After a full day of amusement at the park, they returned to their homes on the streetcars by which they had come, filling the seats, standing in the isles, hanging out the windows. Safety was not always the main consideration.

There were other places in the immediate area; places of recreation, boating, shopping and the exclusive Tampa Yacht Club.

Ballast Point Park still remains a well cared for picnic and fishing area, now a City park. The surrounding neighborhood is prosperous, changing and interesting.



Post Card. A south side view of the Ballast Point Pavilion, showing the bath house built out over the water and its reflection in the clear, calm Hillsborough Bay.

-courtesy of Pattie Dervaes



An aerial view of Ballast Point Park, Tampa Yacht Club to the south, Tampa Gun Club to the north, and Davis Islands still under construction across the bay. The bicycle race track, no longer in use, can be seen across from the park and the Gun Club.

-courtesy of Tampa Public Library



Post Card. A view of the pavilion from the Hillsborough Bay. The two story toboggan was very daring and exciting. The dining room is on the right, overlooking the water. Shore dinners were served here. The zoo, with bears, monkeys, racoons and deer, in cages, was an interesting exhibit. Aligators were in a round, cement pen near the center of the park, while peacock roamed the grounds freely. The concession booths, operated by an elderly Japanese retired Naval officer named Y Yokameksu, consisted of a shooting gallery, billiards and a ball game. These booths can be seen at the far left of the picture.

-courtesy of Pattie Dervaes



Post Card. A view of the pavilion from inside Ballast Point Park, showing the oriental construction, the open air dance floor on the second floor and the beautiful landscaping around the walkways.

-courtesy of Pattie Dervaes



Post Card. A view of the boardwalk, which ran from the pavilion to the concession stands at the west end of the park. Notice the boardwalk worked around the tree. The electric lights made strolling in the evening a very pleasant event.

-courtesy of Pattie Dervaes



Post Card. A view of the gazebo located in the center of the park. Band concerts on Sunday afternoons were held there, as well as other programs. The message written on the back of the post card is: Tampa, March 17, 1911. Dear friends, It's a pleasure to tell you that I am having a grand time. Find everything in good shape, and I think you could be comfortable should you want to do Tampa. The rooms are from \$5.00 to \$7.00 for week, 2 in a room. They inform me that good table board near here is \$4.00 for week. I hope to see you soon. Sincerely, Jim.

-courtesy of Pattie Dervaes



Post Card. A view of the grounds at the west end of the park. It is postmarked July 21, 1912. The Tampa Yacht Club is pictured, center, and there is no sign of the boardwalk or the concession booths.

-courtesy of Pattie Dervaes



Post Card. Mr. Arthur S. Dervaes, Sr. was the first superintendent of Ballast Point Park when Tampa Electric purchased the park from Mrs. Chapin. The superintendent's home was in the park, where several of the Dervaes children were born. The home can be seen in the left background. Pictured, from right to left: Flora, who died the summer she graduated from high school; Rachelle, who married Gibson Gowland of Hell Harbor fame; Arthur; Jules; Albert (Beck); and Paul



The Buckeye Grocery, located on Bayshore Boulevard at the foot of Knights Avenue, was owned and operated by Clair and Minnie Cogan. It was also a streetcar stop. Note the tracks between the store and the red brick Bayshore road. Ralph Gower, 15 years old at the time, was the grocery boy. He took orders over the phone and delivered them in the delivery truck. Free delivery!

-courtesy of Mrs. Minnie Cogan



A view of the Ballast Point Pavilion after the hurricane of 1921. The bath house lies in the water. The little wooden dragons were blown from the roof or twisted about. A huge tree lies across the beach. Windows are blown out. It took months to clean up the debris. The splendid pavilion never returned to its former grandeur. It burned to the ground in August 1922.

-courtesy of Tampa Public Library



The Buckeye Grocery after the hurricane of 1921, showing the electric and telephone poles lying across the streetcar tracks, the destruction of the building as well as the shore under it around the pilings. Some of the sturdy pine trees weathered the storm very well.

-courtesy of Mrs. Minnie Cogan



The Allen boat dock on Bayshore Boulevard, at the foot of Hawthorne Road, about 1920. It was a meeting place for young people in the neighborhood. The walkway went completely around the boathouse at the end of the long dock. It is thought to have been built by Mr. Pierce, who worked for the Phosphoric Plant in Polk County. He kept his two yachts under the boathouse. There was a dance floor on the second floor, where he held parties, picnics and dances. He sold it to Mr. Allen.

-courtesy of Mrs. Imogene Hatzel Worth



The girls, acting cute on the Allen Dock, with the Wallace F. Stovall home in the background, at the right. After the hurricane of 1921, the dock was destroyed and never rebuilt. All that remains today are 15 pilings still standing in the water, which can be seen at either high or low tide, and a concrete floor on the bottom of the bay.

-courtesy of Mrs. Imogene Hatzel Worth



The rubble of the famous Ballast Point Pavilion lies on the shore, while the new pavilion is being erected over the water, about 1925. At this point in Tampa's history, there were many automobiles to take people to many recreation places other than Ballast Point. This last pavilion, even in its heyday, never became the showplace and central attraction as Mrs. Chapin's oriental Pavilion.

-courtesy of Tampa Public Library



The arbor, located midway into Ballast Point Park, had seats on either side, with a latticed top where honeysuckle vines covered it for shade. The Norman B. Hamm family lived in Gary and spent many Sunday afternoons in the park. They rode the streetcar from Gary to Ballast Point. Pictured, from left to right: Elmer, 7 years old; Myrtle; Florence; Mrs. Hamm; Clarence; Beatrice (Mrs. J.A. McLaughlin), 12 years old. Picture taken in 1924.

-courtesy of Mrs. J.A. McLaughlin



The fire that destroyed the Tampa Yacht Club in 1938. Ballast Point Park is to the right of the picture.

-courtesy Mr. George Woodham

The 1984 D. B. McKay Award has been given to Frank A. Garcia.

Born in New York in 1946, Frank moved to Florida at the age of one year, attended Tampa schools and eventually graduated from Jefferson High School. He served in the U.S. Navy and entered the work force as an insulator. As nourishment for the body he has worked in this field for the past 20 years; his nourishment of the soul comes from his true love - discovery.

Frank's first discoveries of fossil fragments near the shores of Lake Okeechobee in South Florida fired a lifelong independent study of paleontology that has led him to some of the most remarkable specimens documented in scientific history. He -is respected by the professionals in the paleontological field across the world, is a research associate with the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., and has many specimens currently on display in museums across the nation.

In 1973 he discovered the largest and most complete dolphin skull to date. In 1974 he published his first book, Illustrated Guide to Fossil Vertebrate, and currently has two books being printed, one of which is the story of his finding of the fantastic fossil site in South Hillsborough County in June of 1983. The discovery has turned the eyes of the world to Florida's West Coast for the last year.

The spectacular fossil discovery in Ruskin has been dated at 1.5 to 1.9 million years old and could represent the most significant fossil deposit in North America, far surpassing the La Brea tar pits in Los Angeles. Most unusual is the number of

individual species found at one location - to date estimated at 72 different species.



-photo courtesy of Robert Vande Weghe

THE 13TH ANNUAL BANQUET OF TAMPA HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Outgoing President Randy Stevens (on the far right of the photograph) applauds our guest speaker Marjory Stoneman Douglas. Incoming President Richard S. Clarke to the left of Ms. Douglas) and master of ceremonies Hampton Dunn stand by the guest speaker.

-photo courtesy of Robert Vande Weghe

Every President of Tampa Historical Society has left a legacy behind them, and Randy Stevens, president of Tampa Historical Society from 1982 to 1984 was certainly exceptional in his goals and accomplishments. Randy came into the Presidency with a desire to publish a new



Marjory Stoneman Douglas and Adele Clarke are seated at the guest table while Dr. L. Glenn Westfall, executive director, and President Richard S. Clarke stand behind them.

-photo courtesy of Robert Vande Weghe

book on Tampa, and his efforts resulted in the publication of Tampa, The Treasure City. Although the idea of a new book had been discussed in previous administrations, it was Randy who gave the leadership needed for such a tremendous undertaking. His goal to publish the book was gifted with the talents of two authors, Tony Pizzo and Dr. Gary Mormino. Their combined talents resulted in a touch of artistry in their words and photos which reflected Tampa's past.

Randy's presidency was highlighted with excellent lectures and events for members, the tribute to his accomplishments was shared not only with our members but also our guest speaker, Marjory Stoneman Douglas.

Ms. Douglas, has been described by writer John Ricks: "Like a Florida mosquito, she's little but she stings. Almost 90, she's still a crusader, a battler, a tiger whose only shortcoming may be taking on too much. Her eyesight is failing but her vision in matters environmental remains crystal clear."

Marjory "wowed" them. A standing ovation was given to her after an eloquent introduction was given by Master of Ceremonies Hampton Dunn. Marjory then spoke from her heart, magnetizing the audience. At the conclusion of her speech, Marjory was given the prestigious D.B. McKay Award for her contributions to Florida's environmental survival.

The Presidency of Tampa Historical Society passed on to Mr. Richard S. Clarke, on this December 7th evening.

"Dick" began his presidency with long term goals for the organization. Among Dick's goals have been more active participation of Tampa Historical Society in its community.

He is currently serving his second term as president, and at the 14th Annual Banquet, he and vice-president Wayne Bevis have set new goals for gaining new members for T.H.S. in its desire to serve the public.

BOOK REVIEW

By JAMES W. COVINGTON

Their Number Become Thinned: Native North American Population Dynamics in Eastern North America, Henry F. Dobyns, University of Tennessee Press, no price listed, 1983.

The greatest loss of American Indian population was due to diseases introduced by the white men rather than wars, slave hunts or starvation. The native North Americans had little or no immunity against such diseases as smallpox, measles, bubonic plague, typhus, diphtheria, cholera and scarlet fever. In one hundred years after the Spaniards came to Central Mexico it was estimated that due to disease the population was reduced by 95 percent. This great loss of population was due to lack of immunity and subsequent development of virulent strains of virus, complications among people who have heavy melanin deposits in the skin and lack of life-support systems during illness.

The area inhabited by the Timucuan speaking bands in Florida is used by the author as a case study in which food resources are examined, the social structure and estimation of population." For those persons interested in the pre-Seminole Indians of Florida, this book is a "must-see." It examines in detail edible wild plants, sources of animal protein, cultivation of plants, population and settlement demography and finally, the rise of epidemics among the natives when the white man comes and decline of population. Table 27 contains a list of

epidemic disease episodes among Native Americans of Colonial Florida from 1564-1727.

Dr. Dobyns has done an excellent job in writing this book. The research is thorough and it represents a major advance into the effect of disease upon the North American Indian, especially of the Florida peninsula.

ANNUAL REPORT TO TAMPA HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Richard S. Clarke

Fourteen years old and going strong in this year of 1984. The Tampa Historical Society is indeed becoming an item of history in Tampa town on our great west coast area of Florida.

Who could help but notice the intense building and growth activities, which to quote the prophets of today "this is the hot spot and the future of this country". Should we then turn among ourselves and ask could this be possible had not the history of Tampa been etched in permanence for all to remember, thus giving guiding light to those who now add to our present and future.

But we cannot rest our laurels, be they ever so humble, for we must continue to preserve those traditions and standards which we

have inherited. Among those accomplishments which we should seek would be the improvement and enlargement of our headquarters so that it may serve a purpose for not only our members but for the community at large. Our acquisitions must also grow and with growth comes the details of cataloging, recording, storage and preservation. We should sponsor promotions to search out our possessions in order to pass them on to society that they might best be used by those who follow.

There is always the need for financial aid as there remains the constant and everpresent requirement for improvement, maintenance and expenses of operation. Your help as a member can be utilized in the need to broaden and expand our active rolls. I would

challenge each of you to just add your family members in the next year and see

what it would do to our 500 member list of today, for as we face the future there are a number of projects on the horizon that require a strong and growing membership.

Your officers and directors join with me in the pleasure of serving you. As the future looms ahead, I am sure they will request from you the type of programs, meetings, socials, and other activities that are most enjoyable.

A debt of gratitude is owed by the society to those who give their time and effort in operating the Tampa Historical Society: Dr. Glen Westfall, our executive director and editor of the quarterly, for his overall service, guidance, and attendance of regular meetings; our ladies of the house, Mrs. Kathy Parrish, Mrs. Sam Latimer and Mrs. Jean Marsicano for their house activities; the directors for their dedication, service and attendance; your vice-president, Mr. Wayne Bevis, for his great counsel; Mr. Howell McKay for his overseeing of finances and others to numerous to mention but of equal assistance.

Yes, the future does look bright and there appears to be a solid purpose and use for our society. Won't you join me in working toward that end? It has indeed been a privilege and an honor to have been in service this year.

Richard S. Clarke

1984 *SUNLAND TRIBUNE* PATRONS

Tampa Historical Society wishes to express its sincere thanks to the following individuals and organizations who have generously contributed \$25.00 or more for the publication costs of this issue of the *Sunland Tribune*.

Helen F. Allen
B-K Rentals
Richard H. Blank, M.D.
Joe C. Byars
Annie-Kate B. Carpenter
Virginia Carte
Mr. and Mrs. Ballard Carte, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Mack T. Christian
Richard and Adele M. Clarke
James A. Clendinen
Anthony W. Cunningham
Bobbie C. Davis
Mr. and Mrs. Samuel A. Davis
Mr. and Mrs. Sam F. Davis
Winifred G. Davis
Louis and Helen De La Parte, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. E. B. Dodson
David Falk Foundation
Mrs. David A. Falk
Eva C. Fowler
Garrison Glass Co., Inc.
Stapleton D. Gooch IV
Guelda Gregory
Greiner Engineering
Mrs. Jack Griffin
Havatampa Incorporated
Leland M. Hawes, Jr.
F. J. Howard
Guy King, Jr.
Mrs. Lawson P. Kiser
Dr. and Mrs. Victor Knight
Mr. and Mrs. Julian B. Lane
Evelyn E. Lovett
Murphy Mansfield and R. J. Duff
Miriam W. Marcus
Rafael and Cecilia Martinez-Ybor
Mr. and Mrs. J. D. Midulla
Mrs. Eleanor G. Murray
Marie W. Major
Donald McKay

Mr. and Mrs. Herbert G. McKay
Mr. and Mrs. Howell A. McKay
Mr. and Mrs. T. Burt Nelson
Mr. and Mrs. C. D. Newbern
Mr. and Mrs. Lester Olson
Louise M. Olson
F. T. Pachler
George W. and Mary Lou Phillips
Sallie Mae Phillips
Rood and Associates
Chase M. Rotureau
Arsenio M. Sanchez
Bernard A. and Jeanne Sanders
Mrs. D. G. Sansbury, Jr.
Stephen W. Sessums, P.A.
E. Lamar Sparkman
Spicola Hardware Co., Inc.
Patricia Fisher Stowers
Charlotte Anne Thompson
J. Thomas Touchton
Martha C. Ward
Western Waterproofing Company
L. Glenn Westfall
Joseph J. and Vilma Zalupski