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Monumental Undertakings

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During the busy year of 1983, Tampa Historical Society continued its tradition of supporting public awareness of our history by dedicating three historical markers, all located in the downtown Franklin Street Mall. The historical markers program was initiated by Tony Pizzo. (THS past president Ken Mulder wrote of the marker program in his article "Marking an Historic Trail Through Tampa", Volume VII, 1981.) Tampa Historical Society is proud of its contribution to a community
service project which exposes thousands of persons to Tampa's history daily.

Saturday, April 16, two markers were dedicated in a gala celebration, the first being dedicated to Dr. Frank Adamo, early pioneer in Tampa's medical field. This was the first monument dedicated to a living individual. Dr. Robert Withers, Hillsborough County Medical Association Historian officiated at the services. Dr. Adamo and a host of family members and well-wishers were on hand to honor the event.

The second historical marker dedication April 16 was officiated by Dr. James Covington, board member and past president of Tampa Historical Society. The FORT BROOKE CEMETERY was recently discovered while constructing the Old Fort Brooke parking garage. During the Second Seminole War (1835-42) the U.S. Army used the site as a cemetery for soldiers, civilian employees and Indians. In 1982, 102 bodies were exhumed and reburied at the Oaklawn Cemetery. The Indian remains were put to rest by burning herbs at the Seminole Shrine on Orient Road, and today, passersby are reminded of this historic site, thanks to Tampa Historical Society.

On November 18, 1983, Tampa Historical Society dedicated its third historical marker to Captain James McKay, pioneer settler of Tampa. Captain McKay was an early Tampa entrepreneur who pioneered the first commercial connections between Tampa and the outside world. In addition, he was involved in the construction of the first courthouse, was active in the cattle trade to Cuba and was elected mayor in 1859.

The dedication ceremonies were attended by THS members, guests and McKay family members. THS was proud to be a part of this
ceremony dedicated to a pioneer whose family’s civic contributions through generations have made them one of the most respected families of the area.