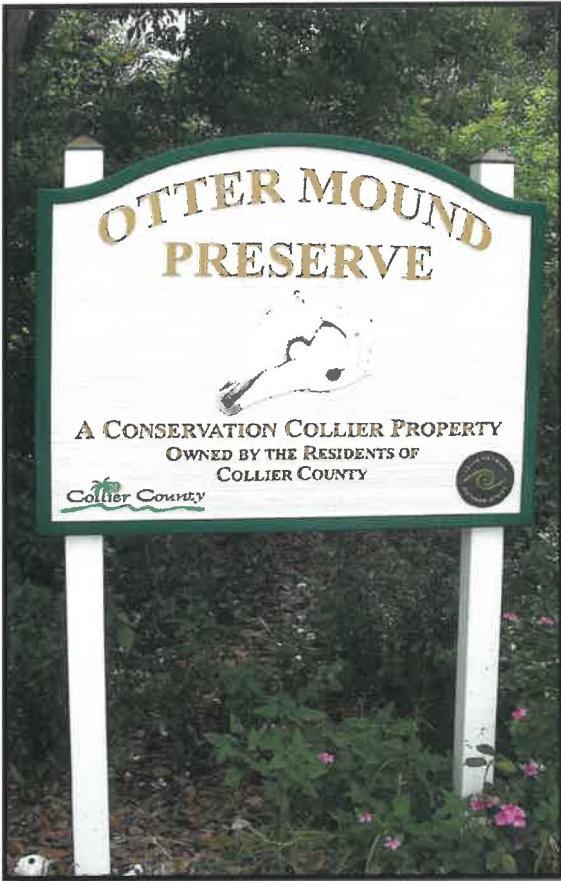


HISTORICAL LANDMARKS



OTTER MOUND PRESERVE

Having nothing to do with the slim-bodied semi-aquatic mammals, a glimpse into the past is possible at the Otter Mound Preserve. Many residents have known about the conch shell wall bordering Addison and Inlet Court in the estate section, but few understood the significance of the historical site and the efforts of former Island resident, Ernst Otter.

Marco's Native Americans, the Calusa Indians, were a seafaring tribe and used canoes to obtain the fish and shellfish that sustained their lives. After hundreds of years of harvesting shellfish, the empty conch shells of the Calusa began to accumulate. Mr. Otter decided to use these shells to his benefit.

The Otter Mound Preserve property has been in the Barfield family for over 90 years. During the clearing and establishment of the Otter Mound paths and walkways of this 1.78-acre nature preserve, indigenous plantings sites of tropical hardwood hammock were discovered; and, as archeologists made excavations, they found either old Indian artifacts or relics from life in the 1800's in Caxambas.

Various theories abound regarding the building of the wall. One theory was the terrace walls were a sluiceway for tidal waters to bring fish into the Caxambas community. Another was that Otter only rebuilt Native American fish trap canals that had been abandoned for centuries. The last theory was that these shell wall terraces held the sandy loam in place for Mr. Otter's vegetable and flower gardens.

The clearance and maintenance of this site was made possible by members of Conservation Collier along with many devoted volunteers from the Marco Island Historical Society. Visitors are asked not to bring pets as the preserve is meant to be a sanctuary for wildlife. Take time to discover Otter's fascination with Marco's ancestors.

MARCO ISLAND'S HISTORICAL CHURCH

The Marco Island Historical Church, completed in 1939, is the first established church on Marco Island. The little church rose from humble beginnings to become one of the most important historical markers on Marco.

An Island schoolteacher, Caroline Kipp, took on the task of establishing the first church after holding Sunday school classes in her home. Caroline and her husband rallied the community to raise funds for building a church for everyone. The community donated money, building materials, transportation and labor to make the church a reality. It stands today as a testament to the spirit of giving and selflessness of the Marco Island Community.

Today, the church is available for weddings, memorial services or any significant ceremony. It is also beautifully decorated each season to celebrate Christmas.



MARCO ISLAND HISTORICAL MARKERS

The Historic Marker Project was the brainchild of the Marco Island Bicentennial Task Force Committee in 1976, marking the eleventh birthday of modern Marco. Community-minded businesses, various organizations, and individuals with Deltona, the Island's developer, got together and raised over \$4,000 to pay for the markers. Led by Chairperson Evelyn Sivier, committee members Jane Hittler and Bud Kirk selected locations, designed the markers, and wrote the inscriptions. The 11 stainless steel markers were set in native lime rock and placed about the island cost about \$300 each. The markers, which dot the island from north to south, were put in place by history buffs and other residents with the support of Collier County officials in the 1970s. ("The Island was an expanding resort community," noted Jane Hittler.)

By 1983, the markers were in need of some repair and maintenance. The Marco Island Beautification Committee decided to use taxpayer money, donations, and volunteer effort to clean up the markers and make them more visible to passing motorists and interested history seekers. The Beautification Committee suggested that individual markers could be adopted by local clubs and organizations to look after them and provide the care, maintenance, weeding, and watering as needed. Most of the markers were adopted and cared for by local organizations until August of 1997 when the City of Marco took over the project. Two markers were added to the original eleven, one at the cemetery for "Those lost or buried at sea" and "Goodland village and the historic curving access road connecting the tops of shell mounds."

In 1936 a bridge to Marco Island was approved as a Public Works project. A wooden trestle type bridge built with a swing span over the channel came from the Caloosahatchee River Bridge at Fort Myers which was being replaced by a concrete structure. It was loaded on a barge and towed to the new location where it served the traffic needs there. Harry Pettit and his wheelbarrow filled in the low spots between the shell mound to create a road to meet the bridge abutment. On Sunday, April 24, 1938, Marco Islanders and their Collier County neighbors celebrated the opening of the new highway bridge and the discontinuance of the ferry operating from the land to Old Marco Road that reached the pass opposite Marco.

By 1991, the plaques were rusting and corroding according to JoAnne Ruitzky former chairwoman and member of the Beautification Committee. Margaret Paulson, then president of the Marco Island Woman's Club, suggested an "adoption policy" to have residents and clubs volunteer care for the sites, said Rusitzky who kept a record of the marker story.

Shortly afterwards another effort was launched to replace the plaques completely. The committee, aided by Collier's Transportation Services Department engineer Steve Fabiano, convinced county officials to pay for new long-lasting, epoxy-coated bronze plaques. The cost to remove the old markers and cast new ones in bronze was \$5,026. At the same time residents, clubs and businesses were found to donate the cost of putting the new markers-mounted in limestone in place. Extensive historical research was also done.

By 1994, the 13 new plaques in 12 locations were erected. Clubs, businesses and, in some cases, property owners of the land where the plaques stand agreed to water, weed, and care for them.

"Those plaques are still in place" wrote Marco Island Eagle newspaper Bureau Chief Charles Winkler in 1999. "Curious residents and visitors can take a self-guided historical tour around the roads of Marco to trace the island's history. In most cases, the plaques, located next to roads and in between new homes and building are the only evidence of ancient Calusa Indians, Victorian Age pioneers, and the societies they represented."

Long time resident and Island activist Jane Hittler, a member of both the county and city Beautification Panels, proposed that the Marco Island Historical Society, of which she was a member, take over the responsibility of making sure the sites were tended and preserved. Winkler's article stated, "Betsy Perdichizzi, past president of the 100-plus-member group, agreed with the proposal. 'I think it's appropriate' Perdichizzi said. 'I would think that the city is more interested in the plantings for the swales and medians and things like that. Whereas, the historical society has a strong interest in the markers and their being maintained. We would work with the city and ask for their help.'"

Jane Hittler, Volunteer

Hittler had long been involved in the preservation of the island's history. In the 1970s, she brought it to the Mackle brothers' attention that they owned a pioneer cemetery hidden beneath overgrown vegetation. At first, the Mackles, owners of Deltona Corp., couldn't believe it. But when Hittler and others showed them proof, Deltona dug in, and cleaned up the site, later donating 9 acres of land for a Youth Center that finally became the YMCA. Hittler became known as grandmother of the Y. She and her husband, Larry, were instrumental in bringing ambulance service to the Naples hospitals and ultimately Health Care to the island, now, the Urgent Care Center. For her work on the Beautification Committee designing the boulevards and plantings of island roadways, Jane Hittler was honored with a Presidential Award. On May 18, 1999, she traveled to the White House and received from the hands of Nancy Reagan the "National Landscape Award, Beautification Marco/Collier County." In 2001, Collier County presented Jane Hittler with the prestigious award few women receive, the "Distinguished Eagle Award, City of Marco Island." Jane Hittler's daughter, Mary Lou Jankowsky, donated her mother's 16 awards and trophies to the Marco Island Historical Museum for safe keeping.

Historical Markers, Locations, Sponsors 1999

Marco Island Marker One, Largest of Ten Thousand Islands, Marco Island, 5,000 B.C. to 1964, evolution of the largest of the 10,000 islands.

Sponsor: Art League. The marker was unveiled in July 1976, according to Marco Island Eagle.

Location: South end of the Judge Jolley Bridge, west side of SR 951 now Collier Blvd. (The marker was relocated to City Hall in 2001 -2008 and updated during the bridge expansion under the leadership of Mike Minozzi City Council Chairman.)

Marker Number Two, Marco Village, Ferry Landing, 1912-1938, site of development of Old Marco; on private property at Ville de Marco condominiums dock on Edington Place, where visitors are asked to park outside the gate and walk in; Ville de Marco Condominium Association.

Sponsor: Kiwanis and Marco Pass Motel.

Marker Three, Marco Village School, 1889; same location, at the northern tip of the island, and caretaker as Marker No. 2.

Marker Four, Captain William D. Collier Home site, circa 1880; Bald Eagle Drive on right side of road when heading south; Residents of Riverside Club

Marker Five, Frank Cushing Archaeological Site, 1895-96, where the Marco Cat was unearthed; a few yards south of Marker No. 4, also in front of Marco Vista, with same caretaker.

Marker Six, Marco Island Cemetery, founded circa 1880 and still in use; Bald Eagle Drive just south of Elkcam Circle on the right; Church of God's Marco Island Cemetery Association, Inc.

Marker Seven, Railroad Turn-A-Round, 1927-1994; from Bald Eagle Drive still heading south, turn left on Bayport Avenue then take fifth right which is Society Court; Island Country Club.

Marker Eight, Caxambas Cemetery, Circa 1890, from Bald Eagle Drive, take left on San Marco Road, right on South Barfield Drive, left on Travida Terrace, and right on Inlet Drive, and the marker is on Inlet between Travida and Olds Court; Jess and Tyler Tateo.

Marker Nine, Kirk Archaeological Site, a Calusa burial mound; from Inlet, take left on Olds to find the marker on left; Marco Island Newcomers Club.

Marker Ten, Burnham Clam Factory, 1904-1929, 1904-1929, back on Inlet Drive, on the curve after Osceola Court; Marco Island Beautification Advisory Committee.

Marker Eleven, Indian Hill and Barfield Home Site, the highest elevation in Southwest Florida, and Caxambas School, 1890-1928; continue on Inlet until Scott Drive, and take a right, marker is on intersection of Scott and Indian Hill; Dr. and Mrs. Robert Folsom.

Marker Twelve, Pineapple Plantation, 1901-1906; back on South Barfield, head north, and marker is on the right just past Hawaii Court; Museum of Models.

Marker Thirteen, Goodland Village and Access Road, with village built on Calusa shell mound; from intersection of South Barfield and San Marco Road, take right on San Marco to Goodland Drive, turnoff just before Goodland Bridge, marker is on the left near painted water tank; Village Productions.

By Betsy Perdichizzi

SELF-GUIDED HISTORICAL DRIVING TOURS

The 1976 Bicentennial Task Force Committee placed Historical Markers at places around the island that hold historical value. Follow this tour for an insight into Marco's fascinating past. Your first or final stop should be video at the Marco Island Historical Museum.

MARKER 1 (Located west side of City Hall, 50 Bald Eagle Drive)

Marco Island is the largest of the Ten Thousand Islands at 6,800 acres. It is one of the oldest places in North America inhabited by ancient Indians over 5,000 years ago. Around 800 A.D. it was the realm of the Calusa Indians. Between 1,500-1,800 the Spanish explored the region. After the Civil War, pioneers from the Southern States formed three settlements, Marco Village, Caxambas, and Goodland. In 1922, Barron Collier purchased Marco Island. Then in 1964, Deltona purchased and developed Modern Marco Island.

MARKER 2A (Located behind the entrance barriers at Ville de Marco, 1206 Edington Place, condos located in Olde Marco adjacent to the boat ramp, under the flag. You can park your car outside the gate, then walk around the gate.) Site of Marco Village, one of the three villages originally located on the island which began about the same time, Marco and Caxambas grew in 1880's, Goodland grew in 1949. Marco Village was settled by the W. T. Collier family who had a mercantile store, hotel, and the Doxsee Clam Factory which was established in 1911. The Caxambas Village was settled by the Barfield and Ludlow families. The Jim and Tommie Barfield family had the mercantile store, post office, and the Burnham Clam Factory which opened in 1904. Goodland Point was settled by Alexander Pettit, a farming family, who turned to fishing and guiding, when they discovered that the rich black earth on the shell mounds was only two inches deep. Goodland Point's name was shortened the summer of 1949 when it grew almost overnight. Barron Collier's sons cleared renters from Caxambas property by making them instant homeowners if they bought company property in Goodland. The Company would move renter's wooden houses free of charge, no money down, reasonable rates, and three years to pay!

MARKER 2B (Also located behind the entrance at Ville de Marco, 1206 Edington Place). Marco Village School at the site of the original Ferry Landing - "Location of one of the earliest schools on Marco Island which was finished in 1889." The school consisted of three rooms and was in session for seven months. During this period, if a student was over 14, they would quit school and work in the clam factory. The first ferry was a one car ferry from Marco Island to what is now Isles of Capri. Eventually, a bigger ferry, which was self-propelled, handled up to four cars thanks to lobbying efforts by Tommie Barfield. The ferry stopped in 1938 when the Goodland swing bridge connected to the mainland.

MARKER 3 (West side of Bald Eagle Dr., 1128 Bald Eagle Dr., in front of Marco Vista Condos). William David Collier's Home Site - Captain Bill Collier is credited with the economic development of Marco in the early years, circa 1880. He built the Old Marco Inn, and later, while digging muck to fertilize his garden he discovered ancient Indian artifacts, wooden materials, carvings and tools made of shell. This discovery ultimately led to Frank Hamilton Cushing's archaeological dig and finding the Key Marco Cat. Captain Bill invented the clam-dredging machine for two clam factories. He served two terms as a Collier County commissioner.

MARKER 4 (Close to above marker). Cushing Archaeological Site - "One of the most important archaeological digs in North America," according to Helmut Nickle, Metropolitan Museum Curator of Armament. Nickle heard about the discovery of the panther lion god with a student in Germany. He never dreamed of living here and helping build a history museum in his retirement years. The two-month Pepper Hearst Expedition was organized in 1896 with Frank Hamilton Cushing discovering the prized artifact of a lion god referred today as the Key Marco Cat. This "cat" is a carving approximately six inches high currently on loan to the Marco Island Historical Museum through 2025. It is permanently housed in the Smithsonian Institution.

MARKER 5 (Located on west side of Bald Eagle Dr., 489 W. Elkcarn Circle, beyond Elkcarn Circle and adjacent to cemetery entrance road). Marco Island Pioneer Cemetery - An "old island cemetery where many settlers and their descendants are buried." Among those buried are the three sons of Captain Bill Collier who tragically drowned at sea during a storm in 1898. The Marco Community Church, Marco Island's first church, was built in 1937 with donations from sawmills and lumber mills spearheaded by Mrs. Caroline Robinson and her Sunday school class of twenty-two

children. The cemetery and the church are still in use today by island residents.

MARKER 6 (Located adjacent to the entrance road to cemetery, west side of Bald Eagle Drive, 400' south of Elkcarn Circle). A memorial plaque located next to this marker is dedicated to "Those lost or buried at sea." "The Lord maketh the storm to cease: So that the waves thereof are still"

MARKER 7 (Bald Eagle Dr. then left onto Bayport until you reach Society Ct. Turn right, proceed to the end of the Cul-de-Sac). Railroad Turn-A-Round - "Presumed to be the "depot" or "turn-a-round" of the old railroad." The Atlantic Coast Line Railway began operations in 1927 to the island to pick up the clams from the J. H. Doxsee and E. S. Burnham cannery operations, making two trips a day. While the train did not carry passengers, it brought wealthy visitors from the north to the islands in their own train-cars. The postmaster met the train at the turn-a-round to pick up mail that was being delivered to the island. Eventually the train stopped when the clam beds were depleted around 1944.

MARKER 8 (South Barfield Dr., northbound across from Wesley United Methodist Church). Fred Ludlow of Ohio developed a pineapple plantation that consisted of over 100 acres. At the time, it was believed to be the largest pineapple plantation in the State. At its peak, he employed 20 workers and had a packing house. Acreage extended as far as the current Shops of Marco shopping center.

MARKER 9 (On Inlet Dr. between Travida Terrace and Olds Ct.). Caxambas Cemetery, Circa 1890 - "Primitive Cemetery, typical of internment practices of the early Florida period." Early settlers and an unknown sea captain are buried there.

MARKER 10 (After visiting Marker 9, continue down to Olds Ct. and take a left). Kirk Archaeological Site - "Calusa Indian Burial Mound with artifacts and bones dating back to ancient times. Ancient Spanish maps indicate fresh water in the area making Caxambas one of the oldest place names in North America." This site was named for Bud Kirk who discovered it. He and Jane Hittler wrote the descriptions and placed the historical markers for the 1976 Bicentennial Task Force Committee.

MARKER 11 (South on Inlet Dr. after passing Osceola Ct.). Burnham Clam Factory - "Operated from about 1904-1929; it was the original clam canning factory in the Caxambas area. It closed its doors when their dredge sank in 1929. Another clam factory on the island, operated by J. H. Doxsee came to their rescue in an effort to keep local residents employed during the Depression. In 1932, however, the Burnham site was destroyed by a hurricane.

MARKER 12 (Scott Dr. and Indian Hill Rd.). Indian Hill and Heights House - Barfield Homesite - Originally "The Heights", highest point in Southwest Florida. Site of J. M. and Tommie Barfield home and the Heights Hotel (1908). "Site of Caxambas School; built in 1898. One of the earliest schools on Marco Island." The Heights Hotel, a 20-room structure seated high atop Indian Hill, featured a panoramic view of the waterways and the Ten Thousand Islands to the south. The hotel was later abandoned, as a Curator of Armament waiting development which failed to materialize.

MARKER 13 (Take S.R. 92 east to Goodland; stay to right into Goodland near painted water tank.) One of the oldest named places in North America, Goodland was built by early settlers on a Calusa Indian shell mound. The access road of clamshells was built single-handedly by Harry Petit using his wheelbarrow to fill in the gaps between the shell mounds thus creating the historic winding shell road 1936 -38. In 1949, the village was established when 18 homes and businesses were moved almost overnight from Caxambas.

SELF-GUIDED TOUR MAP

