

HURRICANES

The following list consists of hurricanes that directly affected Collier County since the National Weather Service in Miami has been keeping track, (1871).

- 1) October 6, 1873
- 2) October 19, 1876
- 3) September 25, 1894
- 4) October 17, 1910
- 5) September 18, 1926
- 6) September 10, 1960

Hurricanes are whirlwinds that may grow to be more than 300 miles in diameter. As they spin over the ocean, converting heat from the sunwarmed water to wind, hurricanes release more energy each minute than the largest hydrogen bomb. Once these winds start moving, they feed on energy from the warm, moist air over which they travel. As long as the hurricane is over warm water, it usually continues to build. While moving over the ocean, it lifts billions of tons of water everyday and dumps most of it back as rain in the next 24 hours. When the storm moves inland or over colder water, the loss of heat energy from the ocean eventually causes the hurricane to die.

The photographic exhibit covers the 1926 and 1960 hurricanes.

September 18, 1926. This fast moving storm hit Miami on the morning of September 18 and was battering Everglades by noon of the same day. Storm winds blew the water out of the Barron River and Chokoloskee Bay and then surged back into the waterfront town to the height of over eight feet.

The townspeople who did not evacuate rode out the storm on the second floor of the Everglades Inn. As they watched from the Inn's window, the storm quickly rearranged the landscape of the town. Houses were blown off their foundations and either floated or sailed across town. Others were ripped apart by the winds. Parked automobiles were filled with muddy salt water and sea creatures. Those animals trapped in cars later died when the water subsided leaving a stench that lingered for weeks. All the cows that were pastured in Everglades drowned for lack of an elevated shelter. At the north end of town, Port Dupont with its

repair complex for Barron G. Collier's steamship line and road building equipment for the Tamiami Trail, was leveled.

In a truly pioneering spirit, only a few people chose to leave the area. Barron G. Collier sent his yacht, the Baroness, to pick up survivors and to bring emergency supplies a few days later.

The damage from this storm was very severe in the Miami area and from Pensacola into Southern Alabama. 243 people lost their lives in this hurricane.

PHOTOGRAPHS

These photographs are from Everglades City, Florida.

- 1 - High winds and flood waters in Everglades City during the 1926 storm.
- 2 - Buildings were damaged from the winds, flooding and surges.
- 3 - Aerial view of storm damage looking east down Broadway. The Administration Building is on the left, Everglades Inn is on the far right, the Everglades Club and Central Garage are in the top right and the jail in the center in the background.
- 4 - View along Broadway West with Central Garage in the center and the Bakery to the far right with a trolley parked in front.
- 5 - High flood water after 1926 storm.
- 6 - View from the water tower looking along Broadway West showing the State Road Department on the left, which was torn from it's foundation and blown into the street coming to rest near the Everglades Inn.
- 7 - Street flooding.
- 8 - View from Broadway West as seen from the roof of the Rod and Gun Club. Everglades Inn is on the left, Administration Building on the right with the Barron River in the background.
- 9 - Ed Scott's Ford standing in a flooded street in Everglades City, 1926.
- 10 - Ed Scott seated on a row boat that is tied to the rail of the Rod and Gun Club.
- 11 - Woman and her dog standing in flooded street.
- 12 - Storm damage and flooding. Western Union Office to the far right.
- 13 - Work crews begin the clean-up.
- 14 - Oscar Lybass leaning on the fender of his partially submerged automobile parked in front of the Everglades Club.

"IT'S AN ILL WIND THAT BLOWS NO ONE A GOOD CASE OF SCOTCH"

If a case of perfectly healthy and robust Scotch came floating into your life - would you, or would you not turn it over to the "proper" authorities , presuming that the authorities are "proper" in this respect? Or would you "turn it up?"

This is the condition of mind of D.C. Griffon, Everglades' premier plumber.

It all happened like this:

The storm raged, the plumber plumbed the depths of despair. His door blew open and, presto, a square box came floating more or less bumpily, but majestically, into his place of business.

Now, it is related, Mr. Griffon had never seen such a box before; so he scrutinized it closely and decided he had better investigate its contents, which he did. It proved to be twelve perfectly good bottles of an approved brand, with a little water outside but none inside.

Mr. Griffon's first impulse was to rush out with this contraband and carry it posthaste to the nearest Volsteadian official; but there was water in the streets, and Mr. Griffon, it is related, hated to get his feet wet. Also the wind was blowing, and he doesn't care much for wind. So he sat him down and considered.

There are those in Everglades who believe that he is still considering. If he has sought legal advise, it is not a matter of public knowledge. Everglades attorneys to a man are said to believe that when a box of happy hooch drifts thus into a man's place of business, he is not manufacturing, transporting, or otherwise breaking the 18th Amendment; while mere laymen believe that this amendment has been broken so often that there is not enough of it left to find a piece large enough to break.

The Collier County News, Everglades, Collier County Florida.

Thursday, September 23, 1926.

September 10, 1960 : Hurricane Donna. "Special Collier County Hurricane Forecast. Winds and squalls will increase steadily this evening reaching hurricane force by midnight. Due to the northeast and east winds, the tides will not rise much until the hurricane center passes abreast of Collier County. The movement of the hurricane has been erratic during the last several hours and a more precise forecast of the maximum winds and tides will have to wait until later this evening. At this time, all persons in Collier County are urged to make necessary hurricane precautions. No evacuation seems necessary at this time. However, all persons should keep in touch with further advisories and bulletins over their radios." Leonard Pardue, Spokesman for Miami Hurricane Center. This bulletin was aired on September 9, 1960, things would change on the 10th.

September 10, 1960 : A broadcast beamed to Collier County indicates that Naples and Collier County will receive the full brunt of Hurricane Donna. Sheriff Doug Hendry broadcasts from Civil Defense Headquarters: "Emergency action will be required on the part of the people living in the Naples area. It is recommended persons living south of 8th Avenue, South, or along the beach and west of 1st Street, south of 5th Avenue, South and east of West Lake Drive, east of 9th Street from 5th Avenue, South to 8th Avenue, North, please prepare for an orderly evacuation. This evacuation must be completed by 7 a.m. this morning. Red Cross shelters are available at the Naples High School, the Masonic Hall and the old Railroad Depot. If you plan to leave town, please register at the Naples High School first. Stay calm. Do not get excited."

Donna is heading straight for Naples. Gusts are reported at 166 mph. Evacuation bulletins are announced for Marco, Goodland, Isles of Capri, Everglades, Chokoloskee Island, East Naples, Naples Park and Vanderbilt Beach. Throughout the day bulletins increase in frequency and urgency.

A tropical hurricane with its counter clockwise circulating winds is dangerous for three reasons: heavy rains with resulting flooding, high winds and high tides, and always, there is the possibility of a tidal wave.

"This is an extremely dangerous hurricane. You will be safe if you take action as requested now. Please remain calm." Sheriff Hendry.

The last ham radio report is received at 7 a.m. in Everglades City. Winds are 120 mph. The storm is coming but noone knows when the maximum winds will arrive. At 7:45 a.m., Civil Defense Headquarters is evacuated to the Red Cross shelter at the high school.

8:00 a.m. winds are at hurricane force. The roof begins to peel off the Railroad Depot Shelter - people inside are moved to Pine Lane Bowling Alley.

Communications are failing. UPI Network has blown down. The final contact with the weather bureau is by phone at 8:30 a.m. The eye is nearing Everglades City. The eye will pass over Naples, according to the weather bureau radar, between ten and eleven a.m..

By 9:30 a.m. any communication out of the city is non-existence. The barometer proves to be the best indicator of Donna's location.

The eye passes over Naples at noon, it lasts one hour. By 1:00 p.m., the winds are picking up again, this time from the opposite direction. Now the high tides are coming in. The southwesterly winds are bringing in the water that was blown out of the inland waters earlier and returning them forcefully with new gulf waters over the wind-battered mainland. Homes that survived the winds are now giving way to a nine and a half foot wall of water.

6:00 p.m. The winds have calmed. Donna is gone but not forgotten.

Fortunately, no lives were lost from Donna's passage over Collier County.

PHOTOGRAPHS

- 15 - Palm tree outside Naples residence twisted by Donna 1960.
- 16 - Gordon Pass Fish Camp in Naples. The camp never re-opened.
- 17 - Corner of 5th Ave. and 3rd St. in Naples blocked by fallen trees.
- 18 - Damage to home on Vanderbilt Beach. Photo by Tom Morgan.
- 19 - House trailers, some submerged, blown from Bonita Beach trailer park across Fish Trap Bay. Photo by Tom Morgan.
- 20 - Trailer park on Bonita Beach. Photo by Tom Morgan.
- 21 - Anthony Frederici's home on Vanderbilt Beach. Photo by Tom Morgan.
- 22 - Furniture from the Vanderbilt Beach Hotel litter the beach. Photo by Tom Morgan.

- 23 - Naples Airport. Photo by Tom Morgan.
- 24 - Naples City Docks -- some boats smashed on to dry land. Photo by Tom Morgan.
- 25 - Two automobiles swept off Gordon Drive into Naples Bay.
- 26 - Naples Marina
- 27 - Erosion and damage done to a seawall on Naples Beach.
- 28 - Broken pavement lying on Naples Beach. Photo by Tom Morgan.
- 29 - National Guard troops come to Everglades City. Photo by Tom Morgan.
- 30 - Naples Pier. Photo by Tom Morgan.