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Hampton Dunn

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REMEMBERING HENRY BRADLEY PLANT

By HAMPTON DUNN

Over on the East Coast of Florida, Henry Morrison Flagler is a byword and there are reminders everywhere of that great developer. A county and a city are named for him, there are statues and numerous other signs of his importance to the history of that area.

Over on this West Coast, the image of Henry Bradley Plant is not so well projected. And yet, he did for the West Coast what Flagler had done for the East Coast: He brought his railroad here, built magnificent hotels, opened up the isolated section for development.

We have a museum named for Plant; his old Tampa Bay Hotel has been renamed Plant Hall by the University of Tampa; an east Hillsborough County community honors his name as Plant City. There is a monument to Plant in front of the old hotel - but no statue of him anywhere.

ART TEACHER ACTS

Energetic, imaginative, enthusiastic Hilary Jameson is doing something to eliminate this oversight. She is an art teacher at Tampa’s Plant High School, which is named in Plant’s honor.

Ms. Jameson has spearheaded a movement to raise $5,000 to erect a bigger-than-life bronze statue of Plant. She has reached her goal; well-known Tampa sculptor Carl Norton, 2nd, is rapidly finishing the project, and
plans for the dedication early next year are well underway.

The 1980s mark the centennial of Plant’s impact on the Tampa Bay area with the construction of his railroad and the elegant hotel.

WORD FROM MARTINEZ

The large bas relief, which will be one-of-a-kind, will be located in the Plant High School interior main lobby. This site will assure safety and high visibility of the historic piece of sculpture. A commemorative plaque noting the names of persons and groups giving $100 or more to the project will be on the wall beside the statue of Plant.

Plant High School is at 2415 S. Himes Avenue in the Palma Ceia section. It was opened in 1928.

In the Spring of this year, when the project was first announced, then Mayor Bob Martinez wished the sponsors success and observed that "It is most encouraging to know that the number of Tampa citizens who are interested in preserving our historical heritage is continuing to grow, and I commend their efforts."