

2002

### Editor's Preface

Florida Historical Society  
membership@myfloridahistory.org



Part of the [American Studies Commons](#), and the [United States History Commons](#)

Find similar works at: <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/fhq>

University of Central Florida Libraries <http://library.ucf.edu>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by STARS. It has been accepted for inclusion in Florida Historical Quarterly by an authorized editor of STARS. For more information, please contact [STARS@ucf.edu](mailto:STARS@ucf.edu).

---

### Recommended Citation

Society, Florida Historical (2002) "Editor's Preface," *Florida Historical Quarterly*. Vol. 81: No. 1, Article 3.  
Available at: <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/fhq/vol81/iss1/3>

## Editor's Preface

In 2002, the Florida Historical Society marks its centenary. Organized on 26 November 1902 and chartered three years later, the Society was the successor to the Historical Society of Florida, formed in 1856. According to its charter, the Society's mission was twofold: "the collection, arrangement and preservation of all material pertaining to the history of, or in any manner illustrative of Florida, . . . [and to] prepare, edit and publish articles, sketches, biographies, pamphlets, books and documents, descriptive or illustrative of Florida."<sup>1</sup> To fulfill the second objective, the Society initiated the *Publications of the Florida Historical Society* in April 1908, the predecessor of the *Florida Historical Quarterly*.

Of course, both the collections and the publication depended on whether "our members and friends will sustain us with such financial aid as may be necessary." At the time, annual dues were five dollars, but Society officers still had trouble collecting. "Don't make it necessary for those who are devoting their time and labor in the interest of the Society, without financial compensation, to have to send a second notification to delinquent members," admonished President F.P. Fleming in 1908!

Today, the Florida Historical Society is thriving, and its immediate future is exciting. From its early days in a "commodius" room in the Jacksonville Public Library to its current homes at the Roesch House in Melbourne and the Alma Field Library in Cocoa, the Society has evolved in its mission. Today, the Society is dedicated to the preservation of Florida's past through collection and archival

---

1. All quotes are from "Prospectus," *Publications of the Florida Historical Society* 1 (April 1908): 3-4.

maintenance, through scholarly research and publication, and through public history, historic preservation, and youth education.

As part of the commemoration of the Florida Historical Society's centennial, this special issue returns to one of the Society's original objectives: to publish articles illustrative of Florida. In particular, as the state has become urbanized and as more people move into its burgeoning towns and cities, community has become a major concern of many Floridians, and appeals to history in order to construct community identities have become more common. Inspired by "History and Community in Florida: A Regional Conference," held in 2001 on the campus of the University of Central Florida, the authors in this issue were charged to explore the meaning of "community," the relationships between community and history, and the development of community identities. In his introductory article, Gary R. Mormino presents the larger transformation of Florida that frames this historical problem. Through their respective articles, on a history museum, urban planning, and historic preservation, Bob Beatty, Hugh E. Bartling, and Scott Eidson explore how the historical problem of community has evolved in Orlando and Central Florida. Each illuminates predicaments faced by Central Floridians in uniting their region's past with a sense of community, illustrating Florida's larger historical problem of community as well.

My desire is that all readers will approach the articles objectively, seeking in the contributors' ideas and conclusions opportunities to consider the shaping of Florida, the South, and the United States. In sending forth this issue, I invite readers to share thoughts on its contents, on the themes addressed, and on the ways that "The Best Laid Plans: Community, History, and Urban Development in Central Florida" illustrates an expanding vision for the study of our collective histories and cultures.

Craig Thompson Friend