

ROYAL PALM PARK— Narrative by Sandra Riley
Team Archives Woman's Club of Coconut Grove

1883 -1905—Adventurers and Conservationists

Kirk and Mary Barr Munroe canoe through the Everglades on their honeymoon trip in 1883. In the future, as Florida conservationists with Audubon Societies and Women's Clubs, they preserve birds and hammocks in the Everglades. That same year Teddy Roosevelt makes a trip to the North Dakota Badlands. In the future, as President, he protects nearly 230 million acres of public land.

Women of the 19th century, sensitive to the beauty of the scenic wilderness and their need to improve the living conditions of families, work locally and nationally in conservation and reform (Merchant 58). From the giant Sequoias of California to the Royal Palms of the Everglades in Florida, conservation is woman's work. In 1883, the women of Green Cove Springs organize the Village Improvement Association, the first woman's club in Florida. It is there on 21 February 1895 that delegates from Tarpon Springs, Crescent City, Orange City and Fairfield clubs meet to form the Florida Federation of Women's Clubs (hereafter, FFWC) (Meyer 37).

In 1886, "some ladies" of Philadelphia organize the Pennsylvania Forestry Association (Merchant 63). One of those women is Edith Wright (later our beloved Edith Gifford). A Google search of Edith Wright brings up a biography of "Cornelia Hancock" in *Notable American Women, 1607-1950*. Cornelia, Civil War nurse, charity worker and housing reformer, moves to Wrightsville, South Philadelphia, to work as Resident Agent for Edith Wright. When Edith leases the town in 1884 from its absentee owners (one of them her father, a wealthy shipper), the tenants live in squalor and occasionally pay rent. Edith and Cornelia have houses repaired, provide municipal services, establish a library and savings bank, hire a more competent school principal and visiting physician, banish scavenging pigs, and prove that "enlightened management" can bring financial success as well as reform. Cornelia lives and works in Wrightsville. Edith comes to Florida and saves the Everglades.

In 1891, Mary Barr Monroe is among the founding members of the Housekeepers Club. Both she and Kirk, already civic visionaries, meet John Muir when he visits Coconut Grove in 1898, kindling a friendship and rekindling their interest in forestry conservation.

In 1900, an "inexplicable resurgence" of "feather fashion" calls every bird lover into action to reform milliners and plume hunters (Merchant 72). The National Association of Audubon Societies pushes hard for legislation to protect birds and animals. In 1900, pioneers in Florida form an Audubon Society to save the wild birds. They hire a warden, Guy Bradley, who in 1905 is killed by a plume hunter. Kirk Munroe writes ten leaflets on birds for children's education (Diederich 9). Mary Barr Munroe, militant advocate for plumed birds, gives talks throughout Florida, organizes the village boys into Rangers to defend birds, pens articles in her battle to "Save the Egret," harasses milliners in New York City and accosts plume-hatted women on the streets everywhere.

1905—First Attempt

Edith Wright Gifford moves to Coconut Grove in 1903 and joins Mary Barr Munroe to save Paradise Key and Royal Palm Hammocks. They draft a proposal to bring before the Annual Convention of the FFWC (Vance 5). On 25 January 1905 delegates travel from Miami to Coconut Grove for their afternoon business session. Edith Gifford makes a note of the resolution in the Housekeepers Club Minute Book: "First mention at this meeting of Royal Palm Hammock, its unique features & the great desirability of preserving it as a State Reservation" (HC 1904-1905 p28).

In 1906, Edith Gifford introduces a resolution in the "General Federation of Women's Clubs for the creation of a Conservation Department" (Sherman in HC 1916-1917 p108-109).

Napoleon Bonaparte Broward runs for Governor of Florida on the slogan Drain the Worthless Swamp! As governor 1905-1909, he initiates dredging to reclaim land for agriculture and opens up development. In one heated town meeting 1909, Congressman Frank Clark calls realtors "land sharks," accusing men like H. G. Ralston of selling land not by the acre, but "by the gallon" (Cohen 167-9). Pros and cons of drainage are discussed everywhere, even "around the tea table" at the Housekeepers Club (HC 1907-09 p44).

The 1905 Park resolution stalls, perhaps by indifference, perhaps by confusion over the exact location and/or ownership of the hammocks (Vance 5). Despite long-distance travel, South Florida clubwomen stay connected with the Federation. Mary Barr Munroe takes the chair as president of the Housekeepers Club in March of 1908. On 16 December 1908, she writes to John Muir: "I wonder if you will think I am reaching too high when I tell you that I chair the Forestry Committee of the Florida Federation of Women's Clubs.... Trees. I have always loved trees. And now I am beginning to have heart aches about them" (Holt-Atherton Special Collections Muir Correspondence).

In an article published in the *Miami Metropolis* 3 Dec. 1908, Mary Barr Munroe reports that she and Mrs. Antoinette Frederick traveled alone from Miami to Live Oak to attend the Annual FFWC Convention (HC1907-09 p85). On 11 November 1909, Mrs. Edith Gifford and Mrs. Maria Ingraham attend the next year's convention (HC 1909-10 p4).

The Forestry Department of the FFWC publishes Dr. John Gifford's "Florida Trees" and the Florida Audubon Society publishes the last of Kirk Munroe's leaflets "Florida Birds Worth Their Weight in Gold," to be distributed to school children throughout the State. On 4 May 1910 the Housekeepers call a special business meeting to vote on a proposal requesting members and friends to not wear egret plumes to the club. The club is now a member of the Florida Audubon Society and is doing much work to protect the birds (HC 1909-11 p52b).

1910—Second National Conservation Congress

President Teddy Roosevelt establishes a Conservation Commission and in August 1908, the First National Congress is held in Washington State during the opening of the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Expo. On 5-8 September 1910 the Second National Conservation Congress meets in St. Paul, MN. Women from all over the Nation attend and Mary Barr Munroe, as Forestry Chair of the FFWC, is a delegate. Having heard that the women of the Cliff Dwellers Association had helped make Mesa Verde a National Park, she and Mrs. Barcus of St. Paul draft an announcement to ask all women interested in conservation of our native wilderness areas to meet, not only to exchange views, but also to discuss ways and means.

Chairman of the session that day, Professor Condra ridicules the announcement by criticizing the grammar and punctuation, changing its wording and perverting its meaning. He states in an interview published in the evening paper that he feels no need to apologize for the incident. In spite of the ridicule, Mary returns home with enough confidence and information to know that the women of Florida can and will save Royal Palm Hammock. In defense of Mary and the 800,000 Federated clubwomen of America, Kirk writes a scathing open letter to Professor Condra, which editor Frank Stoneman publishes in the Miami paper and wires to all the significant newspapers in the country (*Herald* 17 Sept. 1910 See appendix p12-13).

On her return from the Congress, Mary and Edith Gifford urge the women of the FFWC to take action on the 1905 Royal Palm Hammock Proposal.

1910 - 1914—Women's Suffrage and the Conservation Movement

There are 800,000 Federated clubwomen throughout the nation speaking out on issues concerning public welfare. Of particular concern is child labor. Greed is claiming the lives of scores of children.

A nationwide women's suffrage campaign is underway. At a General Federation meeting in 1910, Kate Gordon, speaking on the issue, states that the 1900 Census revealed that "117,632 more women than men in the United States were literate." She goes on to say, "We want a world where the opinions of men and women rate equally and then, and not till then, will we be a true democracy" (Merchant 75).

Florida women seem to be of two minds regarding suffrage. Debate continues. On 6 February 1913 at the Housekeepers Club, Mrs. Sue V. Moore gives a paper advocating suffrage, emphasizing the splendid work done by Women's Clubs and what could and would be done if women were allowed to vote and hold office. Mrs. Grace Manlove in her talk against suffrage mentions domestic friction. Mrs. Elsie Paddock and Mrs. Clarkson touch upon the child labor questions and woman's work concerning them. Florence Haden's argument is that women would not change, but would change laws (HC 1911-15 p95-96). Some Florida clubwomen, who had been against suffrage, begin to realize that in order to make laws concerning prison and asylum reform, education, child labor, as well as conservation of our natural resources, women must get the vote. Individual clubs start Legislative Committees. May Mann Jennings chairs the Legislation Department of the FFWC. As Mary Barr Munroe writes and talks about hammocks, pine trees and birds, she wonders when women do get the vote, will they enforce bird protection laws or still wear egret plumes in their hats?

Conservationists of the early 19th century did not have the knowledge of the Everglades unique ecological system that is available today or surely Edith Gifford would have studied it thoroughly. On Everglades Day, 16 February 1911, Edith Gifford reads extracts from articles on the geological formation of the Everglades and the state of land companies' operations. She sends letters to the Ralston Everglades Land Company to adopt Seminole names for their subdivisions, from lists provided by Dr. Gifford and Kirk Munroe (HC 1910-11 p104+). When asked, the Club votes to advise women to buy land in the Everglades. Mr. Walter Waldin's book *Truck Farming in the Everglades* will tell them how to use it (HC 1910-11 p79).

Regarding the Seminoles, the women are of one mind. Edith Gifford writes to the federal government in Washington requesting more land for the Seminoles. The Housekeepers sign Bishop Gray's petition. In it are these words from the Seminole people: "We will go into the 'Glades while white settlers push us on, as long as there is a place for our feet. And when there is no more we will step into the Gulf and pass away" (HC 1910-11 p137).

After 1912 the American Forestry Association ceased to print articles or news items on the work of women in forestry (Merchant 77). Throughout the country, Conservation and Forestry become technical positions no longer available to women. Their influence diminished, the clubwomen of Florida and the Audubon Society struggle to save hammocks and rookeries in the Everglades.

In 1913, Stanley G. Fisher writes an article "The Wonders of Florida" for *American Field*, a national sportsman's journal which also appears in one of the Miami newspapers. Headline reads "National Park Is Advocated For Florida. *American Field* Appreciating the Beauties of This State, Wants Present Legislature to Provide For a National Park." Like Edith Gifford, Fisher begins with a description of the natural formation of Florida. Then he says that "if I had been dictator, I would have drawn a line across the state under Jacksonville," and preserve everything south of that line down "to the tip of the last mangrove root, the last bunch of grass or rock of the Everglades where the mighty Gulf Stream swirls around it like a mill-race." Fisher proposes "to make it all a National Park, an International Park, a park for the whole world to visit." Fisher asserts that "as the world fills up, we must do something no matter the cost or we shall become a mere swarm of low forms of life, tearing one another in a desert." In conclusion, Fisher concedes that we may have to start small. He appreciates what has been done by the Audubon Society in their desperate effort to save the birds by finding and protecting breeding places. Fisher is "thankful for this beginning" (HC 1912-13 p111).

Women's clubs begin to form in towns closer to the Paradise Key and Royal Palm Hammocks. These pioneer women of the 'Glades would become important to the Royal Palm Project. The earliest is the Longview Women's Club founded in May 1911, then the Women's Industrial Club of Detroit, now Florida City, in October 1911. Other area clubs are the Princeton, Redland, and the Homestead Woman's Club founded in September 1914 is active to this day (Blakley).

1914 - 1915—Legislation

May Mann Jennings becomes President of the FFWC in November 1914. Working as aide to her father, Senator Austin Mann, during the 1891 Legislative Session, gains her the political experience to help her husband William S. Jennings become Governor. From 1901-1905, she serves as First Lady of Florida. This background and her boundless energy more than qualify her to lead the fight to stop exploitation and to save Royal Palm Hammock on Paradise Key.

May puts into action the Munroe/Gifford 1905 Proposal to preserve Royal Palm Hammock as a State Reservation. On 3 December 1914, she writes to her officers outlining her plan of action. Thankfully, only a few women, wary of the financial burden for the Federation, oppose. Most are in favor. Instinctively she knows she must work fast. Friends are important. Mrs. Florence Cay, wife of Tallahassee businessman and legislator, phones Mrs. Trammell, wife of the Governor and Federation member, to "touch on the subject." May goes to Tallahassee alone. The *Tallahassee Weekly* reports: "Mrs. Wm. S. Jennings, of Jacksonville, the brilliant wife of former Governor Jennings" is making a brief visit to the Capitol city, and is being "charmingly entertained at the Governor's mansion by Mrs. Park Trammell." The Governor promises to bring May's request before the next meeting of the Trustees of the Internal Improvement Fund (IIF). Meanwhile, May Jennings and Florence Cay visit Cabinet members who are also Trustees (Vance 8-9).

In the minutes of the IIF meeting on 23 December 1914, the trustees discuss, then write a letter authorizing Mr. W. J. Tweedell and Mr. F. J. Powers "to prevent any trespass" upon Royal Palm Hammock (IIF 609-10). Mrs. Tweedell, a member of the Homestead Woman's Club, perhaps plays a part in this small, but important step in the process.

On 24 December 1914, May Jennings' Park Proposal comes before the IIF. The Trustees resolve that the Royal Palm Hammock be set apart for the "perpetual use and enjoyment of the people of the State of Florida as a State Park, on the condition that the same shall be improved, beautified and maintained by the Florida Federation of Women's Clubs." The Trustees reserve the right to determine "whether the above conditions are being performed by the said Federation of Women's Clubs, and in the event of a failure, to revoke, annul and make void this resolution and to assume full control, management and disposition of the aforesaid land and State Park" (IIF 610-11 See appendix p14).

The Trustees plan to visit South Florida in January and ask May "not to release the news to the public until after that time." The Jennings family celebrate Christmas. On the next day May, with her husband Governor Jennings and their son S. Bryan Jennings, leave for Miami on "a round of official Federation visits" (Vance 10). May can only guess as to the reasons for the Trustees' delay. Her motives are clear and a visit to the site can only strengthen her belief in the Park's possibilities.

On 28 December 1914, the Jennings family depart Miami on their journey to Paradise Key with three Miami clubwomen: "Mrs. T. V. [Mary Sorenson] Moore, Vice President at large of the Federation; Mrs. A. Leight [Martha] Monroe, President of the Miami Woman's Club and Chair of the Federation's Home Economics Department; and at Coconut Grove, Mrs. Kirk [Mary Barr] Munroe, President of Coconut Grove's Folio Club, Chair of the Bureau of Information and Historian of the Federation." At Homestead they are joined by "Mrs. T. E. [Floretta] Evans, President of the Woman's Club and Mrs. L. L. [Lily Lawrence] Bow." All express delight and agree that the Hammock should be secured by the Federation for a State Park (Jennings 12-13). May writes to Mrs. Hocker that the hammock is actually an island and the palms beautiful. She can see now why the women "down in that part of the country" are very enthusiastic over the Park subject (Vance 10).

1915—Royal Palm State Park Legislation

In January, the Trustees visit the hammock and approve the Federation's proposal. Vance calls this a "quiet but dramatic change in policy" and "an important moment in the history of Florida conservation" (Vance 10).

May and the Federation officers meet with Mr. James Ingraham, Vice President of the Florida East Coast Railway. They decide that since the State holds title to the lands, they should ask the legislature "to cede the lands to the Federation for park purposes, and to designate the hammock as the Royal Palm State Park (Jennings13)." Governor Jennings drafts the bill calling for the state to deed to the Federation 960 acres to supplement the 960 acres promised by Mrs. Mary Lily Kenan Flagler and asks for \$1000 for park maintenance. The bill receives little attention and almost dies in committee (Vance 11).

Meanwhile, vandals steal exotic plants and palms. May sends a contingent from Miami to check on the hammock and stir up more support. According to the 6 May 1915 issue of the *Homestead Enterprise*, "Last Sunday [2 May], Dr. John and Mrs. [Edith] Gifford of Coconut Grove visited the Royal Palm Hammock at the request of Mrs. Jennings and in the interest of the state federation. They were accompanied by Professor Charles and Mrs. [Flora] Simpson of

Little River, Mr. [Charles A.] Mosier of Lemon City, Mrs. Florence P. Haden and Miss [Olive] Callahan of Coconut Grove, and were joined at Silver Palm by Dr. Hiram and Mrs. [Mary] Byrd and at Redland by Mrs. A. M. [Flora] Blakesley. The Woman's Club of Redland is especially interested in the conservation of this hammock, and will have an earnest botany study department (Blakley)." The botanists on this visit subsequently publish articles and give talks. In one way or another all are vital to the project.

May Jennings urges the 6,000 members of the Federation to write letters to their House and Senate legislative delegates. She publishes pamphlets "extolling the virtues of the hammock," takes them to Tallahassee and gets them into the hands of every lawmaker (Vance 11).

In her argument to the legislators, May includes these words of Charles Simpson: "I have been in Honduras, all over the west half of Cuba, the entire island of Jamaica, Haiti and practically all over the warmer parts of Florida, but never have I seen elsewhere such an ideally glorious view of tropical vegetation. Whoever named this 'Paradise Key' had a genuine inspiration (Jennings 26)."

In Tallahassee, May lobbies herself into exhaustion and must go home to Jacksonville.

1915—Last Day, Last Chance

The Legislature is scheduled to recess 4 June 1915 and "it would not meet again for two years." May's husband and son remain at the Capitol to push legislation. On 2 June her son Bryan sends May a telegram: "House passes Park Bill." The next day her husband sends a telegram: "Park Bill passed Senate midnight" (Vance 11). The Bill had been left to the very last minute before recess. On 5 June Governor Park Trammell approves and signs into law the first and only State Park created by a Legislative Act (HC 1914-15 p73 See appendix p15).

By this law, the Florida Federation of Women's Clubs becomes the only Federation in the United States to own a State Park. Soon after the law is passed Mrs. Mary Lily Kenan Flagler donates 960 acres as an endowment (Jennings 14).

Timing is everything. This was the right thing to do and the right time to do it. If left to the 1917 legislative session, America would be at war and it is doubtful that the Royal Palm State Park could be created at all. Furthermore, without the clubwomen of Florida's tireless maintenance there might have been no Everglades National Park. Today we might be sitting in a desert with no drinking water.

The Federation designates a Park Committee and appoints Edith Gifford Chair. Safety of the Park is a main concern. The Federation posts Trespass Notices everywhere in the State Park, warning that removal of any trees, plants, shrubbery, or hunting on the premises, will be subject to the punishment prescribed by law. Edith seeks to hire a Park Caretaker.

Money is needed. The Park Bill excluded the \$1000 maintenance money, but appropriated "One Dollar (\$1.00)," if there is money in the Treasury and if the Federation gets the 960 acre endowment (HC 1914-1915 p73 See appendix). It is a condition of the Grant that the FFWC use the \$1.00 to protect, improve and beautify the Park. May must mobilize the rank and file. She visits 48 clubs, travels 5,486 miles and writes 1,869 letters for Federation and Park business (HC 1915-1916 p15, 1916-1917 p96). Along the way she receives some generous personal cash donations for the Park Maintenance Fund. The Federation takes steps to make the State Park a matter of pride to all Floridians. The Jacksonville paper 20 December 1915 reports that May Jennings enlists every citizen "in a movement to make Florida worthy of the name—Land of Flowers" and "garden spot of the world." "Florida Beautiful" should be every citizen's slogan (HC 1916-1917 p91).

On 22 December 1915, May calls a meeting of the Park Committees and Presidents of the Federated Clubs of South Dade County at Villa Serena, the home of Mrs. William J. and Mary Elizabeth Bryan. Edith Gifford opens the meeting and turns it over to May Jennings. Roll call is taken. Those present: "Mrs. William J. Bryan; Mrs. W. S. Jennings of Jacksonville; Mrs. John Gifford, Coconut Grove; Mrs. A. Leight Monroe, Miami; Mrs. T. V. Moore, Miami; Mrs. Kirk Munroe, Coconut Grove; Mrs. T. E. Evans, Homestead; Mrs. D. J. Red [J. D. Redd], Larkins [Homestead]; Mrs. John Opsahl, Larkins; Mrs. Frank Stranahan, Fort Lauderdale; Mrs. A. M. Blakesley, Redland; Mrs. Hiram Byrd, Princeton; Mrs. George M. Taylor, Princeton; Mrs. E. C. Loveland, Longview; Mrs. George A. Paddock, Miami; Mrs. J. W. Ives; Mrs. Haden, Coconut Grove." Florence Haden acts as Secretary for the meeting. Mrs. Gifford then reads the names of her advisory committee. Beside Mesdames Byrd, Loveland, Evans, Taylor, Bryan and Haden is Mrs. John Hinson of Kendall. Mrs. Jennings states that in addition to these names and clubs, she hopes to have the co-operation and help of all the clubs of the state, federated or not and especially the Audubon Societies because the Park is under the Conservation Department, which includes Forestry, Waterways, Good Roads, Birds, etc. She shows a map of the Park land and the portion of the endowment land provided by Mrs. Flagler. When roads are built the Federation plans to rent a tract of land to tomato farmers in order to help pay for Park maintenance. The committee decides to distribute state-wide, foot-long strips to collect "a mile of dimes" (HC 1915-1916 p21).

1916—The Year of the Royal Palm State Park

At a New Year's Reception held for her at the Tallahassee Woman's Club, May speaks about the Park and invites members and guests to participate in the mile-of-dimes campaign. May Jennings continues to raise dollars from private donors wherever she goes.

The Daytona newspaper prints Mrs. Gifford's Report to the Director's Meeting of the FFWC in February. To date, individual donations and dimes amount to \$800. Most encouraging is the inspiring co-operation of local clubs. Edith reminds the group that Royal Palm is the only State Park owned by women and it is the only bit of "tropical landscape in the United States, set aside as a reservation." There can be no such word as *fail*, "if fertile resourcefulness and eager idealism can win out." There are still hundreds of nature lovers and patriotic citizens, Audubon and Civic Clubs, University Botanical and Research Associations, who, if asked, will "lend a helping hand." Edith's talk turns to the needs of the park: a caretaker, a lodge to house his family and scientific visitors, those already studying the Park "as well as those to come in the future." Edith concludes by saying that the scientists urge us to "keep diligent watch over our tropical jungle" and to secure a caretaker to "administer intelligently the work entrusted to him." At this meeting the Committee is authorized to find a caretaker (HC 1916-1917 p94-95).

By March, Edith Gifford and the Park Committee hire Charles Mosier, a botanist from Little River as warden. He moves to the park with his entire family, wife Hettie along with their son Charles and his daughter Alice from his first marriage.

It is August and time for another appeal. Edith Gifford's Park Committee letter addressed to the "Friends of Florida" begins this way: "The Florida Federation of Woman's Clubs has undertaken the greatest conservation work of any organization of women in the United States." Florida's own tropical jungle, the most unique of its kind, holds hidden treasures of "rare orchids, ferns, vines and beautiful tree snails." Edith invites all citizens of Florida to discover the "beauty spots of the State" and help conserve them. "If the million residents of Florida

would contribute one dime, \$100,000.00" could easily be raised and the problems of Park improvement and maintenance would be solved for many years. Right now, the "warden is living in a tent and we have no place to receive visitors." Edith notes that with no less than \$5,000 they can start building a lodge (MMJ-UF 1916 August p1-2).

Dimes trickle in and pennies too. Edith Gifford makes a careful record (MMJ-UF 1917 Jan-Feb p80-82 See appendix p19-21). Construction of the lodge does not begin until after the Dedication Ceremony in November.

22-24 November 1916—FFWC Convention in Miami

Mrs. Gifford's Annual Report of the Park Committee opens with "Greetings: To the Florida Federation of Women's Clubs here assembled, and welcome to our Royal Palms, our noble Oaks and all our Tropical Treasures! **A Dream Has Come True.**" She goes on to outline the accomplishments of Charles Mosier, Park warden: he puts out fires, cuts miles of trails, revealing many hidden beauty spots, and propagates rare and useful plants. Through his efforts the Park is a natural bird sanctuary. Though "often entirely marooned," he sticks to his post.

Edith speaks about the continuing struggle for money. Several large donations and monies from the dime strips sent to 128 clubs gross \$1,240.33. The Coconut Grove Audubon Society pledges \$10 annually for the warden's salary. The \$1,000 from the Dade County Commissioners brings the total to \$2575.00. The donation of \$10 from the Children of the Springfield Junior Civic League is especially appreciated. She thanks the press "for making the Park a live issue." The lodge building, the responsibility of a sub-committee—"Mrs. T.V. [Mary Sorenson] Moore, Miami; Mrs. George [Gertrude] Taylor, Princeton; and Mrs. E. C. [Agnes Stewart] Loveland, Chairman"—is finally underway.

Edith closes her report with a personal note. In deep appreciation for Professor Simpson's inspiring words and steadfast encouragement she adds her own words: "In our far ancestral past, rare and beautiful sylvan retreats were set apart for worship of the most High, and now as we dedicate our Park, let us hope that kindred inspirations may fill our minds, and that we, and all those who come after us may find here a revelation of deep delight and may go forth refreshed and invigorated in spirit and in deed" (HC 1916-1917 See appendix p16-18).

23 November 1916—The Event

The *Miami Herald* reports that on Thursday 23 November, 168 cars carry 800 people on the 50-mile ride from Miami to Paradise Key to celebrate the dedication of the Royal Palm Park. May Jennings calls the meeting to order. Dr. J. R. Carson gives the dedication prayer. In the absence of Mrs. Edith Gifford, Chairman of the Park Committee, Mrs. Agnes Stewart Loveland of Longview reads the Annual report.

The Hon. James E. Ingraham, Mayor of St. Augustine, shares the story of his early adventure to Paradise Key and subsequent conversations with Mr. and Mrs. Flagler about the unusual nature of the hammocks. He speaks "most whimsically" of Mrs. Jennings' "illusions about the promises of legislators, their consultation with the 'wise old lawyer' about drawing up a new bill and her indefatigable efforts which result in the land being given, but not the money." He closes by congratulating the President and Federation members "on the successful fruition of their hopes."

Mrs. Mary K. Dickinson Sherman, principal speaker and Chair of the Conservation Department of the General Federation, credits the women for saving one of their most beautiful natural scenic places for park purposes. "Natural scenery becomes our greatest asset when we use it for recreation—for giving rest and encouragement to the weary and toil worn of this generation and for the development of the boys and girls of today in the good citizens of tomorrow." She commends the women of the Florida Federation of Women's Clubs for their good work in conservation and to have the distinction of being the only state federation to have secured a state park. "Florida is rich in its natural resources, and doubly rich in having men and women who appreciate the beauty of their state and recognize the need of saving it."

Sherman concludes by noting: In our national and state parks, we live "in harmony with the universe and in sympathy with the world." She emphasizes that "boundary lines of nations are forgotten," the artist and the poet find "new inspiration and musician a new theme."

Dr. Charles T. Simpson, "Grand Old Man of the Garden," expresses gratitude that his "beloved hammocks" have been saved. He cautions against making the Park a botanical garden with ornamental plants and shrubs. It should kept as close as possible "as nature made it."

Mrs. May Mann Jennings dedicates the park with these words: "With the power in me vested as president of the Florida Federation of Women's Clubs I hereby dedicate this Royal Palm Park to the people of Florida and their children forever."

After the ceremony a picnic lunch is served. With the leadership of Mrs. Floretta Evans, wife of the owner of the Redland Hotel and member of the Homestead Woman's Club, the women of the Entertainment Committee serve lunch to 600 people. The menu includes turkey, beans, salad, cheese, coffee and doughnuts—a veritable feast. After lunch Mr. Charles Mosier takes the delegates down the trail into the hammock. Along the way several pause "to listen and search the trees" for the mockingbird, only to discover that the mockingbird is Bryan Jennings, May's son (*Miami Herald* article in HC 1916-1917 p 98-99, 101 See appendix p22-25).

Although invited, no state officials attend. However, many who supported the Park from the beginning do attend: "Mary Munroe, Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Tweedell, Mr. and Mrs. Bion H. Barnett, Jr., Governor Jennings and Bryan, Mrs. Frank [Ivy] Stranahan, Lucy Blackman and Mrs. Napoleon Bonaparte [Annie] Broward (Vance 14)."

1917—Royal Palm Lodge

On 20 February 1917, May Jennings writes to Edith Gifford that she is grateful for the check from Charles Deering. "It will help to keep us from borrowing so much from outsiders." She realizes they must borrow at least \$1000, perhaps even \$1500 to finish the lodge. She urges Edith to meet the members of the legislature, while they are in Miami, invite them to the Park and "set forth its possibilities in 'glowing colors' for an appropriation of \$5,000." May says that she intends to keep in touch with Edith, "even if you are not the chairman of the committee. This work is entirely too big for the President of the Federation, with all the rest that weighs on me. So I expect you to stand by me" (HC 1916-1917 p107). Edith's personal motto is "If a thing needs doing, do it." If May and the lodge committee need support, she does it.

Once the lodge is built, Mrs. Agnes Loveland Lodge Committee Chair becomes House Committee Chair. The women with the vision to start the Park Project in 1905, and then convince the state to turn over the land to them in 1915 "did not foresee that they would be in the hotel and restaurant business" (Meyer 95).

On 27-28 September 1917, the Federation holds a meeting in the Royal Palm Park Lodge. There is a photograph of the women standing in front of the lodge. The copy obtained from the Florida State Archives and digitally enhanced by Frank Wendeln appears in the appendix along with Jeff Blakley's identification of the people (p26-28).

1917-1947—Park Maintenance

For 32 years, beginning 1915, the clubwomen of Florida maintain the Royal Palm Park "on a shoe string" through WWI, the 1926 hurricane, the Great Depression and WWII. May Jennings fully realizes that with the duties connected with war time and hard times, the women will be stretched to the limit. And in order to get State funds for Park maintenance, she will have to stretch herself beyond her limit.

In 1917, May submits a bill to the new Florida Legislature requesting State funds. She goes before two committees, Appropriations and Forestry, but the bill dies on the calendar. Completely worn out at this point, May faces "another two-year struggle to keep the Park functioning." In 1918 as Conservation Chair of the FFWC, May Jennings goes again before the Internal Improvement Fund Trustees and asks for more land "to even out the Park's awkward boundaries." Her request was denied, along with her "perennial request for funds." In 1919, another bill put before the legislature "dies on the calendar." The Park continues to "scrape by on nickles and dimes" (Vance 14-15).

Governor Jennings dies in 1920. Grief stricken, May almost gives up the fight. In 1921 May puts yet another bill before the legislature. "Perhaps because of the Governor's death, or because the park had become popular, or through sheer exasperation, the legislature approves a \$2,500 per annum appropriation. The Great Hurricane of 1926 and several fires cause the legislature to appropriate \$10,000 for Park restoration" (Vance 15).

In 1929, May Jennings formally offers the "Royal Palm Hammock to the proposed Everglades National Park if ever it should be created." The struggle to maintain the Park continues with the help of a citizens' group, headed by Ernest Coe. The Everglades National Park becomes a reality in 1947. The old lodge serves as a visitor's center (Vance 15-16).

1947—Dedication of the Everglades National Park

At the dedication ceremony the FFWC deeds their land to the National Park. To this day, the Royal Palm Park remains the nucleus of the Everglades National Park as a testament to the courage of the women of Florida.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

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THE DAILY METROPOLIS SATURDAY MIAMI, FL SEPT. 17, 1910

KIRK MUNROE FLAYS PROF. CONDRA FOR RUDENESS TO WOMEN DELEGATES
Plain Language Is Used in an Open Letter

Incident at Second Conservation Congress Is Not Closed

Man Who Made Fun of Announcement that Was Handed Him as Presiding Officer to Read Is Put on
Notice that He Will Hear

Coconut Grove , FL Sept. 16

Professor G. E. Condra, State University, Lincoln, Nebraska

Sir:

Having just learned of your amazing rudeness toward the women delegates to the Second National Conservation Congress, while in session at St. Paul, Minn., on the 8th, instant, I feel impelled to write to you concerning the matter.

By some mischance you were honored with the chairmanship of the meetings on that day; a position which demanded the courteous treatment of every delegate present, and the dignified consideration of every item of business present to regular order.

At this congress were many women delegates, who had equal rights with their brother workers for the cause. Among these was my wife, who had done more toward conserving the natural resources of this state than all its men put together. She is an active member of the National Conservation Association; and, as an accredited delegate to your congress, she represented the Florida Federation of Women's Clubs.

As chairman of the forestry committee of her federation, she suggested to Mrs. Barkus of St. Paul, who holds a similar position in the Minnesota federation, that all women delegates present, who were interested in this particular branch of conservation, hold a meeting for the discussion of ways and means as well as for an interchange of views. The suggestion was accepted. Mr. Gifford Pinchot gladly promised to address the proposed meeting, and an announcement was prepared to be read from the platform by the chairman of the next session of the congress.

Unfortunately you were that chairman; and, to the incredulous amazement of all your hearers, you treated, and read the announcement as though it were an invitation issued by little girls, to a doll party. Evidently you saw in it only an opportunity to prove yourself a humorist, in which effort you signally failed, though afterward you probably will be widely known as the clown of the Second Congress.

Your pedagogical instincts led you to criticize the grammar and the punctuation of the announcement, while your innate folly permitted you to change its wording and pervert its meaning.

In that moment of asininity you succeeded not only in enraging the women present, and disgusting the men, but in alienating the esteem of the 800,000 federated women of America, and materially checking their enthusiasm for the cause of conservation.

Had you acted the part of a gentleman, you would, then and there have made the humble apology that your offense demanded, and the evil would have been minimized; but this you refused to do. Moreover, in a subsequently published interview you claimed ignorance of having offended, and immunity from criticism on the ground that you have, a mother, a wife, "and a daughter to whom you are not indifferent."

How deeply must you have mortified that mother and that wife!

Now sir: if for a moment you imagine that incident closed and forgotten you are vastly mistaken. Every woman delegate to that congress must mention it in her report to her State federation. Thence it will be repeated to every woman's club in the state. But, in a very short time, your slur upon the womanhood of the United States will be known to, and resented by, every woman in the land; with what effect to yourself, and upon your own career, you may imagine.

In this exigency there is but one method of reparation left you. That is a full apology, sent to Mrs. Phillip Moore of St. Louis, President of the National Federation of Women's Clubs, with the request that she transmit it to the State presidents, by whom it will be passed onto the individual clubs of this powerful organization.

For it is a powerful organization, though in your ignorance, you may not realize it so powerful as that its influence for or against any cause may mark all the difference between success and failure.

Trusting that you may accept this letter of admonition and advice as coming from a friend who is much farther advanced in years as well as in knowledge of the ways of womankind than yourself, I remain

Yours, etc.

Kirk Munroe

Tallahassee Florida, December 23, 1914

Minutes of the Trustees of the Internal Improvement Fund of the State of Florida Volume X, p609-610

It was thought advisable, after due discussion, to authorize Mr. W. J. Tweedell and Mr. F. J. Powers to prevent trespass on lands of the State in the custody of the Trustees situated in Township 58 South of Range 37 East, and the following letter of authority was prepared and forwarded to each of the above named parties:

Mr. W. J. Tweedell, [&] Mr. F. J. Powers

Dear Sir:—

You are hereby authorized and directed to prevent trespass upon the lands belong to the State of Florida in the control of the Trustees of the Internal Improvement Fund, situated in Township 58 South of Range 37 East, especially any depredations upon Royal Palm Hammock.

Any depredations should be promptly reported to the State's Attorney for the Eleventh Circuit.

Trustees of the Internal Improvement Fund, By (signed) Park Hammell, Governor and Chairman.

Tallahassee, Florida, December 24, 1914

Minutes of the Trustees of the Internal Improvement Fund of the State of Florida Volume X, p610-611

WHEREAS, There is located in Dade County, Florida, a tract of land, Township 58S of Range 37 East, embracing about five hundred acres and known as "Royal Palm Hammock"; that said hammock consists of tropical forest trees of rare growth and beauty, many of which trees are Royal Palms which have attained a great height and marked degree of development: that said hammock makes a natural park of rare palms, tropical forest trees and shrubbery and should be preserved and cared for to the end that the same may be enjoyed and used as a public park by the people of the State of Florida; and

WHEREAS. The Florida Federation of Woman's Clubs has made application to the Trustees of the Internal Improvement Fund of the State of Florida to set aside said hammock as a State Park to be improved, beautified and maintained by the said Federation of Women's Clubs for the use of the Public: therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, By the Trustees of the Internal Improvement Fund of the State of Florida, that insofar as they have authority so to do, that the said described land, known as Royal Palm Hammock, be and the same is hereby set apart for the perpetual use and enjoyment of the people of the State of Florida as a State park, on condition that the same shall be improved, beautified and maintained by the Florida Federation of Women's Clubs, the said Federation of Women's Clubs to have the care and custody of the grounds, trees, plants and shrubbery thereof, and shall keep the same open for the use, enjoyment and benefit of the people of the State of Florida.

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the said Trustees reserve the right at all times to determine whether the above conditions are being performed by the said Federation of Women's Clubs, and in the event of a failure to revoke, annul and make void this resolution and to assume full control, management and disposition of the aforesaid land and State park.

The Trustees then adjourned. Attest: PARK HAMMELL, Governor [&] J. STEWART LEWIS, Sec.

[Park Application submitted by Mrs. May Mann Jennings, President FFWC. Source: Vance, Linda. *Florida Historical Quarterly*. Vol. LV, Number 1 (July): 1976. p.9-10.]

"Royal Palm State Park" Granted the Florida Federation of Women's Clubs by
the Legislature of 1915
CHAPTER 6949—(NO. 143).

An Act to Cede Unto the Florida Federation of Women's Clubs Section Fifteen (15) and North Half of Section Twenty-two (22) in Township Fifty-eight (58) South, Range thirty-seven (37) East. Dade County, Florida and to Designate said Lands as the Royal Palm State Park, Granting the Possession Thereto and the Beautifying Thereof to the Florida Federation of Women's Clubs for State Park Purposes for the Use of the Public; to Provide for Its Maintenance and Care and to Appropriate Funds in Aid Thereof.

Whereas, Attention has been called to an island situated in the Everglades in the lower part of Dade County said to be very fertile and covered with a dense growth of tropical forest trees and growth, and studded with most beautiful royal palms, estimated at from 600 to 1000 in number, many of which have attained an estimated height of one hundred (100) feet, making altogether a most beautiful and unique natural Park of rare plants and a magnificent body of royal palms which are not known to exist in forests elsewhere in Florida or in the United States, which should be protected, cared for and the grounds beautified in the interest of all of the people of Florida, and whereas the Florida Federation of Women's Clubs have taken a lively interest in the dedication of the lands aforesaid and its designation as the Royal Palm State Park, to be used perpetually for State Park purposes, improved, cared for and beautified, and will undertake to procure a like acreage of lands in the vicinity of the proposed Park, suitable for agricultural pursuits of equal market value, to be used in kind, or the proceeds arising from the rents, profits and sale thereof, as an endowment for the perpetual care, maintenance and beautifying of said State Park under the supervision, direction and care of the officers and members of the Florida Federation of Women's Clubs; therefore,

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. That Section Fifteen (15) and the North Half of Section Twenty-two (22) of Township Fifty-eight (58) South, Range Thirty-seven (37) East, situated in Dade County, Florida, be and the same is hereby ceded to the Florida Federation of Women's Clubs and designated as the "Royal Palm State Park," to be cared for, protected, and to remain in the full possession and enjoyment, with all the possessory rights and privileges thereunto belonging to the Florida Federation of Women's Clubs, for the purposes of a State Park, for the benefit and use of all of the people of Florida perpetually, provided that the Florida Federation of Women's Clubs shall procure a deed to 960 acres of lands in Dade County, in the vicinity of said State Park, suitable for agricultural purposes, conveying to said Florida Federation of Women's Clubs fee simple title thereto, said land to be used as an endowment for the perpetual use and benefit of the said Park, its protection, improvement and beautifying thereof, including the construction of roads and other improvements either in kind or by the use of the rents and profits accruing therefrom or the proceeds of sales thereof or any part of said endowment tract.

Sec. 2. That One Dollar (\$1.00) be and the same appropriated out of any funds in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated annually, to be used by the officers and members of the Florida Federation of Women's Clubs in the protection, beautifying and improvement of the Royal Palm Park, as aforesaid, conditioned upon and always provided that the Florida Federation of Women's Clubs procure the conveyance of the 960 acres of land as above referred to as an endowment.

Sec. 3. The lands described above as the Royal Palm State Park and the lands to be conveyed to the Florida Federation of Women's Clubs as an endowment for the use and benefit of said State property be and the same are hereby exempt from the payment of State, county, or other special assessment or any assessment of taxes.

Sec. 4. All laws and parts of laws in conflict with the above be and the same is hereby repealed.

Sec. 5. This law shall become operative and take effect immediately upon its passage and approval by the Governor.

Approved June 5, 1915

[Source: Housekeepers Club 1914-1915 Minutes and Scrapbook p73 & 1916-1917 p93]

Annual Report of the Royal Palm State Park Committee
Mrs. John (Edith) Gifford, Chairman Coconut Grove, Florida
FFWC Convention in Miami Tuesday - Friday 21-24 November 1916
[Report given by Agnes Loveland in Edith's absence on Dedication Day Nov. 23, 1916]

GREETINGS: To the Florida Federation of Women's Clubs here assembled, and welcome to our Royal Palms, our noble Oaks and all our Tropical Treasures!

A Dream Has Come True

Behold us monarchs of all we survey, the proud and happy owners of the only tropical reservation in whole United States.

You will wish, I feel sure to have me give a brief summary of our year's work since the Royal Palm Hammock became our very own by grant of the 1915 Legislature to the Federation of Women's Clubs. An equal acreage of land which was donated by Mrs. Flagler as an endowment tract, has since then been exchanged for a much more favorably and contiguous tract so that in all we are now owner of 1920 acres, half of which is Park proper.

The Legislature passed an act exempting our Park from taxation, but unfortunately did not grant the appropriation asked for.

Your Park Advisory Committee representing nearby clubs has held frequent meetings and has consulted with the President of the Board of Directors when any important decision was being considered.

Thus, at our very first meeting February 24th we urged that a competent warden should be immediately employed, and your chairman secured in person the consent of the State Board, in executive session at Daytona (17 Feb), to this recommendation. Mr. Charles A. Mosier has served in this capacity since March 1st. He has demonstrated in most convincing fashion the needs and possibilities of our Park. During a particularly dry season he has put out and checked the spread of dangerous fires. Without being officially appointed a deputy sheriff, his presence has sufficed to stop depredation and hunting. He has cut miles of trails, revealing many hidden beauty spots. He has collected thousands of Palm seeds and raised as many seedlings and has propagated many rare and useful plants. He has made our Park a natural bird sanctuary. At great discomfort, and often entirely marooned, he has cheerfully stuck to his post, and in every way, more than justified our initial act.

The next important undertaking was to persuade the County Commissioners to assist us financially. On April 29th a petition was presented in person by your chairman and three others, and the motion made by Mr. Hinson to appropriate \$1000.00 for our first year's expenses was unanimously carried.

The plan we have pursued of sending to all clubs, and others as well, card strips as dime containers, with the object of collecting a mile of dimes, was proposed by Mrs. T. E. Evans, our entertainment chairman, to-day.

The 128 clubs of Florida have been liberally supplied with strips. Aggregate returns at 10 cents per capita were computed at \$6336.00 actual gross returns to date, including several large individual gifts are \$1240.33 Oct. 26th. Many clubs have not yet responded and many pledges are outstanding. Park Day on the first meeting in December is we hope, to be observed by all clubs, when collections can be made and our fund largely augmented.

We have to thank the Press for making the Park a live issue. Especial mention must be made of the Tropic Magazine for its very liberal aid in issuing a special number containing two notable articles and giving us 50% discount.

Several special donations enabled us to send out one thousand copies. The Florida Grower and Mr. Edgar A. Wright added generously to our funds and offer a rebate for the Park benefit, on all subscriptions. These two papers, copies of which may be had at our exhibit table I most heartily commend to your notice and trust they may find the support they deserve, in return for favors shown.

The Cocoanut Grove Audubon Club has pledged \$10.00 annually towards the warden's salary. The Chicago Motor Club sent enthusiastic commendation and a liberal donation. Let Audubon Clubs and Motor Clubs please take note and go and do likewise.

On May 14th a Park picnic was held, about thirty automobile parties attending.

Exhibits of maps, photos and literary matter were placed in the Dade County Fair at Miami at the Biennial in New York in charge of Miss Mira Lloyd S. Buck, at the Appalachian Congress and at a number of local clubs.

At our committee meeting June 28th, plans for a warden's lodge were considered and sub-committees were named to take up various phases of work in detail. The difficulties encountered by road construction have been the source of great concern, as construction of the lodge has necessarily depended upon being able to haul materials. Our Indefatigable Building Committee reports as follows:-

Oct. 22, 1916

"The building committee of the Royal Palm Park Lodge took up the work after the entire Park Committee had gone over this matter and outlined in a general way what it would approve on a Lodge for the Park, to serve as a home for the warden, a sheltered and resting place for visitors and a lodging place for students and scientists who wished to study the Park at close range. This committee found that the original plan must be cut in many ways as the sum that could be raised for this purpose was much less than was anticipated and it has been decided to build a rustic wood building large enough to meet the present demands, equipped with its own electric light plant, water plant, a garage for two cars and an aseptic tank for disposing of sewage. Besides the general committee meetings, the building committee has met for discussion on the work six times - four of these meetings were held with Mrs. Jennings, Our President. On Friday, Sept 29th, the Chairman went with Mrs. Jennings to the Park for the purpose of selecting a site for the Lodge. Fifteen letters have been received by the chairman from Mrs. Jennings in which the Lodge was the partial is not whole topic of the letter, and she had copies of as many more written by the State President to others concerning the work. The Railey-Milam Hardware Company Miami, gave us a splendid discount on the bill for windows

and doors. The McDonald Lumber Company are to furnish the rough cypress siding and the entire Committee have made a low price on roofing which we have accepted. The Woman's Club of Princeton have donated two thousand feet of best Dade County pine flooring, and also planning to completely furnish a Princeton Rest Room in the Lodge. The members of this committee are Mrs. T. V. Moore, Miami, Mrs. Geo. Taylor, Princeton, Mrs. E. C. Loveland, Chairman, Homestead."

We acknowledge the courtesy of the McCrary Company in agreeing to make a turn out in road, thereby preserving intact several of our most beautiful oaks.

Financial plans enabling the Board to build [the] Lodge have been duly authorized. Certain loans will be required. As a supplementary device to raise money for our Lodge; two thousand chain letters appealing for aid have been issued; receipts from this source amount to \$222.95 October 26th. You are invited to examine our Exhibit and learn from those in charge many things about our Park, which I have not time to mention. We wish to urge that the State be memorialized and besought to grant us an ample appropriation in order that we may be relieve from efforts to secure support and be free to carry out the proper development schemes.

Our hopes are glowing and far reaching. We wish not only to guard but to enhance in many ways the beauties of our heritage so that it may be a joy forever. Quite inevitably we shall be beset with vexations and problems when our endowment lands are in cropping condition; rigid rules will have to be enforced to protect the Park from fires and from encroachments of campers and truckers with the insect pests that accompanying them.

In view of all these facts and circumstances we wish to urge that a strong committee of suitable selected scientific men be asked to confer and advise on the best policy for the future. A consistent continuity of supervision and the very best advisory aid obtainable seem indispensable.

In closing my report I must add one personal note, for I feel that we can never sufficiently express our appreciation of Prof. Simpson's inspiring words and steadfast encouragement and our hope that he will ever thus continue to point the way. In our far ancestral past, rare and beautiful sylvan retreats were set apart for worship of the most High, and now as we dedicate our Park, let us hope that kindred inspirations may fill our minds, and that we, and all those who come after us may find here a revelation of deep delight and may go forth refreshed and invigorated in spirit and in deed.

Edith Gifford, Chairman.[crossed out on report]

NOTE

Since the above was written by Mrs. Gifford, there has been \$1,000 received from the Commissioners of Dade County, also other amounts not yet turned to the Treasurer, bringing the total to \$2,575.00. Among these donations is one specially to be appreciated, from the Children, the Springfield Junior Civic League, of Jacksonville, \$10.00.

There has also been some progress made in securing a 60 foot right-of-way from the City limits of Homestead to the Park, over the Ingraham Highway. The representative of the Company which owns the largest tracts on the way, as well as several smaller owners have assured us that they will deed the necessary amount of land as soon as the deeds are ready.

[Source: HC 1916-1917 Scrapbook UM Richter Special Collections Box 57 Folder 1]

DONATIONS TO ROYAL PALM STATE PARK
UP TO CONVENTION, NOVEMBER 1916

[Source: UF - MMJ 1917 January-February Correspondence, pages 80-82]

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Some Individual Donations to Royal Palm State Park Fund

Mrs. Cummer.....	\$250.00
Mrs. Deering.....	200.00
Mrs. Ransom.....	10.00
Mrs. Nugent.....	20.00
W. McDarrow.....	10.00
Chas. W. Ames.....	25.00
A. Anderson.....	50.00
Mrs. Guenther.....	24.00
Mrs. Fred Morse.....	10.00
Com. Munroe.....	10.00
Mrs. D. S. Cook.....	10.00
Mrs. Edison.....	50.00
Mrs. Rodman Smith.....	25.00
Edgar A. Wright Florida Grower.....	10.00
Dr. A. Terry.....	10.00
Mrs. John Gifford.....	50.00
Mrs. Van Nance.....	7.00
Mrs. J. M. Taylor.....	5.00
Geo. Walker.....	5.00
Mrs. Byrd & Mrs. Robt. Jehle.....	10.20
Chicago Motor Club.....	7.20
Audubon Society.....	10.00
Mrs. Hiram Powers.....	7.00
Mrs. Jesse Moore.....	5.00
Sidney Chase.....	5.00
Anon.....	25.00
Mrs. Wm. Bryan.....	5.00
Mrs. Ingraham.....	9.00
Miss Rodman.....	5.00
Mrs. Haden.....	10.00

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Mr. Charles Deering.....	\$100.00
Mrs. Curtis James.....	100.00
Mrs. W. W. Cummer.....	250.00
Mrs. J. E. Ingraham.....	59.00
Mrs. Thomas A. Edison.....	50.00
Mrs. Nugent.....	20.00
C.W. Ames.....	25.00
Mrs. Rodman Smith.....	25.00
Mr. Fred Morse.....	25.00
Com. Munroe.....	10.00
Mrs. D. S. Cook.....	10.00

Mr. Edgar A. Wright of
 "The Florida Grower".....10.00

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Dr. M. O. Terry.....	10.00
Mrs. John Gifford.....	20.00
Mrs. Ransom.....	10.00
Mrs. W. J. Bryan.....	5.00
A. Anderson.....	50.00
Mesdames Byrd and Jehle.....	10.00
Mr. Geo. W. Allen.....	5.00
Mrs. J. M. Taylor.....	5.00
Miss Van Nance.....	7.00
Mrs. Jess A. Moore.....	5.00
Miss Rodham.....	5.00
Mrs. F. P. Haden.....	10.00
Sidney Chase.....	5.00
Mrs. Hiram Powers.....	7.00
W. McDarrow.....	10.00
Total.....	\$848.00

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Donations by Clubs, Other Organizations and Towns
 From Pledges, Dime Strips, Chain Letters, etc.

Bartow W. C.....	\$8.65	
Boyton W. C.....	6.00	
Chicago Motor Club.....	7.20	
Audubon Club Coconut Grove.....	38.55	
Folio Club Coconut Grove.....	1.25	
School Democracy.....	2.40	
Ransom School.....	1.20	
Housekeepers Club	75.58	
Crescent City VIA.....	17.75	
Alpha Sorosis, Dade City.....	2.40	
Palmetto Club, Daytona.....	12.00	
Dunedin Mother's Club.....	11.00	
Woman's Club Ft. Pierce.....	9.60	
Florida City.....	2.50	
Fellsmere Library Association.....	6.00	
Woman's Club, Ft. Lauderdale.....	22.28	
Green Cove Springs VIA.....	5.00	
Gainesville Twentieth Century Club.....	12.00	
Longview Club.....	12.00	
Homestead Woman's Club.....	65.10	
High Springs New Century Club.....	8.40	
Jacksonville Woman's Club.....	20.50	Chain Letters
Lakeland Woman's Club.....	5.00	
Larkin Woman's Club.....	3.60	
Lutz Woman's Club.....	3.60	

Miami Woman's Club.....	27.80
Melbourne Woman's Club.....	37.35
New Smyrna Woman's Club.....	6.00
Ocala Woman's Club.....	16.65

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Ojus Mother's Club.....	6.50
Ormond VIA.....	6.00
Orlando Twentieth Century Club.....	6.00
Orlando, Interlachen.....	3.60
Oviedo Woman's Club.....	10.40
Orange City Woman's Club.....	6.00
Orange Park Woman's Club.....	6.50
Ozona Woman's Club.....	1.10
Perry Woman's Club.....	6.00
Pompano Woman's Club.....	3.20
Palatka Woman's Club.....	8.60
Princeton Woman's Club.....	13.80
Punta Gorda Fortnightly.....	2.00
Redland Woman's Club.....	22.40
St. Cecelia's Club, St. Augustine.....	5.00
Springfield Improvement Assoc. Jacksonville....	10.30
Woman's Club Sarasota.....	24.00
St. Petersburg VIA.....	11.00
Stuart Woman's Club.....	7.20
School Civics League, Starke.....	5.00
Tampa Civics Association.....	11.90
Tarpon Springs.....	9.75
Vero Woman's Club.....	5.40
Winter Park.....	7.00
Total.....	\$655.51
Misc. Donations.....	71.49
Individual Donations.....	848.00
County Commissioners, Dade County.....	1000.00
Total.....	\$2575.00

Coconut Grove Mrs. John Gifford Chairman
 Royal Palm State Park F.F.W.C.

Please see if names are correct & return. No use to change figures unless people are not credited with right amounts.

May M. J.

MIAMI HERALD FRIDAY NOVEMBER 24, 1916
[COVERING EVENT AT THE ROYAL PALM PARK ON THURSDAY 23 NOVEMBER 1916]

FORMALLY DEDICATE THE PARK
MOTORCADE OF 168 CARS CONVEY FEDERATION DELEGATES ON THEIR NOVEL MISSION
INCIDENTS OF JOURNEY
LAST EVENING'S SESSION IN MIAMI AN APPROPRIATE END OF A PERFECT DAY

One hundred and sixty-eight cars* by actual report of the indefatigable and super-efficient chairman of transportation, Mrs. J.E. Junkin **yesterday** morning beginning at eight o'clock, rolled up the drive to the Halcyon hotel for their quotas of delegates to the Florida Federation of Women's Clubs who yesterday enjoyed the most unique feature of this or any other convention, the fifty mile ride south to the Royal Palm Park, once Paradise Key, now the only example of West Indian vegetation extant in the United States, and, moreover and most especially, the only park owned by a state Federation of Women's clubs in the country.

Eight hundred people were in the cars.* For several hours the long procession of Ford, Cadillacs, Maxwells, Overlands and samples of every other car made were passing the every-two mile towns down the magnificent stretch of level oiled roads and to the short stretch of rough but entirely possible road from Florida City to the Park itself.

The Royal Palm Park itself proved lovelier than the greatest expectations of the delegates. Even from the first glimpse of its sentinel Royal Palms across the open glade, up to the entrance road under the misty Spanish moss festoons and up to the open space provided for parking the crowds of cars, the delegates had their eyes and their mouths quite open.

In the cleared space where the lodge will shortly stand the twenty-five members of the Homestead club had prepared not only a gaily decorated speakers stand with benches, but a carefully planned cafeteria style lunch counter, from which later the hungry delegates and their chauffeurs received the bountiful lunch prepared by this club.

Called to Order.

As soon as approximately all the cars had arrived Mrs. W.S. Jennings mounted the platform and called the meeting to order. The delegates sat and stood about under the trees to hear the excellent lists of speakers for the dedication of the park.

Dr. J. R. Carson gave the benediction prayer, particularly felt out there with the soil of the park under the feet and the Royal Palms in the distance.

In the absence of Mrs. John Gifford, chairman of the state committee for the Royal Palm Park, her report was read by Mrs. Loveland of Homestead, member of the committee and president of the hostess club of the day.

Mrs. Gifford's report told of a long year of earnest and untiring effort for the raising of funds for the park, of endless consultations over ways and means, and gave a statistical survey of the present condition of the park finances that was most gratifying. With the one thousand dollars received from the Dade county commissioners since Mrs. Gifford's report, the total stands now, two thousand five hundred and seventy-five dollars for maintenance.

Dedicatory Speech.

The dedicated speech for the park was made by the Hon. J. E. Ingraham mayor of St. Augustine, and for whom the Ingraham highway was named.

Mr. Ingraham made a most delightful speech, telling, in intimate conversational terms first of his early discovery of the Paradise Key, of his talk with both Mr. and Mrs. Flagler on the subject of the unusual nature of the two hammocks, of the title claim made by the railroad, and then, most whimsically, of Mrs. Jennings' first attempt to have a bill put through the legislature for the appropriation of the park to the federated clubs with one thousand dollars a year. Mrs. Jennings

difficulties in this line were depicted, her first illusions about the promises of legislators, the consultation with "the wise old lawyer" who finally drew up a new bill and her latest indefatigable efforts which resulted in the land being given, but not the money. Mr. Ingraham closed his very charming speech congratulating the president and the federation members on the successful fruition of their hopes.

Ingraham Highway.

Mr. S.A. Belcher, chairman of the Dade county board of commissioners, then dedicated the Ingraham highway in a fitting speech. He first gave a most encouraging report of the Dixie highway, of which, he said, there are more miles in Florida than in any other state. He brought strongly before his audience the fact that the eastern division of the state, Dade county, and the Ingraham highway had paved the way for the rest of the state to enter an era of tremendous road construction which would result in the opening up and developing of all Florida.

Mrs. Sherman's Address.

The principal speaker of the day was Mrs. John Dickinson Sherman, chairman of the conservation department of the general federation, and the Florida convention's distinguished guest. Mrs. Sherman was introduced by Mrs. Gaston E. Edwards and said, in part:

"It is to the great credit of the Florida women that they had the vision, in these days of commercialism, to save one of their most beautiful natural scenic places for park purposes. Natural scenery becomes our greatest asset when we use it for recreation—for giving rest and encouragement to the weary and toil worn of this generation and for the development of the boys and girls of today in the good citizens of tomorrow.

"I know of no other state which is doing such good work in conservation along so many lines as the Florida Federation of Women's Clubs, and, in addition, you have the distinction of being the only state federation to have secured a state park.

"People build monuments of costly structure to perpetuate the memory of themselves to somebody else, but none of these is as worthy of praise as the setting aside of one of the God given beauty spots for the enjoyment of the men, women and children of the land.

"Florida is rich in its natural resources, and doubly rich in having men and women who appreciate the beauty of their state and recognize the need of saving it."

Mrs. Sherman proceeded to a forceful description of the natural resources of the United States, the greater assets of the 20,000,000 boys and girls of the United States. She gave in detail a stirring account of the work necessary still in America along lines of conservation. Forests, natural scenery, birds, good roads, and particularly the necessity for many parks were all described, as was also the special work of the various states along these lines.

Concluding an address which for scope of breadth of vision, for grasp of essentials, not only along practical lines, for the spirit of earnest enthusiasm and common sense altruism has not yet been surpassed at this convention, Mrs. Sherman said:

"When we get our national parks ready to be seen in comfort, scenic outdoors in the United States will become as popular as that of Europe, and we will have an enormous travel industry. This will benefit all people and help all industries.

"In our national and state parks, the boundary lines of nations will be forgotten, people of the world will meet and become acquainted. Here the artist and the poet will find new inspiration and the musician a new theme. A new understanding of beauty will come to us and we will learn to look on life with clearer vision.

"Out with nature in the mountain summits or in the prairie lands and in the tropic wonderland of your own Florida, there comes to one a sense of the kinship of created beings. You are in harmony with the universe and in sympathy with the world."

Dr. Chas. T. Simpson.

Dr. Charles T. Simpson of Little River, rapidly becoming the "Grand Old Man of the Garden" for all

Floridians, whose state he has so distinguished by his appreciation of her floral beauties, was the next speaker. Dr. Simpson first gave a brief history of the geological creation of the Royal Palms' hammocks, the two islands to whose shores were borne seeds from the West Indies of which most noteworthy are the Royal Palms whose tops cut the skyline with such effect. Dr. Simpson said he was not trying to make a speech, but he succeeded in impressing his audience, as no studied oratory might have done, with the sincere explanation of his spirit in thus seeing his beloved hammocks saved. He spoke of the various plans suggested for the park, walling it with cocoanuts, making it a botanical garden and setting out ornament shrubs, and his appeal for the disregard of all these as decorations went home. "It should be kept," he said, "as nearly as possible as nature has made it. The jungle must be retained." He favored a scenic highway around it and complimented the judgment of the superintendent, Mr. Mosher [sic], suggesting that the development of the hammock as a tropical garden be left to his wisdom. He concluded: "I am proud of the state of my adoption, and I am more rejoiced over this magnificent work of saving the hammocks than in any other state work that has been done. I thank God this park has been preserved."

Words of Mrs. Jennings.

Mrs. W. S. Jennings then very simply and fittingly dedicated the park with the words: "With the power in me vested as president of the Florida Federation of Women's Clubs I hereby dedicate this Royal Palm Park to the people of Florida and their children forever."

After the singing of the Doxology, the benediction was pronounced by Dr. Ira Adams of Miami.

Then Refreshments.

After the speaking the long file around the tables heaped with good things by the women of the Longview club began. Turkey, baked beans, salad, doughnuts, coffee and other goods thing were supplied to the hungry delegates in quantities. The Pinapola company of Miami supplied free bottles of their product and the grounds of the clearing were gay with the hilarity of the picnicking delegates.

Later Mr. Mosher [sic], the superintendent, took them down the trail into the hammock where they felt fully the beauties of the tropical vegetation.

The members of the Longview club who were so warmly congratulated on the efficient work they had done were Mrs. Loveland, President; Mrs. Evans, chairman of the committee, and Mrs. R.B. Schelern, Mrs. Edwards, Mrs. E.A. Carter, Mrs. Frank Bely, Mrs. G. M. Bud, Mrs. King, Mrs. Tweedell, Mrs. W.T. Lanier.

TWENTY-THREE HOMESTEAD WOMEN ARE DESERVING OF PRAISE FOR WAY THEY ENTERTAINED CROWDS *MIAMI HERALD* FRIDAY NOVEMBER 24, 1916

"I never saw a better handled crowd in my life," is what one visiter said of the way in which those twenty-three Homestead Woman's club members served the *six hundred* people who attended the dedication services of Royal Palm state park yesterday.

Drivers of cars and delegates were tagged before they left Miami with a green ribbon bearing the word Homestead. This entitled them to luncheon at the park, and when luncheon time came around the park visitors were lined up and one by one entered the rope enclosed area about the tables. The lunch was served cafeteria style and visitors advanced from one booth to another, the line being served quickly and efficiently by the club women in the booths.

The Homestead women took the serving of this lunch as their part of the entertainment of the federation, and for weeks Mrs. T. E. Evans, chairman of the entertainment committee, has worked untiringly, and as a result marshalled her forces into a successful line for a combat with hunger. The Homestead women were distinguished by their white frocks and hats and green ribbon bands about their hats. A great deal of the credit for the success of the luncheon is due to Mrs. R. B. Schallern, who was chairman of the refreshment committee. Other members of this committee are Mrs. J. D. Redd,

Mrs. A. R. Livingston, Mrs. E. A. Carter, Mrs. S. A. King, Mrs. Frank W. Bealy, Mrs. G. M. Budd, Mrs. W. J. Tweedell.

Members in charge of the booths served as follows:

Turkey: Mrs. Tweedell, Mrs. Carter, Mrs. Bealy, Mrs. Budd

Beans: Mrs. W. T. Lanier and Mrs. Redd.

Salad: Mrs. Livingston and Mrs. Schallern.

Cheese: Mrs. R. E. Edwards

Coffee: Mrs. R. M. Huntley, Mrs. King.

Doughnuts: Mrs. S. F. Matthews and Mrs. S. E. Livingston.

The Clubwomen had financial assistance from the Homestead Board of Trade.

* * *

Mrs. J. E. Junkin, of Miami, and Mrs. J. J. Hinson, of Kendal, were two of the busiest club women in the state yesterday. Their work was the transportation of visitors to the state park and right royally did they come up with their share of the work, both in securing automobiles and in arranging the motorcade of yesterday. Other local women who served under Mrs. Junkin and Mrs. Hinson were: Mrs. H. I. Dills, Mrs. A. L. Monroe and Mrs. T. V. Moore.

* * *

Visitors at Royal Palm State Park yesterday more than once paused to listen and to search the trees to discover the mocking bird which was whistling so gaily from one direction and then from another. And all that time the "mocking bird" was Bryan Jennings, son of the federation's president, and the word was passed about in undertones so that none of effect sound might be lost by his hearers.

Marjory Stoneman Douglas' Headline on the Society page reads: "Convention Remembered Because of Brilliant Women Who Were Here (*Miami Herald* Saturday 25 November 1916)."

*In a letter to Mr. Mosier on 2 December 1916, May writes: "My son (Bryan) and Mr. Ingraham's chauffeur counted 1,100 people in the park on Dedication Day, & Mrs. Evans says there were 186 cars parked there, and that her club served over 600 persons to luncheon (MMJ - UF Nov.-Dec. 1916 p103-105)."

[Archive Note: Both the main news article and the lunch article are pasted on facing pages in the HC 1916-1917 Royal Palm Park Scrapbook p98-99. The two smaller articles are on p101. The Original book is in the UM Richter Library Special Collections. Box 57]

Photograph taken during a meeting of the Florida Federation of Women's Clubs at the newly opened Royal Palm Park Lodge.

27th or 28th of September, 1917



The Charles A. Mosier family ran the Park for the women. Charles is at the far left. His wife Hettie is at the back in front of the door and their son Charles L., is standing in front of Dr. Stafford (#15). Charles Mosier's daughter Alice (#11) is next to the door. In numerical order are:

1. Floretta (Mrs. T.E.) Evans of Homestead • 2. Mary Sorenson (Mrs. T.V.) Moore of Miami • 3. Adair Irwin (Mrs. G.H.) Edwards of Orlando
4. Emma C. (Mrs. L.A.) Moffett of Miami • 5. Mary Barr (Mrs. Kirk) Munroe of Coconut Grove • 6. Ivy Julia (Mrs. Frank) Stranahan of Fort Lauderdale
7. Gertrude A. (Mrs. G. M.) Taylor of Princeton • 8. Alice W. (Mrs. S.H.) Jenison of Jacksonville • 9. Edith M. (Mrs. I.L.) Twyman of Homestead
10. May Mann (Mrs. W.S.) Jennings Florida's First Lady • 11. Alice M. Mosier • 12. Josephine (Mrs. S.B.) Waite of Longview • 13. Kate V. Jackson of Tampa
14. Agnes Stewart (Mrs. E.C.) Loveland of Longview • 15. Dr. William Edwin Safford, botanist • 16. Mary Elizabeth (Mrs. Hiram) Byrd of Princeton
17. Louise Caroline Meigs, of Jacksonville • 18. Belle (Mrs. D.H.) Goodrich of Fort Lauderdale • 19. Gertrude (Mrs. Harvey) Jarrett of Miami
20. Margaret R. (Mrs. W.B.) Young of Jacksonville

Alice Mosier (#11) married Alton Harold Swinson. In 1972, she gave the photo to the Sirozier Library at FSU. It was labeled the "Swinson Gift."
In 1982, the Sirozier Library holdings were transferred to the State of Florida Archives in Tallahassee.

Lodge Photo People Identifications
by Jeff Blakley

1. Floretta Evans, wife of Thomas E. Evans. She and her husband owned the Hotel Redland in Homestead. She was the founder and president of the Homestead Woman's Club and Chairman of the Refreshment committee for the dedication.
2. Mary Sorenson Moore, wife of Theodore Vivian Moore of Miami. Vice-President at large for the Florida Federation of Women's Clubs and member of the Building committee for the Royal Palm State Park.
3. Adair Irwin Edwards, wife of Gaston Holcombe Edwards, a prominent surgeon in Orlando. She was Chair of the Conservation committee of the Florida Federation.
4. Emma C. Moffett, wife of Leslie Alfred Moffett of Miami. He was a wealthy merchant and she was the president of the Highland Park Woman's Club in Miami.
5. Mary Barr Munroe, wife of Kirk Munroe of Coconut Grove. Park Visionary, Founder and President of the Coconut Grove Audubon Society, Chairman of the Bureau of Information and Historian of the Federation.
6. Ivy Julia Stranahan, wife of Frank Stranahan of Fort Lauderdale. She is known as the mother of Ft. Lauderdale and was Chairman of the Federation Indian Affairs committee. She and her husband Frank donated land for the Ft. Lauderdale Woman's Club.
7. Gertrude A. Taylor, wife of George M. Taylor of Princeton. He was responsible for keeping the saw blades at the Drake sawmill sharp and she was a past president of the Princeton Woman's Club. The Princeton Woman's Club donated 2,000 feet of flooring lumber for the Lodge.
8. Alice W. Jenison, wife of Sherman H. Jenison, who was J. R. Parrott's (of the F.E.C.) private secretary. Chairman of the Press Committee for the Florida Federation. They lived in Jacksonville.
9. Edith M. Twyman, wife of Iverson Lewis Twyman, who was Homestead's attorney and later a member of Brown, Twyman & Scott in Miami. She was president of the Homestead Woman's Club from October, 1917 until February, 1918.
10. May Mann Jennings, wife of Governor William S. Jennings and Florida's First Lady. Park Activist and President of the Federation.
11. Alice M. Mosier, daughter of Charles and Libby Houseworth, b. 1897. She married Alton Harold Swinson and gave this photograph to the Strozier Library at Florida State University.
12. Josephine Waite, wife of Stephen B. Waite of Longview. She was president of the Longview Woman's Club.

13. Kate V. Jackson, a prominent philanthropist from Tampa. She was in charge of the finances for the Florida Federation of Women's Clubs.
14. Agnes Stewart Loveland, wife of Edward Collins Loveland, of Longview. She was past-president of the Longview Woman's Club and the Chairman of the Building committee for Royal Palm Park.
15. Dr. William Edwin Safford, economic botanist with the USDA in Washington, D. C. and author of *History of Paradise Key and Surrounding Everglades*. He was also with the Smithsonian Institute.
16. Mary Elizabeth Byrd, wife of Dr. Hiram Byrd of Princeton. Hiram was with the Florida State Board of Health and Mary was president of the Redland Woman's Club.
17. Louise Caroline Meigs, Director of the General Federation Endowment Fund. Her father was Arthur Meigs, of Jacksonville, Florida, who was a wealthy lumber merchant.
18. Belle Goodrich, wife of Daniel H. Goodrich. She was elected president of the Fort Lauderdale Woman's Club in 1916, the same year the club house was built.
19. Gertrude Jarrett, wife of Harvey J. Jarrett, a businessman in Miami. She was president of the Miami Woman's Club and was in charge of the Royal Palm State Park in 1921.
20. Margaret Rankin Young, wife of William B. Young, a prominent lawyer and judge in Jacksonville, Florida.

Charles A. Mosier was a well-known botanist from Little River and was the first warden of the Royal Palm State Park, appointed on March 1, 1916. He is standing in the front row, at the far left, and was the man who supervised all of the work done at the Park, both before and after the dedication until 1920. His daughter, Alice M., was born in 1897 by his first wife, Libbie Houseworth. His son, Charles I., who is standing in front of Dr. Safford, was born in 1910, the son of Charles and his second wife, Mary Hettie Green, who was born in July, 1870 in Alabama. Hettie, administrator of the Lodge, is standing in front of the door to the right of her step-daughter, Alice.

Photograph Provenance

In his research about the provenance of the photograph Blakley discovered that the image sent by the State Archives is not the original, but a copy. There is a list of the twenty names on the back. The State Archives received the photograph from the Strozier Library at FSU. It was labeled "Swinson Gift." In researching the names Blakley discovered that the woman who married Alton Harold Swinson was Alice Mosier the daughter of the Park warden Charles Mosier and his first wife. Alice had graduated from FSU and gave the photo to the Strozier Library. In the photograph Alice Mosier Swinson is labeled #11 - Kitchen Maid.

Timeline—Royal Palm Park

- 1880s Adventurers and naturalists explore and enjoy the Everglades while poachers and plume hunters pillage.
 - 1883 The women of Green Cove Springs form the Village Improvement Association making it the first Woman's Club in Florida.
 - 1895 The Florida Federation of Women's Club (FFWC) is organized at Green Cove Springs.
 - 1900 With "Save the Wild Birds" as their motto, the pioneer organizers of the Florida Audubon Society hire the first warden, Guy Bradley, killed by a plume hunter in 1905.
 - 1905 On 25 January, Edith Gifford & Mary Barr Munroe of the Housekeepers Club of Coconut Grove make a proposal to the FFWC to save Royal Palm Hammock.
 - 1909 Land sharks exploit the Everglades. Mary Barr Munroe confronts milliners and plume-hatted women.
 - 1910 Mary Barr Munroe returns from the Second National Conservation Congress and urges the FFWC to take action to save the Royal Palms on Paradise Key.
 - 1915 In June, the bill May Mann Jennings lobbies through the Legislature granting the Royal Palm State Park to the FFWC passes one minute before the midnight recess. The maintenance funding appropriation does not pass. The women begin fund raising.
 - 1916 On 23 November, May Mann Jennings dedicates the "Royal Palm Park to the people of Florida and their children forever."
 - 1917 The completed lodge serves as a welcome center to guests and lodging for visiting scientists. May lobbies for funding from the Legislature. It fails as does her 1919 bill.
 - 1921 Legislature approves \$2,500 per annum for Park maintenance.
 - 1929 May Jennings formally offers the Park to the Everglades National Park, if ever it should be created. Work continues with the help of a citizen's group, headed by Ernest Coe.
- From 1915 the FFWC maintains the park "on a shoestring" for 32 years, through WWI, the 1926 Hurricane, the 1927 Fire, The Great Depression and WWII.
- 1947 At the dedication ceremony, the FFWC deeds over the land. To this day, the Royal Palm Park remains the nucleus of the Everglades National Park as a testament to the courage of the women of Florida.