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From the Editors

Tampa Bay History

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FROM THE EDITORS

Some of the most perceptive accounts of American society have come from foreign observers. Travellers from abroad have depicted life in the United States with both admiration and criticism. Journeying from countries with deeply entrenched institutions and traditions, foreign commentators have been fascinated by the qualities of boundless energy, sense of destiny, and optimism mingled with naiveté, materialism, and ruthless competition that have characterized this relatively young nation. Our understanding of the American character has been enhanced through Hector St. John de Crevecoeur's glowing description of the colonies on the eve of the American Revolution, Alexis de Tocqueville's penetrating analysis of the Jacksonian Era, Lord James Bryce's critical commentary on the Gilded Age, and Alistair Cooke's insights into the contemporary political and social scenes.

This issue and succeeding ones will carry articles by foreigners touching on aspects of the Tampa Bay region. We are starting off with a study tracing the development and underlying meaning of Tampa's best known cultural tradition: the legend and celebration of Gasparilla. Authored by André-Marcel d'Ans, a French Professor of Anthropology who recently taught at the University of South Florida, this article is a condensation of a longer work that he has written in French. The journal also includes a diary of an Englishman who visited St. Petersburg around the turn of the twentieth century and recorded his memories of the leisurely sailing trip he took to Manatee County.

The remainder of this issue contains our regular features. A photo essay recalls the exciting years of the 1920s when boom times hit the Sunshine State. About the same period, E. A. "Frog" Smith was working on railroads and in sawmills along Florida's west coast, and this prominent Fort Myers folklorist recounts his experiences in an interview. For those who began to explore their roots after reading the last issue, we offer some more hints in the genealogy section.

With this edition, *Tampa Bay History* completes its second year and embarks on a few changes. While the journal will continue to be based in the Department of History and the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, we will finance publishing costs out of funds derived from the sale of subscriptions. Thus, it becomes more important than ever for our friends along the Suncoast and elsewhere to rally behind *TBH*. Spread the word about us, and remember that gift subscriptions make wonderful Christmas, birthday, anniversary, and graduation presents.

As we look forward to our third year, we would like to welcome to our editorial staff Lou Pérez, who previously served on the advisory board, and Cathy Bayless, a 1980 graduate of Furman University in South Carolina, who is presently working toward a Masters Degree in History at USF. All of us will strive to keep *Tampa Bay History* flourishing for the future.

COMMUNICATIONS

Any correspondence pertaining to the articles, reviews and other material contained in the journal may be sent to the Managing Editor.

Dear Editors:

On page 36 of the Spring/Summer 1980 issue you identified an automobile in the Hernando County Court House as a Model "T" Ford.

Please note that it is a model "A" Ford. The "A" had wire spoke wheels and a split front bumper, whereas the "T" had wooden spoke wheels and no bumper because of a crank start.

Old, old man
John Friend
Tampa, Florida