

BUILDING HERITAGE & THE DIGITAL WORLD:

DOCUMENTING THE
EVOLUTION OF
ST. AUGUSTINE'S
BUILT ENVIRONMENT



Fig. 1

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**Governor's House Cultural Center and
Museum is located at the head of the
Plaza de la Constitución; at the center
of St. Augustine's historic district.**

Its library preserves and provides access to historical resources that enhance our understanding and appreciation of St. Augustine's built heritage. The library holds papers from the former state agency, Historic St. Augustine Preservation Board (HSAPB). From 1959 to 1997, the HSAPB researched, excavated, restored, reconstructed, and interpreted buildings from the city's Spanish colonial past.



Fig. 2 Sydney B. Raulerson (left) & Linda Dean (right) of the living history museum San Agustín Antiquo present HSAPB's crest, 1970.

Fig. 1 HSAPB employed a wide range of historians, archaeologists, and other humanities professionals in their reimagining of St. Augustine. Pictured on the balcony of the Arrivas House, 1962 (left to right): Robert H. Steinbach, Rita H. O'Brien, Robert Gold, and Marion E. Randolph.

ufdc.ufl.edu/source

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Fig. 3 The De-Burgo Pellicer House – a reconstructed British colonial era home – exemplifies the HSABP’s transformation of St. George St. during the 1960s & 1970s.

Governor’s House Library collections holds:

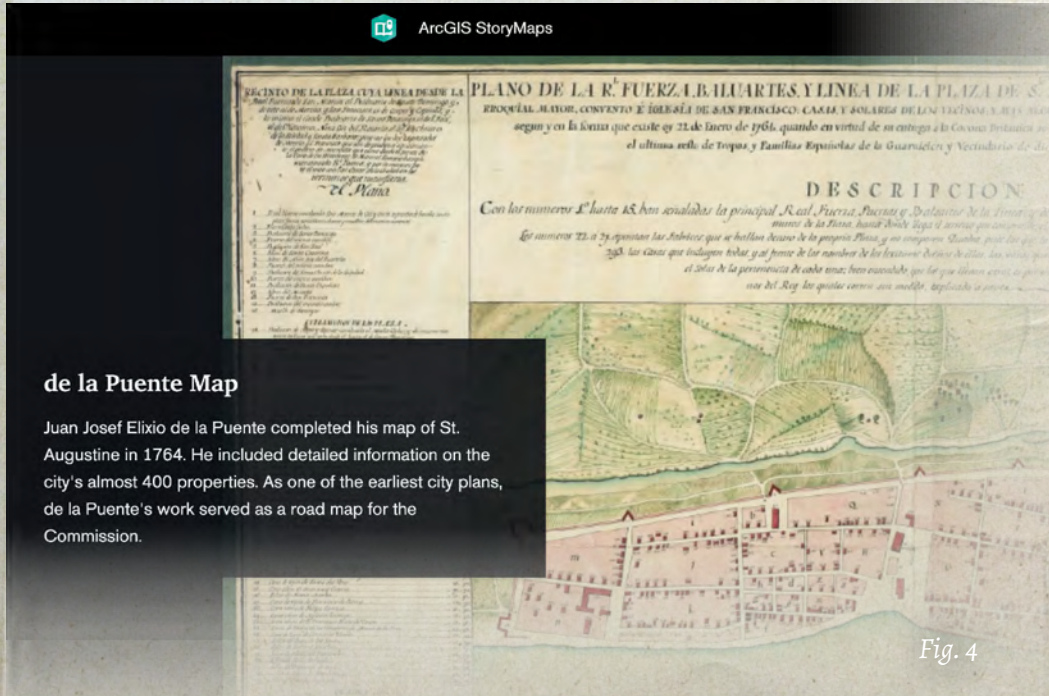
- 104 linear feet of archival material,
- over 800 historic maps,
- nearly 400 design records,
- and 28,000 photographs in print, slide, and negative format.



Their work in archaeology, historic preservation, and public history transformed the city’s streetscapes and laid the foundation for how we see St. Augustine’s past and present. Yet, many do not know the story behind the agency’s reimagining of the colonial presidio.

The University of Florida has held stewardship of the Governor’s House Library collections since 2010, which includes 104 linear feet of archival material, over 800 historic maps, nearly 400 design records, and 28,000 photographs in print, slide, and negative format. To bring this tale out of boxes and to the public, library staff have completed a series of federally funded grants over the past decade to process its collections, digitize a small percentage, and work on some linked data projects. All of this work allowed a shift in our focus to digitization and community outreach.

When COVID-19 hit, developing a digital project that could reach our community safely in their homes became even more of a priority. These efforts culminated in the library’s first digital exhibit, “The Making of Historic St. Augustine,” in October 2020.



de la Puente Map

Juan Josef Elixio de la Puente completed his map of St. Augustine in 1764. He included detailed information on the city’s almost 400 properties. As one of the earliest city plans, de la Puente’s work served as a road map for the Commission.

Fig. 4



Fig. 5

"The Making of Historic St. Augustine" utilizes ArcGIS StoryMaps to reconstruct the HSAPB's narrative through their papers and invites visitors to explore the agency's legacy in an interactive map. The exhibit travels chronologically through St. Augustine's founding in 1565 and its earliest preservation efforts in the 1930's to the over 30 restoration and reconstruction projects completed during the HSAPB's operating years. The exhibit weaves together each of the unique aspects of the Governor's House Library collections. The historical narrative sourced from our research collections is supplemented by images from the library's photograph, map, and architecture collections. It concludes with an interactive map that illustrates the HSAPB's efforts, which remains visible in the landscape of downtown St. Augustine today. Users can select one of the buildings restored or reconstructed and learn more about its history via links to the Governor's House Library blog and Wikipedia articles created or edited by library staff. Through this storytelling, we hope community members, tourists, and students alike learn and think about historic preservation: past, present, and future.

With the completion of Arrivas House, the Commission held a dedication ceremony in 1963 that featured Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson. He gave a speech from the house's restored balcony onto a crowd of onlookers in St. George Street.

Fig. 6



Using a platform that is educational and accessible to anyone, but is cross-functional for our present and future academic partnerships made StoryMaps the natural fit for this digital project and projects we

GOVERNOR'S HOUSE LIBRARY

Governor's House Cultural Center and Museum
48 King St., St. Augustine, FL

Governor's House Library is managed jointly by UF Historic St. Augustine, Inc., & the UF George A. Smathers Libraries.

The Library is open for researchers by appointment Monday - Friday.

will create moving forward. Governor's House Library partners with the College of Design, Construction, and Planning's Historic Preservation program and their Preservation Institute: St. Augustine (PI:SA) field school to aid students' research and on-the-ground efforts to document historic buildings in St. Augustine. Our choice to use StoryMaps as the platform for this exhibit was encouraged by PI:SA staff, as ArcGIS data is frequently consulted in their work.

The online response to this project has been positive and encouraging to us to continue to use our unique collections to provide a different perspective on the modern history of St. Augustine. We will resume digitization efforts this year and hope that this work will allow us to create a series of shorter and more focused StoryMaps that highlight some of the other initiatives of the HSAPB, including their crafts programs, archaeological work, and perhaps specific reconstruction projects in greater detail.

After a year marked by physical distance and isolation, we are excited to continue to create new ways to connect and engage with our community in St. Augustine and beyond.

TO ACCESS "THE MAKING OF HISTORIC ST. AUGUSTINE" AND TO FURTHER EXPLORE OUR COLLECTIONS, VISIT US AT WWW.GOVHOUSE.UFLIB.UFL.EDU.



WHAT'S NEW ON THE BLOG

Rejas: Florida's 16th Century Home Security System

You'll find them on the Hyppo on St. George Street, on homes near the Oldest House, and even on some of the restaurants in the Colonial Quarter. They're called rejas. They're a Spanish architectural feature that serves both a decorative and particularly practical purpose...

[Read more here →](#)

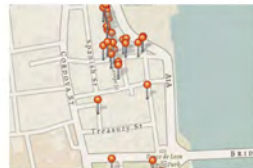


DIGITAL COLLECTIONS

Governor's House Library Digital Collections

Access digitized material from the Governor's House Library collections wherever you are on the Historic St. Augustine collection through University of Florida Digital Collections.

[Explore our collections →](#)



DIGITAL EXHIBITS

The Making of Historic St. Augustine

Explore the history of the Historic St. Augustine Preservation Board through this ArcGIS StoryMap and learn more about their four decade effort to transform St. Augustine's downtown.

[Visit the exhibit →](#)

And, check out our blog: <https://governorshouselibrary.wordpress.com/>

Governor's House Library

Explore St. Augustine's History

