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## ***Yesterday's Fort Myers* by Marian Godown and Alberta Rawchuck**

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wilderness to the dawning twentieth century Ralph Middleton Munroe recorded it with painstaking care and perceptive love.

This book belongs in the libraries of caring Floridians, schools and universities, and, by extension, caring Americans. It is to be hoped that its distribution will not only be statewide but national. Certainly it is worth every penny of its cost.

*Gloria Jahoda*

*Yesterday's Fort Myers.* By Marian Godown and Alberta Rawchuck.(Miami: Seeman Press, 1975. 127 pp. Photographs, \$7.95)

When Mrs. Alice McCann sat at her fifty-drop switchboard, the first in Fort Myers in 1900, she was kept busy while kids “spooned over the wire”. This writer’s neighbor for many years, Mrs. McCann related other adventurous and sometimes disastrous stories which appear in *Yesterday's Fort Myers*.

This book is outstanding. It is a fast-moving account of early Fort Myers from the Caloosa Indians to the tourist boom of the 1950’s. The city's history is broken into four major categories which lead the reader easily from one phase of growth to another. These segments are lavishly illustrated with photographs. The photographs, many of them aerials and panorama views, do not merely show the town, they make it come alive. They depict people in action, rough cowboy bands, 600-pound fish, Indians, trail blazers, and resourceful pioneers. Much local color is then added to the illustrations by the accounts, sometimes stories in themselves, that the authors provide with each photograph. Together they give a well-written and arranged pictorial history of the area.

The book goes a little farther than merely passing as a pictorial history, however. It acquaints the reader with an area that was literally carved out of wilderness by the people who settled and lived there, who all knew each other, where there was no frost, and growth seemed to come in accidental bursts.

It is far beyond that now, but even in the 1950’s, as the book shows, this little city on the doorstep of the Everglades, was still delivering a portion of its mail by boat. One knew a hurricane was on the way when the red hurricane warning flag flew on the Ireland dock and tourists were few.

Thomas Edison and Henry Ford were neighbors and are pictured as they candidly chat at their winter homes on McGregor Boulevard. Not too many years ago Edison was a regular customer at one of the local machine shops.

Mrs. McCann and Mr. Edison would certainly appreciate this book because it recreates that small town, adventurous, neighborly feeling that is Fort Myers, but they would be amazed if they could see their little village now.

*Greg Fulton*