

Book Reviews

Hallandale Bill McGoun, *Boynton Beach, Fla.* : "Star Publishing Company, 1976 v, 147 pp. Introduction, appendixes, notes, biographical sketches, plates, index.

This history of the City of Hallandale, sponsored by the local historical society, explores the major development epochs of a little-known Florida community. McGoun sets out to chronicle salient events in Hallandale's past, and put them in a more general context of state and national history. He succeeds by dint of an engaging literary style and a "feel for the town" which compensates for otherwise pedestrian material.

The early decades of this small farming community differed little from similar settlements along the Florida East Coast Railway. A small band of ethnic agriculturists, in this case predominantly Scandinavian, was drawn to Florida through the twin inducements of cheap land and favorable shipping rates to northern markets for their produce. Life was quiet and uneventful, perhaps even boring, except when a hurricane struck or cold weather threatened the crops. This pastoral serenity ended when Hallandale, like most Florida towns was caught up in the "Land Boom" of the 1920's. The newly incorporated city (1927) survived the depths of the depression years which followed in better shape than most of its neighbors for two reasons: it was not saddled with crushing municipal debt, and it had become a center for casino gambling. The casino afforded employment to a sizeable part of the population during hard times, as would the horse and dog tracks of a later day. Apparent infiltration of the city by underworld elements became a legacy of that era. The years of World War II saw the city inundated with servicemen from across the nation, many of whom returned in the post-war boom which still has not abated.

The author has buttressed his narrative, with reminiscences of some Hallandale pioneers, as well as character sketches from his earlier work, *A Biographical History of Broward County*. These vignettes add a personal dimension to the chronology of municipal growth. A brief chapter on the role of black citizens is very well done and adds balance to the presentation. A complete index, which all too often is missing in privately published works, enhances the book's value to scholars. Perhaps the only discordant element is a listing of former city officials which is appended for no discernible reason. However, that does not detract from the overall appeal of *Hallandale*. In sum, McGoun has produced a concise and very readable little book which will be appreciated by the local history buff and the casual reader alike.

Dr. Harry A. Kersey, Jr.

Pelts, Plumes and Hides — White Traders among the Seminole Indians, 1870-1950 Harry A. Kersey, Jr. *The University Presses of Florida*. 158 pp. \$7.50)

In the latter part of the 19th century, frontier trading posts sprang up in South Florida, usually along the rivers. These trading posts provided the Seminole Indians with an outlet for pelts, plumes and hides, as well as with a source for supplies they needed.

Dr. Kersey, a professor of history at Florida Atlantic University, examines the Indian trade on the Florida frontier during the Seminoles' transition "from a subsistence farming and hunting-trapping economy to an agricultural-herding economy." He concludes that the trading relationship led to a mutual understanding and trust not found elsewhere when white and Indian cultures met.

"...the great lesson to be learned... is that two totally different cultures could peacefully coexist in the same environment, drawing from and adding to the other, in a symbiotic existence," he writes. "For what the trader gave in terms of formal education and treatment of disease or as an outlet for goods, he received the Seminole knowledge of herbal medicine, uses of the products of the Everglades, and a constant flow of profitable pelts, plumes and hides.

One of the monograph's most interesting chapters is "Stranahan and Company: On the New River." Working from ledger books of the Stranahan trading post, Dr. Kersey gives a detailed account of transactions between Frank Stranahan and Ivy Cromartie dating back to 1893.

"One of the more profitable Stranahan ventures early in this century was selling baby alligators to novelty shops, primarily in Jacksonville," writes Dr. Kersey "It was reported that he got as many as 5,000 alligator eggs at one time from the Seminoles, paying a nickel each, then hatching them for the tourist trade."

Pelts, Plumes and Hides is a valuable — and readable — historical work by a man widely recognized as an authority on the history and the culture of the Seminole Indians.

Stuart McIver

Yesterday's Palm Beach, by Stuart B. Mc Iver, E.A. Seemann Publishing Inc., Miami, \$9.95.

This is one of those delightful books that combines historical accuracy with readability, the type of history book of which we need more.

As in the other entrants in Seemanns' Historic Cities Series, the story is told mostly by picture. While I'm not sure whether a picture really is worth 10,000 words it, nevertheless, is a lot more interesting.

It should be added, as is noted on the title page of the volume but not on the cover, that the book is not restricted to the Town of Palm Beach but covers most of Palm Beach County as well. There are photos of the early Boca Raton Hotel and Club, the grand arch of Kelsey City (now Lake Park), and Belle Glade's packing house district in 1930.

"Yesterday's Palm Beach" is not a definitive account of that area's history. It makes no pretense to be. Rather, it is an entertaining, well-edited account in words and pictures suitable for either the newcomer wishing a glimpse into the past or the oldtimer seeking to refresh some memories.

—Bill McGoun

Look for in future issues of the *Legacy*.

Harassed, hounded, haunted Dr. Hughes. Broward's first resident doctor finds wilderness life no bed of roses.

Indian shoot out. Wily Sam Jones faces General Thomas S. Jesup in showdown in Broward.

Beacon of hope and safety. Revisit to Broward's Hillsboro Lighthouse.

Gambling and gamblers in rip-roaring Broward. The pros and cons of this controversial pastime.

Done in by reefs and gales. Part II continues the saga of life and adventure on Broward's beaches.

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Pompano Beach Historical Society (Thomas W. Johnston, President)

Ongoing projects include the organization of a museum made possible by the gift of two cottages by the Kester family and the use of a rustic park site donated to the City of Pompano Beach by the Currie family. Society members are currently planning the second annual antique show and sale to be held November 26 through November 28 at the Pompano Beach Recreation Center, 1801 Northeast Sixth Street.

Wilton Manors Historical Society (Dianne Thompson, President)

The oral history of Wilton Manors is being accumulated and an attempt is being made to secure the original city hall for the historical society.

The University School of Nova University Junior Historical Society (Dr. Leonard A. Tomasello, Advisor)

The very first junior historical society in the State of Florida has been organized at the University School of Nova University. The youngsters' initial project has been the publication of a coloring book, HISTORIC BROWARD COUNTY, 1915.

Historic Preservation Board of the City of Fort Lauderdale: in line with a currently ongoing survey (a federally funded project) of the historic area (H-I) of The City of Fort Lauderdale, researchers are requesting persons having knowledge of the area as it was and is, having photographs of structures or historic happenings (for temporary loan, for preservation, or for annotation), or having family memorabilia relating to the historic area, to please contact Mrs. George Bolge, 563-8597 or Mr. Herb Sickle, planning and building department, 761-2121.

GENEVIEVE VELTRI (MRS. FRANK)

Mrs. Veltri has been a Florida resident for 50 years, 25 of which has been in Broward County. She is a graduate of Western Carolina University...and an active worker in Plantation Historical Society, Friends of the Library, Woman's Club, Plantation Community Church, Inner Wheel, and A.A.U.W. ... besides her many duties she has to perform as the wife of Mayor of Plantation, Mother of 3 and Grandmother of 2.