

FRIENDS OF THE MUSEUM OF THE EVERGLADES

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WHO ARE WE?

Established in 1988, The Friends of the Museum of the Everglades is a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation dedicated to supporting the Museum of the Everglades through fund raising for programs and acquisitions as well as providing volunteer services. Our efforts brought statewide recognition to Everglades City, honored as *Florida's Outstanding Rural Community of the Year, 1998.*

Friends of the Museum of the Everglades

P. O. Box 677

Everglades City, FL 34139

<http://www.evergladesmuseum.org/>

Volunteer Opportunities with the Friends of the Museum ...

**Meet people from around the world
and across the street.**

**Contact Museum for details
239-695-0008**

The Museum of the Everglades is a Collier County Museum. Located at 105 West Broadway, Everglades City, FL, the Museum is OPEN Tuesday thru Friday, 9AM to 5PM, Saturday 9AM to 4PM.

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FRIENDS OF THE MUSEUM OF THE EVERGLADES



The Old Laundry Building

Built in 1927 by Barron G. Collier as the laundry for his company town, the Laundry Building was restored to its current condition in 1997. The Museum of the Everglades was opened in April 1998 and has been visited by people from the four corners of the earth. The exhibits chronicle the 2,000 years of Southwest Florida history from the Calusa Indians through the Collier era and beyond to the present day. *Great Floridians* Deaconess Harriet Bedell and David Graham Copeland are honored with plaques at the entrance.

OUR HISTORY

The village of Everglades was settled in the 1870's by William Smith Allen, a Connecticut Yankee living in Key West during the Civil War. His farmlands and house were bought in 1889 by George W. Storter, Jr., who had migrated here from Georgia with his father and brother in search of a frost-free climate.

In 1921, flamboyant advertising mogul Barron Gift Collier took over the Storters' holdings as headquarters for his agricultural interests in the area. The state legislature created Collier County out of the acres he owned, on condition that the new county complete the Tamiami Trail from Naples to the Dade County line.

Collier filled in land to the east of the Barron River before laying out the streets and avenues. He built houses for his staff and the necessary infrastructure for the engineering center and county seat. There was a grocery, laundry, Post Office, Bank, Inn, Community Center, jail and Court House. He operated a telephone service, published a newspaper, and provided medical care from his hospital.

It was from this base that 76 miles of road through uncharted swamp was completed in the five short years between 1923 and 1928. In addition, the town was linked by rail to the Atlantic Coast Line.

Unfortunately, only a few of the original buildings remain: Bank, Railroad Depot, Rod & Gun Lodge, bulk oil station, Ivey House, original Collier County Courthouse, some private dwellings, and the old Laundry Building.

THE OLD LAUNDRY BUILDING EVERGLADES CITY

BEFORE



Photo Courtesy FME

The dedication date of the Museum April 26, 1998 coincided with the opening of the Tamiami Trail in April 26, 1928. The Friends sponsor a "Birthday" party in April to commemorate both events.

AFTER



Photo Courtesy Carol Moseman

OUR FOUNDER *Pauline Reeves* *(1941-2005)*



Photo courtesy of Everglades Echo

Through the efforts of the indefatigable Pauline Reeves, the dilapidated 1927 Laundry Building was restored for use as a museum, added to the Collier County Museum system, and placed on the National Register of Historic Places. September 22, 2001. She also established the Friends organization to support the Museum in continuing its emphasis on this rural community.

The front lobby of the building was dedicated as the Pauline Reeves Gallery in 2000 and, since then, has been host to local artists including an annual exhibit by students from Everglades City School.