An aerial photograph of Terry Park, showing several baseball fields with green grass and brown dirt bases. The fields are arranged in a row, separated by concrete paths and green fencing. In the background, there are residential houses and a road. The sky is clear and blue.

# **Terry Park Centennial Anniversary**

## **Commemorative Program 1906-2006**

**A Lee County  
Department of  
Parks & Recreation  
Facility**

Photo - Aerial Innovations Inc. - Tampa, Florida - 800-223-1701

**3410 Palm Beach Boulevard  
Fort Myers, Florida**



**LEE COUNTY**  
SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

October 2005

Bob Janes  
*District One*

Douglas R. St. Cerny  
*District Two*

Ray Judah  
*District Three*

Tammy Hall  
*District Four*

John E. Albion  
*District Five*

Donald D. Stilwell  
*County Manager*

Daviri M. Owen  
*County Attorney*

Diana M. Parker  
*County Hearing Examiner*

Dear Terry Park Visitors:

The Lee County Board of County Commissioners looks forward to joining our fellow citizens in celebrating the centennial anniversary of Terry Park during 2006. In the last 100 years, thousands of organizations have used Terry Park for its recreational needs, activities, programs and special events. The visitors and users of Terry Park have made it a cornerstone in the history of Lee County. The park's history includes a multitude of activities.....circus, rodeo competition, holiday events, high school sports, boxing, cultural events and on and on..... but Terry Park is best known for two ongoing activities .....60 years of the annual fair and 100 years of baseball both on the amateur and professional levels.

Numerous events will highlight the park's 100 year celebration. The largest will be on April 28 through 30, 2006. The three days of festivities will include many organizations that have been a part of Terry Park history. The theme will be..... "let's get the old gang back together again one more time." The participants will try to recreate the park's glorious history and honor all the organizations and visitors during the last 100 years. We encourage everyone to attend and enjoy this 'stroll down memory lane.'

We are celebrating the park's history but in doing so let's not lose site of the future. The park may be 100 years old but it has never looked better and the future looks very promising. As a matter of fact, the Board is confident that the next 100 years will prove to be the best years in Terry Park's illustrious history.

As public servants, we believe that an ambitious parks and recreation program significantly increases the quality of life for all citizens. In Lee County, Terry Park was the first park of what eventually became a nationally recognized Parks and Recreation Department. The Board continues to be committed to a countywide system of parks that offers numerous programs for all ages.

In conclusion, we would like to thank all the visitors to the park for their continual usage of Terry Park and making it the 'place to be.' It's that citizen involvement and commitment to Terry Park that has helped to make Lee County an outstanding place to live, work and raise a family.

Sincerely yours,   
Douglas R. St. Cerny, Chairman

Lee County Board of County Commissioners



Bob Janes  
*District 1*



Douglas R. St. Cerny  
*District 2*



Ray Judah  
*District 3*



Tammy Hall  
*District 4*



John E. Albion  
*District 5*

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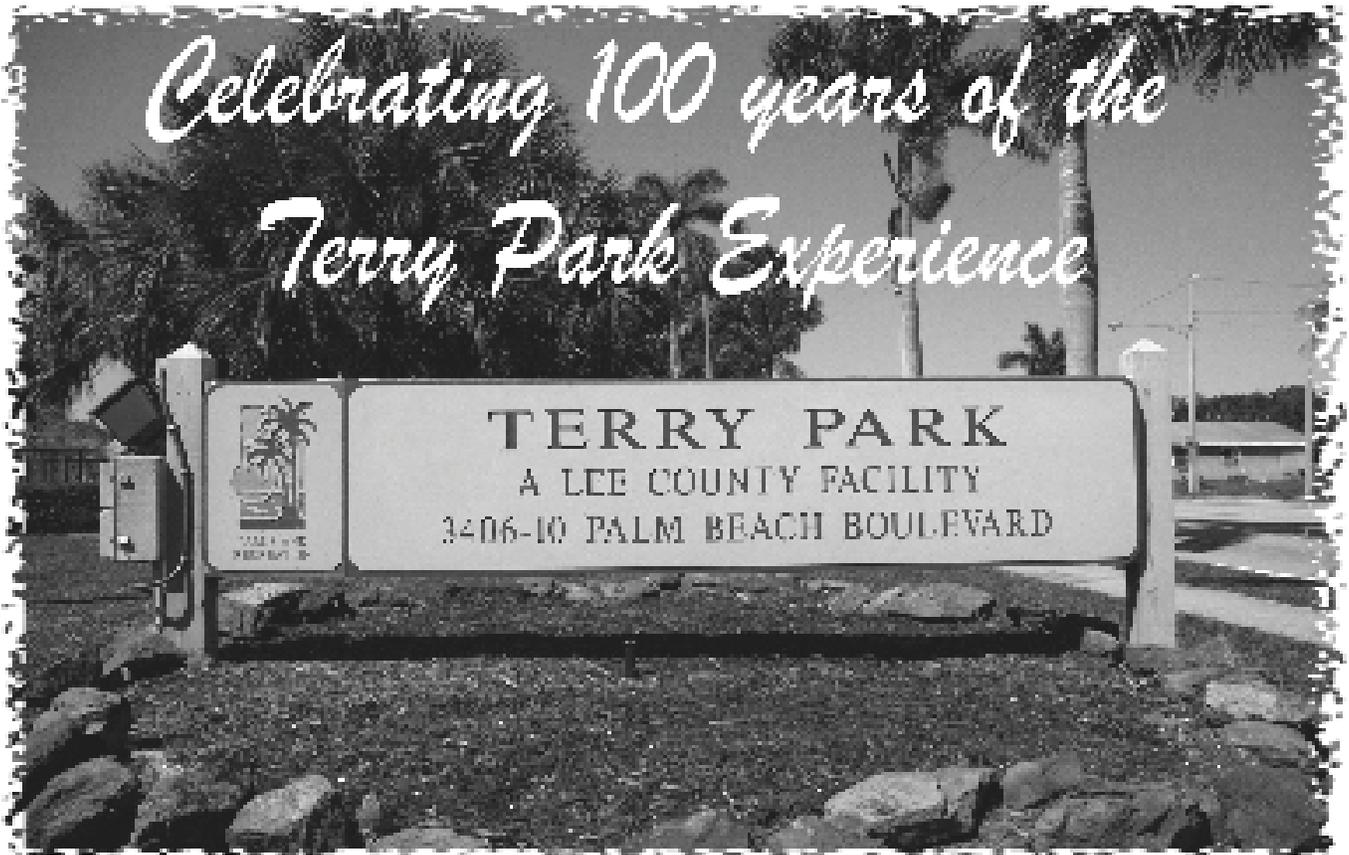


Photo – John Derums, 2005

# Terry Park .....100 Years of Recreation

Today, Terry Park ( TP ), a 38 acre site on Palm Beach Boulevard two miles east of downtown Ft Myers, is one of the busiest Regional Parks managed by Lee County Department of Parks and Recreation. Surrounded by numerous regal Royal Palm trees, this recreation facility is open year round and is annually visited by thousands of individuals -- both locals and tourists. Two county departments – Parks and Recreation and University of Florida IFAS Lee County Extension – have their administrative offices and headquarters on park grounds. Park facilities include a playground, large pavilion and picnic tables, Butterfly Garden, Master Gardener Herb Garden and Palm Garden. Additionally, there are meeting room facilities, Victor Yingst Memorial Reference Library, multi-purpose athletic field, 4 baseball fields, one of which has a 1,000 seat grandstand and in a couple years will be home to a Florida major league spring training baseball museum.

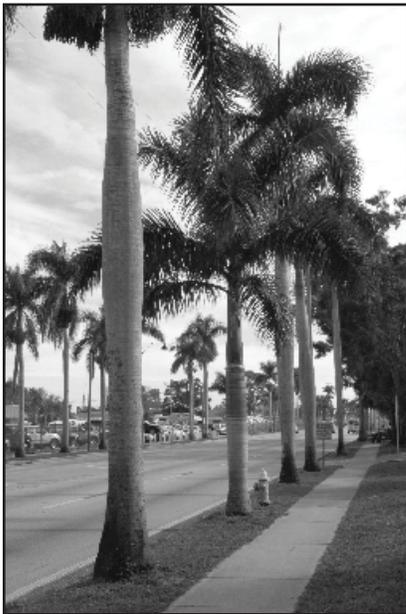


Photo – John Derums, 2005

**The park's elegant Royal Palm Trees**



Photo – John Derums, 2005

**Families enjoy Terry Park's facilities year round**



Photo – John Derums, 2005

**The Butterfly Garden**

Terry Park is the oldest Lee County Park and has a grand and spectacular history. In April 2006 it will be celebrating its centennial anniversary. For most of those 100 years the focal point has been the stadium and the major league baseball teams that have played their spring training games there. But the spring training of 1989 was the last time the big leaguers hit home runs, turned a 6 – 4 – 3 double play and dived head first into home plate with the game winning run in the bottom of the ninth inning to win one for the home team. Though major league baseball has dominated TP history, it would be a serious mistake to limit one's focus solely on baseball, as many other interesting and unique events have taken place there in the last 100 years. Throughout much of its history, Terry Park has been the largest, most attractive and best site in Lee County for a multitude of outdoor games and activities. As you look through this program you'll discover that TP has been, and continues to be, a park that offers something for all visitors. So sit back and read the following chronologies, stroll down memory lane and enjoy the wonderfully entertaining story of this great and historic Lee County Parks and Recreation gem known as.....Terry Park.

In the last 100 years of recreation at Terry Park, 3 structures have been the center of its history....the clubhouse, a large office building and, of course, the stadium. In the first of the two chronologies, the clubhouse and office building will be examined. This chronology will look at the park and all the non-baseball events that have taken place there. For clarification purposes and to avoid confusion, these structures will be referred to as the 'Clubhouse' and 'Building.' The second chronology will review the stadium's illustrious baseball history.

# Park Chronology

## 1906 -- 2006

**April 26, 1906** The facility now known as Terry Park begins as Dr. Marshall Terry and his wife Tootie McGregor Terry, a Ft Myers benefactress, complete plans to turn a cow pasture into the Fort Myers Yacht and Country Club.

**Feb 1908** The Clubhouse is built and becomes the first structure on park grounds and is the center of the ill fated and short lived Ft Myers Yacht and Country Club that goes out of business in 1914.

**1914** The one story Building is constructed and is the second of the 3 major structures on park grounds. It has no official name and is known simply as 'the Building.'

**Feb-March 1914** A minor league baseball team, the Louisville Colonels, spends 3 weeks at TP for spring training. They have 2 daily practice sessions and charge a 25 cent admission fee. The Colonels play and defeat 2 major league teams visiting Ft Myers.....the Philadelphia A's and the St Louis Browns. The large grandstand and ballfield, where the Philadelphia A's would eventually play its spring training games starting in 1925, is not yet built. However, the teams use the baseball field and small grandstand that is part of Dr Terry's country club.

*Historical note..... The Colonels ( 1902 - '62 ) are in the American Association which is one of the top minor leagues. Three future major league baseball players play on this 1914 team....Hank Severeid, Fred Toney and Grover Loudermilk.*



Photo – Southwest Florida Museum of History  
**Tootie McGregor Terry**



Photo – State of Florida Library & Archives

**The country club never becomes a prosperous business**

**October 7, 1918** Lee County Commissioners allocate \$250 for staff to implement 1st Lee County Fair.

**Feb 1919** First Lee County Fair at TP.

*Historical note..... Circa 1910, the precursor of the Lee County Fair is a carnival that takes place on McGregor Boulevard and is sponsored by the Accelerator Club. It does not have the usual fair exhibits and amusements. Instead, the main draw is a Seminole Indian tribe that performs its tribal dances. The carnival's history ends in 1917 when the United States enters World War I.*

**March 3, 1919** Lee County Commissioners agree to accept the Clubhouse as county property after Dr Terry cancels the mortgage and all stockholders donate their stock to the county. Terry hopes that the land ( still privately owned by him ) will be used for an annual county fair. Commissioners levy a millage to support a county fair.

**Jan 5, 1921** Marshall Terry donates the land that has been a recreation facility on private property since 1906 to Lee County Government and it becomes a county government public park for the first time. The Trust Deed stipulates "all property shall be used as a park and public property granted to Lee County." The deed also contains a 'Reverter Clause' that states if the "Trustees of Terry Park" ( AKA - Lee County Commissioners ) do not use the property as a "Park and Public Grounds" then title reverts back to the grantor or his heirs. The Lee County Commissioners officially name the grounds 'Terry Park.' However, many citizens over the years will continue to call it the 'Lee County Fairgrounds.'

**1921** An annex is built and it is the first major addition to the Building. Lee County Extension Service office ( later to be known as University of Florida IFAS Lee County Extension ) is established and moves its headquarters into the new annex.

**1921 – 46** American Legion Post 38 sponsors the fair. Horseracing on the ½ mile dirt track around the stadium and boxing are added to increase attendance.

**1922 – 80** The Clubhouse serves as space for Lee County government offices and meeting rooms for the general public.

**1923** Circle of wooden sheds costing \$16,700 is constructed behind the Building. Lee County Commissioners name it "Turner's Circle" after WS Turner who was a County Commissioner from 1911 – 23. During the years when the Fair is at TP, the sheds are used for small animal cages and displays. After the Fair moves to the Lee Civic Center in 1979, the Parks and Recreation Department use the sheds for storage.



Photo – Southwest Florida Museum of History  
( left to right ) **Henry Ford, Thomas Edison, and Henry Firestone** visit the fair at Terry Park in the 1920's



Photo – Ft Myers High School

**The 1939 Ft Myers High School football team had an 8 – 2 – 1 record and finished in second place in the South Florida Conference**

**1924** Name of the Lee County Fair is changed to the Southwest Florida Fair.

**1925 – 47** Ft. Myers High School plays its football games on Fridays at TP. From 1925 to 1934 the Green Wave games are played in the stadium during the afternoon. From 1935 to 1947 the games are played outside the stadium under the lights installed by Florida Power & Light and Head Coach Sidney Ellison and his football players. A local company cuts down trees that will become the light poles and the Green Wave players skin the bark off the trees. Some big games against arch rivals draw as many as 4,000 spectators ( bleacher seating capacity is 2,750. ) Because white field paint had not yet been invented and a white lime substance burns the eyes, FMHS coaches and players line the football field with white sand from Ft Myers Beach on Thursdays for the Friday games.

**Winter 1926** Tourists, in old model cars, camp for the winter on park grounds in a “tent city” ( AKA tourist camp. ) Lee County Commissioners and Camp Manager, John Boring, decide to close the camp in June of ‘27 because of inadequate natural drainage and unsanitary conditions. Boring is the Lee County Agricultural Agent from 1915-20 and helps organize the first Lee County fairs.

**Feb 1927** Before the annual 1927 fair begins, the Lee County Commissioners spend \$15,000 to renovate the fairgrounds facilities. A second story is added to the Building. To promote fair opening day attendance, the City of Ft Myers closes its offices and encourages all businesses to do the same. First day attendance is 2,700. Attendance for all 5 days is 16,000....a record at the time. Some of the midway shows include contortionists and Buster - the world’s champion diving dog. The school exhibits are on the first floor of the Building and art & needlework exhibits are on the second floor. Fair admission is 50 cents.

**1928** Lee County Commissioners spend \$30,000 on a new wooden floor that replaces the dirt floor of the building. Additionally, they expand the Building’s square footage.

**Late 1920’s** The Clubhouse serves as a polling site for local elections.

**1931 – early 40’s** Dunbar High School plays its football games on Thursday afternoons at TP.

**1934** Ft Myers City Council requests the Lee County Commissioners build a permanent tourist site at TP. The City is prepared to help pay some of the expenses. No action is taken on the request.

**Feb 1938** The first Edison Pageant of Light Parade, sponsored by the Women’s Community Club and the Junior Chamber of Commerce, starts in downtown Ft Myers and goes down Palm Beach Boulevard and ends at Billy’s Creek. The 40 floats and 4 bands continue to TP where Ft Myers Mayor Dave Sheppard presents awards to the best parade entries. Edisonia Royalty are King James Hendry Jr and Queen Virginia Sheppard.

**July 4, 1938** 3,000 citizens show up at TP for the holiday festivities sponsored by the VFW. There are a 13 car 'jalopy derby' and a 5 mile motorcycle race on the ½ mile track around the stadium. Other festivities include a greased pole and greased pig contests for the kids. For a 10 cent admission, spectators can watch daredevil drivers and motorcycle stuntmen perform in the stadium. The day concludes with a 25 cent fish fry. Security for the day is provided by the National Guard.

**Nov 11, 1938** In a 6 man football game, Clewiston defeats Ft Myers 18 – 13. Most of the Ft Myers games at TP were 11 man football, however, they played 6 man football games against schools that couldn't field an 11 man team because of small enrollments.

**Nov 27, 1939** 4,000 fans ( the largest high school football crowd ever at TP ) watch Ft Myers High School defeat undefeated Sarasota High School 13 – 6 during the annual Thanksgiving Day game between the two archrivals.



Photo – Sporting News

**This mid to late 1930's aerial photo shows the ½ mile track surrounding the football field and baseball stadium. To the right are the Clubhouse and Turner's Circle behind the Building**

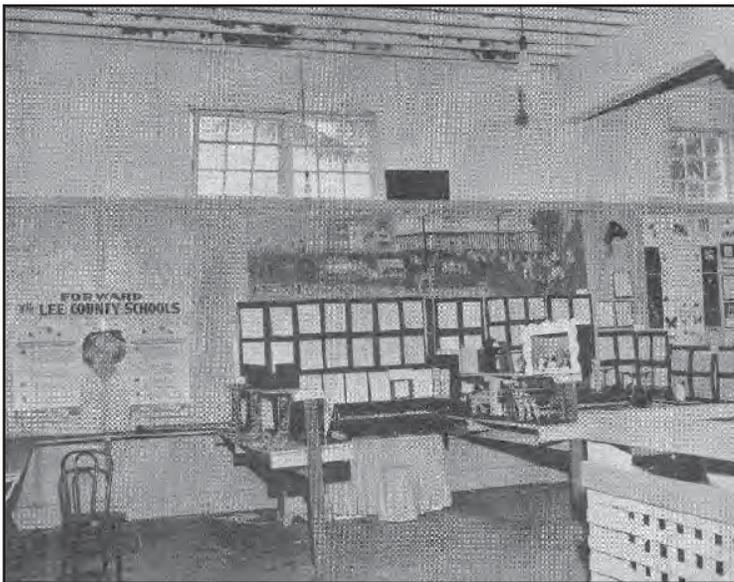


Photo – Doug Bartleson Jr

**1951 Lee County elementary school exhibit at the Southwest Florida Fair**

**Late 1930's - early 40's** Car races are held at the ½ mile track around the stadium.

**1939 – 46** Weekend horse races take place on the ½ mile track.

**1940's – 1950** Ft Myers High School track and field team uses the ½ mile grass track for its meets. Running on the track is treacherous as there are many ruts from numerous horse and car races.

*Historical note:.....The half mile track around the baseball stadium is first used during the Lee County Fair in 1922 for horseracing. At the time it is a dirt track. During the 1940's, because of lack of proper maintenance it becomes a grass track. By the early 1950's with few if any activities being held on it, the grass track blends into the grass next to and around the track and 'disappears.'*

**Sept 1946** Lee County Commissioners grant the Junior Chamber of Commerce of Florida the southwest portion of TP to build a permanent rodeo for annual competition. Western movie star Johnnie Mack Brown makes an appearance at the TP rodeo.

*Historical note.....During his career, Brown makes over 100 western movies in the 1930 - 40's.*

**1947 – 57** Ft Myers Shrine Club of Egypt Temple sponsors the Southwest Florida Fair and splits the profits with Lee County Commissioners.

**1949 – 51** Ft Myers Lions Club sponsors the Rogers Brothers Circus at TP.

**Feb 1952** Local kids in the Caloosa Junior Conservation Club go to the Corkscrew swamp and capture two dozen cottonmouth water moccasins. That exhibit becomes part of a very popular display at the fair sponsored by the Florida Game and Freshwater Fish Commission.



Photo – Southwest Florida Historical Society

**The Southwest Florida Fair is one of the major events at Terry Park for over a half century**

**Feb 1, 1955** 2550 people attend the opening day of the annual fair at TP. The day begins with a 2 mile parade starting in downtown Ft Myers and ending on the fairgrounds midway. Six high school bands participate. Late in the day, law enforcement officials close down a “girlie show” on the midway. Citizens feel a 50 cent, seven minute exhibition is unacceptable for the family style fair.

**Sept 1952** Lee County Commissioners pay \$ 800 to exterminate dry wood termites in the Clubhouse.

**1954** Having made the request 20 years earlier, the Ft Myers City Council, again, requests the Lee County Commissioners build a permanent tourist site at TP. The City is prepared to help pay some of the expenses. No action is taken on the request.

**Feb 3, 1954** Lee County Commissioners allow a gospel singing group to pitch a tent in TP.

**October 1955** Junior Chamber of Commerce sponsors the Cole & King Brothers Circus.

**1955 – 1959** The Demolay Club parks cars at the fair for its annual fundraiser. This club of high school age boys is affiliated with the Masons Tropical Lodge Free and Accepted Masons. Several of these boys....Gerald Ellis ( 3 star Admiral, US Navy ) and Frank Mann ( Florida State Legislator & Lee County Commissioner ) will become prominent Ft Myers citizens years later. Dr. Sam Watkins serves as one of several club advisors.

**1955 – 65** Art League meets at TP. During those years the club proposes that it be allowed to build a new building east of the fire station facing Palm Beach Blvd. It will serve as its headquarters. Plans never materialize.

**1956 – 58** Riverside School is held in the clubhouse as teacher Annie Lee Johnson teaches 18 special needs students daily in one room and on the large porch.

*Historical note.....From 1953 – 55 Riverside School is established and run by Lee County Association of Retarded Citizens – AKA LARC. Classes are held at Riverside Baptist Church Annex, from which it got its name. After the school leaves TP in 1958 it moves to Evans Avenue and Hanson Street....the current location of LARC. In 1969, the School District of Lee County assumes responsibility for the school and in 1975 moves it to its current location at Tanglewood Elementary School.*

**March 20, 1957** Public Health Director tells Lee County Commissioners that fair vendors are digging holes in the ground for their sewage disposal and that “it isn’t very sanitary” and this problem needs to be corrected before next year’s fair.

**1957** Lee County Commissioners hire Park Pigott as the Superintendent of TP. At the time, he was Director of Ft Myers Parks and Recreation Department.

**1958 – 59** The Page Club sponsors the fair.

*Park Chronology 1906 -- 2006*

**June 29, 1959** Lee County Commissioners create the Lee County Department of Parks and Recreation with Park Pigott as Director. He oversees a staff of 2 employees, one pickup truck, a tractor and a few parks. Department headquarters is established in the Clubhouse at TP. The Department will move its office into the Lee County Administration Building in downtown Ft Myers from 1962 – 67 before returning to the Clubhouse in 1968.

**1960 – 78** The Southwest Florida Fair Association sponsors the fair at TP.

**1960's – early 70's** Local Cub Scout Packs and Boy Scout Troops conduct annual 'Scouting in Action Show' with over 100 boys participating. Each troop and pack demonstrates some aspect of scouting. One year a troop serves deep fried rattlesnake.....and only tells the 'grownups' what they have eaten after the fact...much to the chagrin of the adults and to the amusement of the Scouts.

**Sept 1961** Lee County Commissioners allow a local church to set up Sunday School in the Building for 6 months.

**1961 – 69** Lee County Sheriff's Posse sponsors an annual championship rodeo. The 2 day event includes activities such as calf roping, bull riding and the crowning of a rodeo queen.

**1964** Lee County Commissioners want to demolish the Clubhouse. Park Pigott, county Parks and Recreation Director, convinces them to remodel it.

**1966** Tammy Wynette (AKA the first lady of country music) performs in the stadium during the fair.

*Historical note.....In 1968, her song "Stand By Your Man" hits number 1 on the country music charts. In 2004, Country Music Television proclaims this song the 'greatest country song' of all time.*

**Mid 1960's – late 70's** Jr. Welfare League sponsors a Halloween 'haunted house' in the circle of wooden sheds behind the Building.

**Late 1960's** The Fair Board pays for a new Extension Services Office to the west of the Building. It houses fair exhibits and office space for the staff.

**1978** Last of 60 consecutive annual fairs takes place at TP. The fair moves to the new Lee County Civic Center in North Ft Myers in 1979 with a bigger and better facility and with a considerably larger parking area.

During the years the fair is at TP, the Building is often referred to as the "School Exhibits Building." At night in the area of the circle of wooden sheds (Turner's Circle) behind the Building, Southwest Florida high school bands perform concerts. The staff of the Extension Service Office shares space with the Fair's sponsors who use most of its space to display animals during the fair. Traditionally, "Negroes" are permitted to visit the fair only on Thursdays while white citizens can attend on the other days of the week. The segregation days at the fair end in the early 1970's.



Photo – John Derums, 2005

**The Parks & Recreation Administration Building**

**1980** Lee County Parks and Recreation moves its headquarters from the Clubhouse into the Building. From that time to the present, the Building is known as the Parks and Recreation Administration Building.

**Oct 1980** The Clubhouse is decorated for Halloween and serves as a 'haunted house' for the area children. Admission fee is \$1.50.

**Nov 1980** The Clubhouse is demolished and the parking area in front of the Building is greatly enlarged.

**1987** Lee County Commissioners appropriate \$63,000 to renovate the second floor of the Building from storage to office space.

**1989** A property appraisal is done and TP is appraised at \$735,000.

**May 1989** The Lee County Extension Services Office, built in the late 1960's, receives a total renovation and the staff office space is greatly enlarged.

**May 1990** A wine tasting festival is conducted at TP as part of the Florida Supper Program.

**1995** Circle of wooden sheds behind the Building is demolished and new office space is built.



Photo – John Derums, 2005

**Extension Services Building**

**1998 – 2004** Reverend Israel Suarez, Executive Director of the Nations Association, conducts Nations Family Outreach Day. Food, clothing and social services programs are available to people in need.

**May 1998** Girl Scout Troops 2007 and 416 and the Elks Lodge 1288 conduct a flag retirement ceremony and burn over 200 tattered US flags as part of a Memorial Day ceremony.

**Oct 1998** At the Ft Myers Optimist Invitational Cross Country meet, both Estero boys and girls teams win a championship trophy. 30 teams and 200 runners compete.

**Oct 2000** 8,000 citizens attend the Hispanic Culture Festival.

**April 2003** Wagner's Florida Chal-



photo - Todd Stubbing, News-Press, 2004

**Israel Suarez, from the back of the truck, distributes food to the needy**

lenger Baseball Festival features 16 teams and 170 special needs athletes.

**2004** Property Appraiser of Lee County appraises TP at \$3,923,400.

**April 26, 2006** Centennial anniversary for Terry Park as a recreation facility .... the first 15 years as a private country club, owned by the Terry family and the last 85 years as a public park managed by the Lee County Department of Parks and Recreation.

# The Clubhouse

## 1908 -- 1980



Photo - State of Florida Library & Archives

### The Clubhouse is the center of activities at Terry Park

For 72 years, this grand structure stood at the entrance of Terry Park and it was the first thing all visitors saw as they entered the park. Although the stadium is the most famous structure on the grounds.....the Clubhouse might have the most interesting story to tell.

In 1908, Dr. Marshall Terry, a nationally known figure in the medical community, had a vision. He built the \$2,500 house as a centerpiece of the Ft Myers Yacht and Country Club. It was a one story, square frame structure with wrap around wide verandas and a pearly white exterior. Simply put, this house typified early Florida architecture. Inside it had a fireplace, high tongue-in-groove ceilings, sky blue French doors and locker rooms with 'shower baths,' an unusual feature for those times. The premises were lighted by acetylene gaslights. Terry oversaw the construction and local businessmen financed it.

Dr. Terry's grand plan was to create a country club and golf course to equal any facility in Florida and attract sports minded winter visitors. It was managed by a Board of Directors with Terry serving as the President of the Board. The Country Club would offer a golf course, tennis courts, yacht landing, basketball court, croquet courts, gun traps, baseball diamond, small grandstand seating 500 and, of course, the focal point of this dream was the Clubhouse. Terry's dream never fully materialized. He tried to sell annual memberships for \$100 but could register only 300+ members. Too many people thought the location was "out in the boonies" and the roads leading to the Country Club were, for the most part, unnavigable. He did build a 600 foot pier for yachts and motor launches at the foot of Tarpon Street, a new shell road, connecting the Caloosahatchee River to TP. Unfortunately, it was three blocks north of the country club. For individuals who arrived in town by train ( Atlantic Coast Line ) at the depot in downtown Ft.



Photo - New York State Military Museum

**Brigadier General  
Marshall Terry, MD**

Myers, it was an hour travel by carriage to the facility and a 25 cent fee ( round trip. ) On a cold and cloudy opening day for the Country Club, February 21, 1908, there was a golf tournament on what was described as a "crude" 9 hole course, while 4 players competed in a tennis tournament and 12 people participated in a trap shooting contest. After the games were completed, refreshments were served in the main reception room of the Clubhouse, known as the "Terry Room." Later that evening, there was a Grand Ball at the Royal Palm Hotel in downtown Ft Myers. The local newspaper, *The Ft Myers Press*, billed the opening of the new country club as a "new epoch in the social life of Ft Myers." On opening day, Terry and the Board of Directors were \$ 2000 in debt

and over the years it never got much better. By 1914, with a small membership and the country preoccupied with World War I, Dr. Terry gave up on his grand dream.



Photo – Southwest Florida Museum of History

**Golfers ‘teeing it up’ on the country club course**

Over the years and after its country club days ended, the Clubhouse served many functions at TP. It was simultaneously a home and office space for county government’s transportation and roads staff. Later, the Clubhouse served as meeting rooms for civic groups like the Better Homes Club and the 4 – H Club and served as storage space for county voting machines. Additionally, it served as a classroom for area public school students. Finally, it was headquarters for the Kansas City Royals and several Lee County government departments..... Community Services, Veterans Service Office and Parks and Recreation. During the Royals time there, the one inoperable air conditioner wall unit was removed and not replaced. Consequently, numerous birds would fly through the hole in the wall while county government and Royals employees tried to conduct business. The hot springtime temperatures and bird droppings were, at times, almost more than the staff could bear. By 1980 and badly in need of major repairs and renovation, Lee County Commissioners had the Clubhouse demolished.....and thus ended the glorious history of the first structure built on the grounds that today we call.....Terry Park.

*Historical notes.....1 ) Brigadier General Marshall Terry served as Surgeon General of the New York National Guard from 1895 through the Spanish – American War ( 1898. ) 2 ) After Dr. Terry gave up on his dream of a country club at Terry Park, Scottish architect Donald Ross, in 1917, moved the location of the country club to McGregor Boulevard and built an 18 hole golf course. Since 1927, the City of Ft Myers has owned and operated the Ft Myers Country Club, the oldest golf course in Southwest Florida. 3 ) In 2006, there is still a pier on the site where Dr. Terry built his original dock. Now called ‘Tarpon Street Pier’, it is a City of Ft Myers facility used by local fishermen. 4 ) The train depot in downtown Ft. Myers closed in 1971 and since 1982 the facility has been the headquarters of the Southwest Florida Museum of History—formerly known as the Ft Myers Historical Museum. 5 ) Better Homes Club - The first home demonstration club in Lee County was formed on Pine Island by Mrs. Sikes, Lee County Home Demonstration Agent in 1929. Other groups were started including the Better Homes Club, which met at Terry Park in the Clubhouse. The group continued to meet during the depression even though no extension agent was employed. During the 1940’s the Better Homes Club collected old clothing for repair and donation to poor children in the community. Clothing that was beyond repair was torn into strips and woven into rugs and then sold and the money used to purchase material for more children’s clothing. On most Thursdays there would be about 15 ladies working together on the clothing. Members of the club included Iva Celec and Mrs. Solomon, mother of Ellis Solomon, who would become Fort Myers Mayor from 1980 - 84. The group continued to meet until the 1960’s. The loom that was used for weaving is exhibited today in the lobby of the Extension Service office at Terry Park. It was restored by Harley Stevens in 1992.*

# Stadium Chronology

1923 -- 2006



Photo – Frank Richards

**Philadelphia A's practice at the second baseball stadium at TP**

**1923 - 25** As part of the deal to entice the Philadelphia Athletics ( A's ) to leave Montgomery, Alabama and come to Ft Myers to conduct their spring training, a large baseball field and grandstand is built at TP. The ballfield is designed from specs provided by Connie Mack, owner and manager of the A's. The wooden grandstand seats 1,500. Richard Richards Sr., owner of the Ft. Myers Royal Palm Pharmacy and President of the Kiwanis Club, heads up a committee that persuades the A's, after 2 years of negotiations, to come to Ft Myers for spring training in 1925. As part of the deal, the Kiwanis Club underwrites a \$6,000 fee to be paid to the A's upon their arrival. The Kiwanians must have been very persuasive as the local newspaper mentions that Ft Myers

could have been called "Ft Wilderness." At that point, the Tamiami Trail still had not been constructed.

**1925 – 36** Philadelphia A's conduct spring training at TP.

**March 12, 1925** 1st major league spring training game at TP, Philadelphia Phillies defeat the A's 6 – 3 in a 10 inning game billed as the "Philadelphia city championship."



Photo – National Baseball Hall of Fame Library, Cooperstown, NY

**George Herman "Babe" Ruth – New York Yankees**



Photo – Frank Richards

**The Richards' pharmacy on First Street is the local hangout for the A's players and their fans. Owner Richard Richards ( shirt & tie ) is standing next to Connie Mack ( dark suit & hat )**

**March 25, 1925** Babe Ruth, on loan from the New York Yankees, plays for the A's against Milwaukee, a minor league team. Ruth grounds out twice and walks once in his 3 at bats. Game attendance is 5,000 ( Lee County population is 6,774. )



Photo - Lee County Government Archives

**Ft Myers Palms**



Photo – Edison & Ford Winter Estates, Ft Myers, FL  
**Connie Mack watches Thomas Edison in the batters box during batting practice**

**1926 – 27** Minor league team, Ft Myers Palms of the Florida State League, plays its home games at TP.

**1926 – 77** Ft Myers High School plays its baseball games at TP.

**March 8, 1927** Thomas Edison takes batting practice at an A's workout. 65 year old Connie Mack pitches to 80 year old Edison who smashes one pitch so hard it hits Ty Cobb who is standing in the infield and knocks him on his backside that creates a large round of laughter from Edison and a huge collection of reporters.

**March 29, 1933** Connie Mack Day at TP. The A's manager who brought the team to town is honored.

**March 10, 1934** After missing the first week of spring training games as a holdout, Jimmie Foxx accepts an \$18,000 contract.



Photo – National Baseball Hall of Fame Library, Cooperstown, NY

**Jimmie Foxx – Philadelphia Athletics**



Photo – Southwest Florida Historical Society

**Thomas and Mina Edison attend the game on Connie Mack Day at TP**

*Stadium Chronology 1923 -- 2006*

**March 20, 1934** Legendary female athlete Mildred “Babe” Didriksen of 1932 Summer Olympics fame, pitches the first inning for the A’s against the Brooklyn Dodgers. She gives up one walk, no hits and no runs. She does not have an at bat during the game.

**March 20, 1935** A’s defeat the legendary barnstorming Israelite House of David Baseball Club 4 – 3 at TP.

*Historical note.....The House of David team tours the US from 1913 – 1955 playing both professional and amateur teams and in some years wins 75 % of its games.*

**1936** A’s ticket prices are 50 cents for general admission, \$1.00 for grandstand tickets and \$1.25 for box seats.

**Dec 1938** Lee County Commissioners ask the federal government – Work Projects Administration - to construct a new \$20,000 grandstand. Request is denied.

**Dec 18, 1938** 700 spectators sit in the stadium grandstand to watch Happy Jack Miller and his “Death Dodgers” perform vehicular daredevil thrills, spills, dives and crashes on the ballfield. Event sponsor—American Legion Post 38.

**Late 1930’s – 40’s** A Ft Myers traveling pro black baseball team conducts an annual game on ‘Easter Monday’ against an all black team from Plant City. It is an all day affair with a barbeque and dance after the game. Many fans attend these games. Admission is 25 cents for the day’s activities.

**1940 – 41** Cleveland Indians leave Arizona to come to TP for spring training.

**1940** Ft Myers Kiwanis Club sponsors the Indians spring training. They guarantee the Indians \$4,000 for their stay in Ft Myers. The Kiwanians sell game tickets to raise funds for this payment. Cleveland plays 6 home games. Box seat ticket price for a single game is \$1.15. A season pass goes for \$4.00.

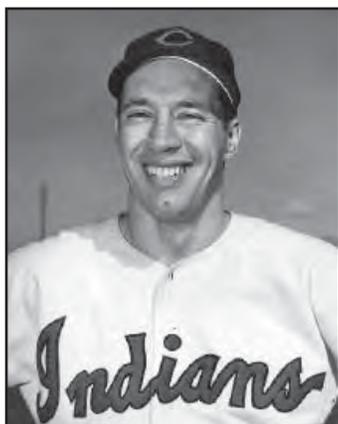


Photo – National Baseball Hall of Fame Library, Cooperstown, NY

**Bob Feller – Cleveland Indians**

**March 10, 1940** Indians first game is on Sunday at 2 PM and is a seven inning intrasquad game. Admission is 25 cents and 2,500 fans attend the game and the barbeque and fish fry following the game. The Kiwanis Club makes a \$600 profit. The Ft. Myers High School Band and the Jr. American Legion Drum and Bugle Corps perform.

**1940’s** American Legion Post 38 baseball teams, coached by Park Pigott, play their games at TP during the summer.

**March 26, 1941** In the Indians last TP game, they defeat Detroit 3 – 2 before 1,200 fans.

**1942 – 53** United States involvement in World War II and the Korean War puts a

crimp in major league teams and spring training in Southwest Florida.

**1943** The wooden grandstand built for the Philadelphia A’s is destroyed by a fire during an amateur baseball game. There are no deaths or injuries. With no grandstand to watch future baseball games, fans sit in their cars in foul territory near the base paths to enjoy a game.

**1950’s** Babe Ruth League ( ages 13 – 15 ) baseball games are played in the stadium.

**April 1953** Lee County Commissioners grant permission to “colored” amateur baseball players to play baseball at TP on May 22, 1953.



Photo – Beaumont ( TX )Convention & Visitors Bureau

**Babe Didriksen**



Photo – Historic Collections and Library Archive, Mary’s City of David, Benton Harbor, MI

**Jesse Lee ‘Doc’ Tally, a House of David team member from 1919 - 1949, is the team’s best all around player**

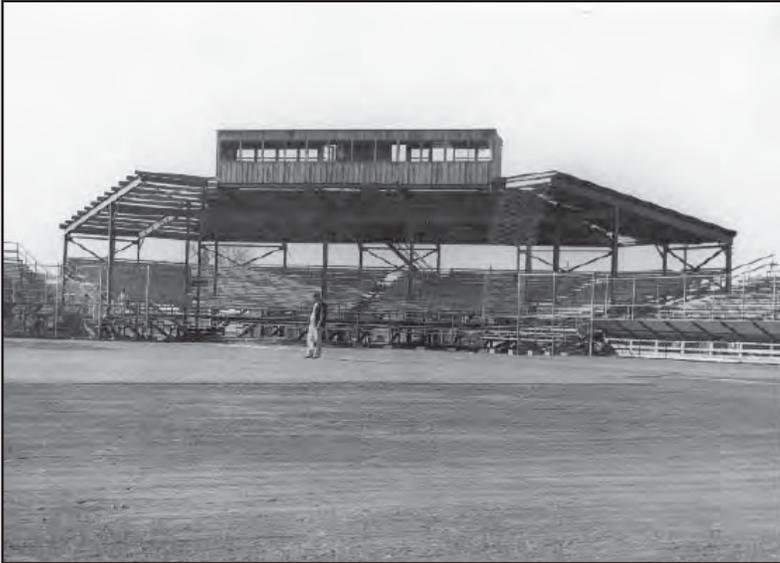


Photo – Sporting News

The steel grandstand is built for the Pirates and replaces the wooden one used by the Philadelphia A's

**1954** Lee County Government and the City of Ft. Myers agree to split the cost of the \$80,000 project to construct a new 2,500 seat V-shaped, steel beam and truss grandstand requested by the Pirates. It replaces the 1923 wooden structure, built for the Philadelphia A's, that is destroyed by fire in 1943.

**1954** The Veterans of Foreign Wars request that the ballpark be named 'Veterans Memorial Stadium.' No action is taken on the request.

**July 7, 1954** The City of Ft Myers and the Lee County Commissioners appoint a 'Ball Park Committee' to seek citizen input during the construction of the new grandstand.

**1955 - 68** Pittsburgh Pirates leave Ft Pierce Florida to come to Ft Myers to conduct spring training at TP. In their first game, the Pirates

defeat the A's 9 – 8. 92 year old Connie Mack throws out the 'first pitch.' Season tickets sell for \$15.

*Historical note.....Connie Mack has a legendary 64 year career in professional baseball. During the first 11 years he is a player on several teams. His lifetime batting average is .245 and during his career he plays all positions except pitcher and shortstop. His primary position is catcher. He manages the Philadelphia A's for 50 years. As a manager, he is on the bench for 7,878 games and wins 3,776 times.....both major league records. He wins 9 American League pennants and 5 World Series championships. Mack is 88 years old when he coaches his last game in 1950 and is inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1937.*



Photo - Eddie Feigner

Eddie Feigner of the King and His Court

**Spring 1955** The Pirates declare Joe Rothschild, a long time Pirates fan, their 'champion roofer.' Rothschild, a 55 year old New York advertising executive, purchases a complete Pirates uniform and extra frills (\$120) and flies from NY to Tampa then takes a cab to Ft Myers (\$45) While wearing his uniform, he attends all the spring training games. He works out with the team and even is a 3rd base coach during one game.

**March 1955** The famous softball team, The King and his Court, plays a local team to a packed grandstand at TP.



Photo - Southwest Florida Museum of History  
Branch Rickey, Pirates General Manager and Joe Rothschild, Pirates super fan

*Historical note.....The King ( Eddie Feigner ) and His Court tour the world from 1946 - 2006 playing 10,000 games in over 100 countries. Feigner is such a great pitcher that his FOUR man team regularly defeats the opposing 9 player teams.*



Photo - Sporting News

The Pittsburgh Pirates Southwest Florida Fair booth in 1955

**Feb 22, 1956** Richard Richards Sr. requests that the Lee County Commissioners dedicate the new stadium in memory of Connie Mack and call it "Connie Mack Stadium." Commissioners pass along the idea to the Ball Park Committee for its consideration.

**March 3, 1956** A two page color photo appears in *The Saturday Evening Post*. The photo caption reads "Spring training at Terry Park, Ft Myers, Florida." It appears in the Face of America section in the magazine.

**May 23, 1956** With the new stadium 'up & running', the Lee County Commissioners dissolve the Ball Park Committee before it comments on the

stadium name suggestion. No action is taken on the naming of the stadium after Connie Mack.

**1957** The Snack House, a landmark restaurant in downtown Ft Myers, gets the contract to run the concession stand at the stadium.

**July 4, 1957** Night games are now possible after Lee County Commissioners have a ribbon cutting ceremony to dedicate the new lights at the stadium.

**Jan 14, 1960** Johnny Vander Mere makes an appearance at TP. In 1938 as a Cincinnati Reds player, he gains sports immortality when he becomes the only major league pitcher to throw consecutive no hit, no run games.

**Spring 1961** New 7 foot high concrete block wall is built in the outfield for the Pirates spring training games. It replaces a chain link fence.

**March 17, 1961** Legendary singer and Pirates Vice President Bing Crosby watches the Pirates beat the Milwaukee Braves 14 – 10.

**April 24, 1961** In a fundraiser for the Ft Myers Babe Ruth league, 1,732 fans watch the famous barnstorming team, the Indianapolis Clowns, defeat the New York Royals 6 – 3. There is a chicken Bar - B - Q after the game.

*Historical note.....In 1961, The Clowns are an African American team who plays serious competitive baseball. In 1968 it becomes an integrated team. During the early 1980's it is a barnstorming, semi pro team before disbanding in 1988. At that point, it is the last surviving Negro League team. In the 80's, the clowns play with a touch of class and showmanship and are to baseball what the Harlem Globetrotters are to basketball. The most famous team member is Henry Aaron who plays for the team in 1951 - 52 and is inducted into the Major League Baseball Hall of Fame in 1982.*

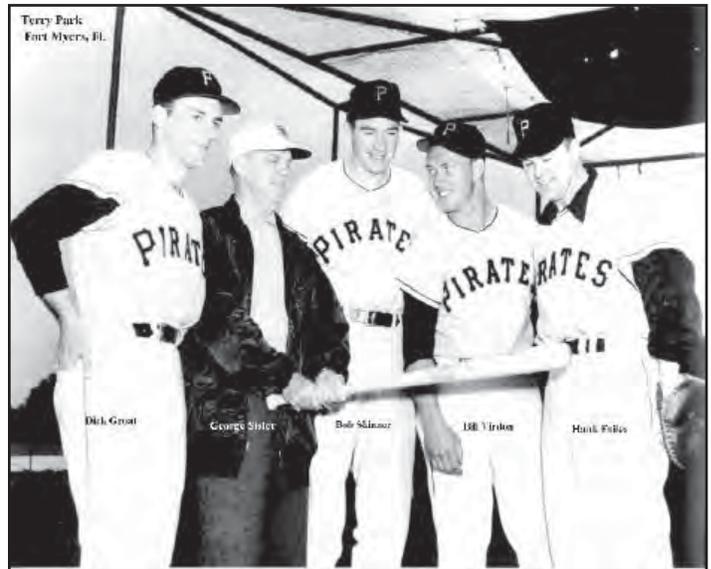


Photo – Hank Foiles, 1957

George Sisler, inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1939, talks hitting at TP with ( left to right ) Dick Groat, Bob Skinner, Bill Virdon and Hank Foiles



Photo – National Baseball Hall of Fame Library, Cooperstown, NY

**April 2, 1964** Park Pigott throws out the 'first pitch' on Park Pigott day at a Pirates spring training game. Pigott is the long time Lee County Parks & Recreation Director and youth baseball coach.

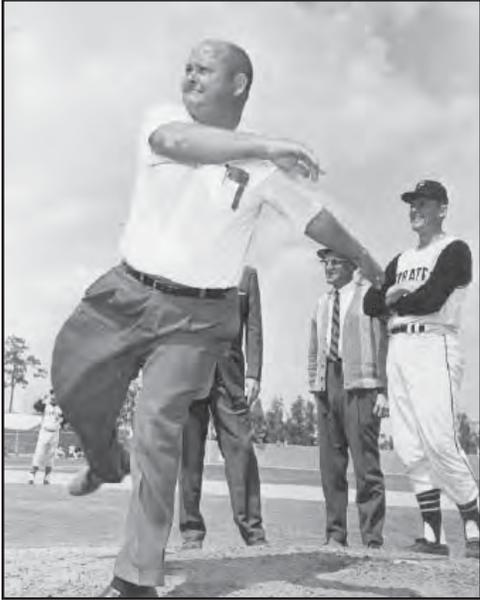


Photo – Frank Pigott

**Park Pigott – Lee County Parks and Recreation Director**

**March 1965** A tough spring training for the Pirates as Roberto Clemente ( malaria ) and Bill Mazeroski ( broken ankle ) both miss several games.

**March 10, 1965** Hall of Famers, Harold 'Pie' Traynor, former Pirates 3rd baseman & manager, and Vernon 'Lefty' Gomez, former New York Yankee pitcher, visit the Pirates at TP.

**Mid 1960's** Former boxing light heavyweight champion, Willie Pastrano makes an appearance in the ring during an exhibition with some local boxers. The ring is located over home plate. A large crowd enjoys seeing the ex-champ.

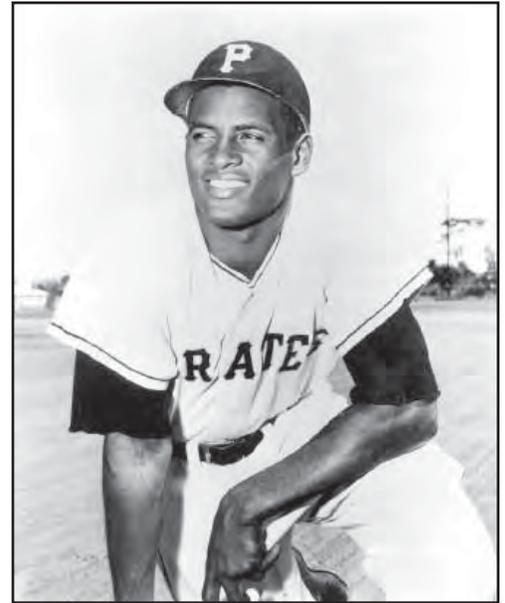


Photo – National Baseball Hall of Fame Library, Cooperstown, NY

**Roberto Clemente – Pittsburgh Pirates**

*Historical note..... Pastrano is the champ in 1963 – 64 and is inducted into the International Boxing Hall of Fame in 2001.*



Photo – Southwest Florida Museum of History

**Len Harsh, News-Press Sports editor**

**June 1965** Lee County Commissioners authorize the purchase of a stadium sound system not to exceed \$386.22. Longtime Ft. Myers News-Press Sports Editor, Len Harsh, is the public address announcer at the games and will serve in that capacity later for the KC Royals games.

**1966 – 2006** Longtime Ft Myers resident Pat Putnam is a mainstay at TP. As a kid he plays Babe Ruth, American Legion and Ft Myers High School baseball games there. Additionally, during the summers he works as a Parks & Recreation employee maintaining the TP ballfields. From 1977 – 84 he plays major league baseball for the Texas Rangers, Seattle Mariners, Minnesota Twins and plays many spring training games at TP. He is the first major leaguer from Southwest Florida.



Photo – Pat Putnam

He finishes his professional career in 1989 playing for the Ft Myers Sun Sox in the Senior Professional Baseball Association at TP. In 1990 he again becomes a staff member for Lee County Parks and Recreation and is one of three former major league baseball players who will join the staff.

**April 2, 1968** Pirates, in their final game at TP, defeat the Oakland A's 3 –2.



Photo – Sporting News

**Park Pigott stands by the Kansas City Royals sign he designed for their arrival in 1969**

**Oct 1968** Lee County Commissioners authorize Park Pigott to oversee construction of a new locker room for the Kansas City Royals.

**1969 - 1987** Kansas City Royals conduct spring training at TP. New bleachers are added down the foul lines raising the stadium seating capacity to 5,100.

**March 6, 1969** As a new expansion team, the Royals, at TP, play their first game in team history and lose to the Montreal Expo's 9 – 8. Florida Governor Claude Kirk throws out the first pitch. It is the first game in major league baseball history that uses a designated pinch hitter (DPH). Royals George Spriggs bats ninth and goes 0 – 4. Major League Baseball drops the DPH idea on March 26.

**1969** Because the Pirates have played its spring training games at TP for the previous 13 years, all the fans at TP know the Pirates ever popular PA announcer Bob Prince. Whenever the Pirates return to TP to play the Royals, Prince announces the game from the pressbox wearing nothing but his bathing trunks.....and the fans love it.

**March 10, 1971** Touring Japanese professional baseball team, the Tokyo Giants, beat the Royals 7 – 4 before 3,463 fans. Playing in the game is legendary slugger Sadaharu Oh who hits 868 homeruns during his career in Japan.

**March 21, 1971** Royals new Baseball Academy is officially dedicated in Sarasota. It is the brainchild of Royals owner Ewing Kauffman and its stated purpose is to provide youth with a dual opportunity to pursue an education and learn the skills of our national pastime. One of its early 'campers,' Frank White is signed by the Royals and plays at TP from 1973 - 87.

**Feb 1972** At the request of the Royals, Lee County Commissioners install a Tartan Turf infield (outfield remains natural grass). It is the first county operated ballpark in the nation to have a synthetic playing surface.

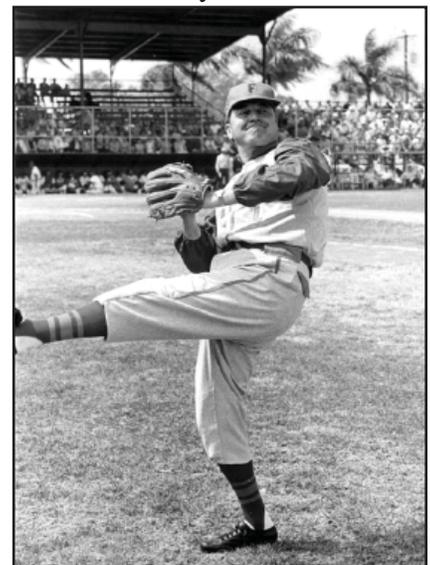


Photo - State of Florida Library & Archives  
**Florida Governor Claude Kirk at Terry Park**

**March 3, 1972** Alabama Governor George Wallace visits the stadium during a Royals practice session while campaigning for the presidential nomination for the Democratic ticket.



Photo - Southwest Florida Historical Society

**Lee County Commissioners reward Park Pigott for years of outstanding work by naming the stadium after him**

*Historical note.....on May 15, 1972 at a political rally in Laurel, Maryland, Arthur Bremer shoots Wallace, paralyzing him from the waist down. Wallace is eventually defeated by George McGovern for the 1972 democratic presidential ticket.*

**October 11, 1972** Lee County Commissioners name the baseball stadium "Park T. Pigott Memorial Stadium" who dies earlier in 1972 at age 58.

*Historical note.....Pigott grows up in Ft Myers and is a star athlete at Ft Myers High School. He coaches the American Legion team at TP for 26 years. In 1954 when the second TP stadium and grandstand are built, Pigott, as the construction manager, lays out the field, designs the dugouts and practice fields. He then maintains the facilities over the years. Throughout his life, Pigott builds and maintains the ballfields at TP in addition to playing and coaching on those fields.....and that's why two words are often used to describe him as a Terry Park 'legend' and 'institution.'*

*Stadium Chronology 1923 -- 2006*

**March 1973** Royals dedicate its spring training season in the memory of Park Pigott.

**1973 – 2006** From 1973 – 83 Don Hood has a 10 year major league pitching career with a 3.79 ERA. He plays many spring training games at TP of which the last 2 years he is a member of the Kansas City Royals. After his baseball career ends he becomes the second former major leaguer to work for the Lee County Parks and Recreation. He is a Park Ranger from 1990 - 2006.

**March 1974** Royals are undefeated in ten games at TP.

**Spring 1976** Chris Barnes, WEVU TV Sports Director, becomes the new

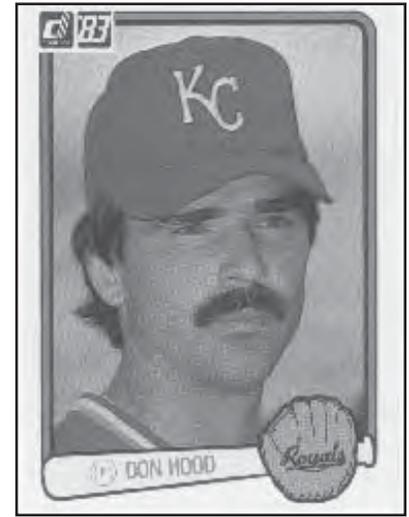


Photo – Don Hood



Photo – Chris Barnes

( left to right ) Joe Garagiola, major league baseball player and TV personality with Chris Barnes, WEVU TV Sports Director

public address announcer for the Royals games at TP. He and the fans in attendance at a Baltimore Orioles and Royals game witness one of the most bizarre spring training games ever played at TP. In the forth inning, O's manager Earl Weaver begins to protest an umpire's call. The always combative and feisty Weaver argues for several minutes and when the 'call' doesn't go his way, he orders his entire team to leave the field, get on the team bus and go back to Miami. The fans are amused by Weaver's antics and the Royals win the game by forfeit. Major League Baseball officials are not amused....they fine Weaver \$1,000 for his antics.

**1978 – 87** Minor league team, the Ft Myers Royals of the Florida State League, play its home games at TP.

**1979** A 12 year old Ft Myers boy, Deion Sanders, is the Royals batboy and is drafted by the Royals in 1985. In the 80's & 90's he would become one the greatest and most versatile athletes in the US....2 time first team All America football player at Florida State, member of 2 NFL Super Bowl championship teams, 7 time NFL Pro Bowl participant and played in the 1992 World Series in Major League Baseball. He is the only athlete ever to play in both a World Series and Super Bowl.



Photo – Bill Hammond, 1982

In the Royals dugout during a spring training game at TP are (left to right) Royals bat boy, Manager Dick Howser, Bill Hammond, a long time Lee County Government employee and catcher John Nathan

**1980's – 1997** Edison Community College plays many of its home games at TP.

**1981 – 84** Rush Limbaugh is at TP as the Kansas City Royals Director of Promotions.

**Summer 1984** The Ft Myers Royals have difficulty getting large crowds at the games (usually fewer than 1,000 spectators attend) so they start having promotions to increase attendance. They get more than they bargain for when they announce that 3 Sam Galloway Ford cars will be given away to people in attendance. 15,000 people show up to buy a game program

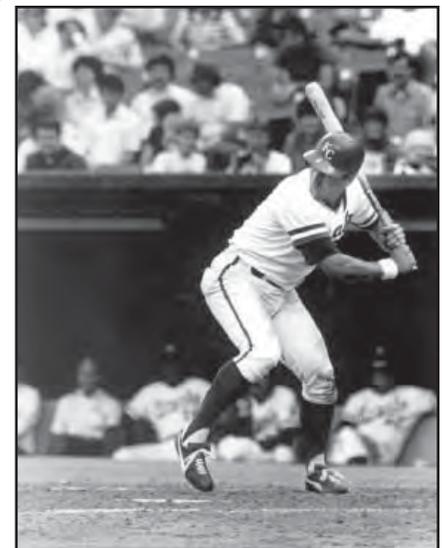


Photo – National Baseball Hall of Fame Library, Cooperstown, NY

George Brett – Kansas City Royals

hoping that their program number is selected for the cars.



Photo - Donruss, Inc

**February 1985** Lee County Commissioners appropriate \$500,000 to refurbish the stadium, restrooms and improve the field irrigation system.

**1985** Ft Myers Royals win the Florida State League Championship and host the League's All-Star game at Terry Park

**1986 - 87** One of the greatest professional athletes of all time, Bo Jackson, plays at TP as a member of the Kansas City Royals.

*Historical note ..... Jackson plays 8 years in Major League Baseball and 2 years in the National Football League. He is the first athlete to play in all-star games in both Major League Baseball and the NFL. Additionally, he wins the Heisman Trophy, the top college football award in 1985 while attending Auburn University. A 1991 hip injury ends what would have been a multi-sport superstar career.*

**Summer 1986** At another Ft Myers Royals promotion night, 100 lucky fans are selected to walk around the grass portions of the field looking for a diamond buried in the grass. In their enthusiastic efforts to find the diamond, the fans dig up the turf and the game is delayed for hours while the Parks and Recreation staff repair the field and restore it to playing condition.

**April 4, 1987** In the last Kansas City Royals game played at TP, 3,781 spectators watch the Royals defeat the Texas Rangers 4 - 2. Ranger first baseman, Tom Paciorek, hits the last major league home run at TP.

**March 2, 1989** In the last major league baseball game at TP, 3,500 fans pay \$2.00 to watch a 7 PM contest and see the Texas Rangers defeat Edison Community College 9 - 3. Future Hall of Famers, Sammy Sosa goes 0 - 2 and Rafael Palmeiro goes 2 - 4 and scores one run and drives in another. The game is a fundraiser for the ECC Athletic Department.

**1989 - 90** Ft Myers Sun Sox of the Senior Profession Baseball Association play its games at TP. A natural grass infield replaces artificial turf infield, originally installed for the Kansas City Royals.

**March 1990** TP serves as the training facility for the Minnesota Twins minor league operations while the new Lee County Stadium is being built. 126 minor leaguers play at TP during the month.

*Historical note.....The most famous player to emerge from this training camp is Chuck Knoblauch who during his 10 year major league career plays on 4 World Series Championship teams, has a career .300 batting average and plays in 4 all-star games.*

**1990** With the 'pros' no longer utilizing TP, the locals - high schools, American Legion, etc. - start playing more games on its ballfields.

**1990 - 2006** Todd Fischer, who pitches for the California Angels in 1986, becomes the third major league baseball player to work for Lee County Parks and Recreation after his playing days end. In the 1970's, he is a batboy for the Kansas City Royals during their TP spring training days.

**March 7, 1991** Possibility of future major league spring training games being played at TP on a regular basis ends as Lee County opens the 7,500 seat \$18.2 million Lee County Stadium at the 80 acre Lee County Sports Complex in central Lee County.

*Historical note.....In 1991, The Lee County Sports Complex becomes the spring training home of the Minnesota Twins. In 1994, the stadium is named "Hammond Stadium" after William H. "Bill" Hammond, current Lee County Government Deputy Manager, who as Community Services Director from 1978 - 1993 oversaw the growth of the county's Parks and Recreation system and its strong affiliation with Major League Baseball.*



Photo - Lee County Government Archives, 1991

**Hammond Stadium at the Lee County Sports Complex has been the spring training home for the Minnesota Twins since 1991**

*Stadium Chronology 1923 -- 2006*

**Spring 1991** Almost 50 college teams use TP for their spring training games. Eventually, the National AAU tournament and the Roy Hobbs World Series begin utilizing TP.

**June 20, 1995** TP ballfield is listed on the US Department of Interior, National Park Service National Registration of Historic Places. TP is added to this prestigious list as a historic sports facility and second oldest spring training ballfield in Florida while representing a major component in Florida's historic tourism industry.

**Fall 1996** New concrete light poles are installed replacing the decaying wooden ones.

**Summer 2001** Ft Myers Miracle of the Florida State League, a Minnesota Twins Class A minor league team, defeats the Lakeland

Tigers 3 – 2 before 1,279 fans at TP. Both teams pay tribute to the teams of the defunct Negro Leagues by wearing different uniforms from that era. Several Miracle players who play in the game will eventually play for the Twins.....Lew Ford, Luis Rodriguez and Benj Sampson. Additionally, Tony Stevens, who plays shortstop during the game, joins the US Army and serves in the Iraq war in 2005.

**2003** Over 1,900 high school, college and amateur baseball games are played at the stadium field and the 3 adjacent fields.

**2004** Stadium grandstand undergoes a major \$1 million phase I renovation because of safety and liability concerns. The new grandstand seats 1,000 spectators and new dugouts replace the 1954 structures built for the Pittsburgh Pirates.

**Aug 13, 2004** Hurricane Charley ( category 4 with 140 mph winds ) hits Lee County. The stadium suffers minimal damage. The concrete outfield wall has a 10 foot gaping hole that is repaired at a cost of \$300,000.

**2005** Phase II of the stadium renovation focuses on building a new entrance to the stadium complex, concession area and restrooms.

**2006** Ribbon cutting ceremony for the newly renovated stadium. It is the fourth stadium grandstand in TP history.

**2008 - 2009** Florida major league spring training baseball museum scheduled to open at TP.



Photo – John Derums, 2005

**The 4th and current grandstand at the baseball field opens for business in 2005. It is very similar to the 1955 Pittsburgh Pirates grandstand except that this one does not have a pressbox on top of it and has fewer seats**

# Other Buildings at Terry Park

1926 -- 2006

Terry Park consists of 38 acres and whereas 24 acres serve the recreation needs of the citizens, 14 acres are dedicated to other facilities to serve the citizens of Lee County.

## Ft. Myers Fire Department and Lee County Emergency Medical Services ( EMS )

**Feb 3, 1926** Lee County Commissioners approve a City of Ft Myers request to build a fire station at TP. But before granting approval, Commissioners give Dr Marshall Terry veto power.....Terry approves of the idea.



John Derums, 2005

**The current Ft Myers Fire Station # 2**

**1926** Ft. Myers Fire Department begins its 80 year presence at Terry Park when it builds the original one bay Station # 2 at the northwest corner of the park at the Palm Beach Blvd. ( then known as Lee County Blvd ) and Terry Street intersection. Facility and equipment costs \$125,000.



Photo – John Derums, 2005

**The former 1956 fire station # 2 is now a Lee County EMS station**

**1928** Fire Station # 2 serves as a polling site for local elections.

**1956** Original Fire Station # 2 is demolished and a new two bay station is built on the exact site.

**April 1977** Lee County Commissioners lease the land to the Ft Myers City Council for a new three bay fire station at TP for \$1.00 a year for the next 50 years.

**1978** The current three bay \$200,000 Station # 2 is constructed 50 yards south of the original site and is located on Terry Street. EMS immediately moves into the 1956 facility on the corner of Palm Beach Blvd. and Terry Street and is operating out of this facility today.

## Ft Myers Boys Club Building and Florida National Guard Armory

**1945 – 1955** Florida National Guard is stationed in the Armory Building ( as it was known before being called the Boys Club Building beginning in the late 40's. ) The Armory Building is a large wooden one story facility with a tin roof and has a large concrete ammunition vault.

**Feb 7, 1945** Lee County Commissioners grant approval to the Board of Directors of the Juvenile Athletic Activities to use the Armory Building.

**1946 – 1960** Ft Myers City Parks and Recreation Director, Park Pigott runs the Boys Club in the Boys Club Building ( formerly known as the Armory Building. ) The facility was open Monday through Friday from 5 to 10 PM. Initially, activities include billiards, ping pong, movies and weight lifting. Over the years, other activities like basketball, touch football and camping trips are added to the recreation agenda. This organization offers local kids ( ages 10 – 17 ) positive activities to help keep them off the streets and from getting into trouble. In the late 40's, Lee County Judge Hiram Bryant starts a boxing club at the Boys Club Building. Local boxers, like Grady Helveston, Chris Stafford and Morgan House box in the ring in the front yard under the 'Old Oak Tree.'



Photo - 20th Judicial Circuit Law Library  
**Hiram Bryant is a Lee County judge from 1945-50**

**Oct 7, 1953** Lee County Commissioners lease the southwest portion of TP to the Armory Board of the State of Florida at \$1.00 for 99 years for Florida National Guard use.

*Other Buildings at Terry Park 1926 -- 2006*

**1954** Lee County Commissioners pay \$430 to have a contractor move the Boys Club Building, elsewhere in TP to make room for the construction of the new Armory.

**Oct 6, 1954** National Guard Bureau in Washington DC awards an \$87,000 contract for the construction of the TP Armory. The one story concrete facility will have classrooms, offices, a supply & ordinance room, kitchen, large drill hall and firing range.

**Dec 8, 1954** Lee County Commissioners deny a Salvation Army request to allow transients to live in the Boys Club Building.

**1955** Armory is built in the southwest corner of the property at the intersection of Marion and Terry Streets. Florida National Guardsmen are housed in the TP buildings for 2 – 3 months prior to completion of the Armory construction.

**Late 50's – late 60's** Professional wrestling matches are witnessed weekly by large and enthusiastic crowds (600 to 700) at the Armory. To increase the number of spectators, famous professional heavyweight championship boxers are brought in to referee the wrestling matches. The heavyweight boxing champions who serve as wrestling referees include Jack Dempsey (champion 1920 – 26 ), Primo Carnera (champion 1933 – 34) and Joe Louis (champion 1937 – 49) Matches are sponsored by the Ft Myers Division of the Florida National Guard. Ticket prices are.....ringside - \$2.00, general admission - & 1.50 and students - & 1.00.

**Nov 1960** Lee County Commissioners decide to demolish the Boys Club Building because of severe structural damage as a result of hurricane Donna.

*Historical note.....The earliest known existence of the Boys Club Building at TP dates back to the mid to late 1930's.*

**Mid 60's** Tommy Roe performs at the Armory. During his career, 4 of his songs are million sellers with “Sheila” and “Dizzy” going to # 1 on the national Billboard chart in the 1960's.

**Aug 15, 1966** During a wrestling match at the Armory, several fights break out and a chair is thrown – severely cutting a spectator - after a referee's unpopular decision ends the featured match. Police quickly end the riot.

**August 1, 1967** Because of the largest crowd ever at the Armory for pro wrestling, 500 fans are turned away at the door. Angry, they pound on the doors and cause damage. Some fans climb on the roof and watch the matches through the windows.

**Early 70's** Four Saturday night rock concerts are held in the Armory to packed houses. Tickets go for \$6.00. Most famous group to appear is an American Indian group called Redbone whose song “Come and Get Your Love” hits # 5 on the national Billboard chart in Feb. 1974.

**1977 – 80** Local boxing promoter and manager of the Ft Myers Boxing Club, John Doherty, conducts annual boxing exhibitions to a capacity crowds of 900+ spectators at the Armory. His “East Ft Myers Tough Guys” compete against boxers from Tampa and Miami.

**June 1987** Lee County Commissioners adopt a resolution endorsing the designation of the Armory as the E. W. “Top” Summerall Armory.

*Historical note.....First Sergeant Eugene William Summerall served in both the US Army and the Florida National Guard. He was the top Sgt. for the Battery B 712th AAA Gun Battalion—the first inhabitants in the Armory at TP in 1955.*

**1990's** Dog obedience classes take place in the Armory.

**Summer 1992** Steve Canton, owner of SJC Boxing Inc, trains his boxers at the Armory.

**1992 - 2006** Battery B, 3rd BN 265th ADA, Florida Army National Guard is located in the Armory.



Photo – John Derums, 2005

**National Guard Armory**

# Lee County Parks and Recreation and University of Florida IFAS Lee County Extension 1921 -- 2006



Photo – John Derums, 2005

From 1908 to 2006, numerous professional and amateur teams play baseball games on the fields at TP. During that time, hundreds of Lee County staff members keep the facilities in championship form. Representing all of those unsung heroes are ( left to right ) front row—George Toma, Reinaldo Diaz, Bob Tice, Al Hicks. Back row—Bruce Sparks, Pablo Adorno, Dave Raybuck, Jack Proyer

( Historical note...1) George Toma, AKA the Sod God, is employed by the Kansas City Royals to maintain the TP fields for their spring training games. He has 62 years of groundskeeping experience and has worked on the football field for every NFL Super Bowl game. 2) After his TP days, Al Hicks becomes the head groundskeeper for the Los Angeles Dodgers in LA during 1988 - 89. )

Florida Yards & Neighborhoods, 4 - H and Horticulture.

The staff rosters of these two departments at TP are listed on page 25. Listed below are all of the department director's during the 100 year history of Terry Park.

## Department Directors Over the Years

Parks Dept	Recreation Dept	Combined Parks and Recreation Depts.	University of Florida IFAS Lee County Extension
From 1921 – 1951 there is no Parks Dept. The parks are managed by the County's Roads Director.			1922 – 27 Paul Hayman
From 1952 to '58 a County Commissioners appointed 'Park Board' runs the county parks.			1928 – 31 Dept eliminated
1957-8 Park Pigott is TP Superintendent.			1932 Coleen Belcher
		1959 – 72 Park Pigott	1933 – 34 Dept eliminated
		1972 – 73 Jim Smith	1935 – 57 Paul Heuck
1973 – 84 Jerry Brooks	1974 – 79 Marshall Treadwell		1958 – 59 JF Barco
	1980 – 84 Bob Stevens		1960 – 63 Dorothy Classon
		1985 – 88 Maley Brancaccio	1964 – 81 Co-directors --Dorothy Classon --Bob Curtis
		1989 – 2006 John Yarbrough	1981 – 2004 Susan Hedge
			2005 – 06 Celia Hill



Photo – Tom Kane, News-Press, 1995

**Caloosa Rare Fruit Exchange's annual tree sale at the Extension office**

Two Lee County government departments have had their headquarters and have been main-stays at TP during the park's first 100 years.....Parks and Recreation for 47 years and University of Florida IFAS Lee County Extension ( formerly known as Lee County Extension Service ) for 85 years. In 2006, Parks and Recreation manages 13 community/recreation centers, 50 parks, 9 swimming pools, 5 boat ramps and 3,500 acres of developed parkland. The Extension office, with resource and financial assistance from Lee County Commissioners, State of Florida and the University of Florida, offers programs in Family and Consumer Sciences, Agriculture & Natural Resources, Marine Education,



Photo – John Derums, 2005

**Celia Hill, Director of University of Florida IFAS Lee County Extension and John Yarbrough, Director of Lee County Parks and Recreation**

## Thanks For a Job Well Done

During the 100 year history of Terry Park, two Lee County government offices, the Department of Parks and Recreation and the University of Florida IFAS Lee County Extension have been the stewards, guardians and caretakers of Terry Park. To honor all those individuals in these two departments -- both past and present -- for a job well done.....all current staff members have been listed below. **Individuals in bold have their offices at Terry Park.**



### Lee County Department of Parks and Recreation

John Yarbrough, Director

Barbara Manzo, Deputy Director

### University of Florida IFAS Lee County Extension

Celia Hill, Director



## PARKS & RECREATION EMPLOYEES / EXTENSION EMPLOYEES

### Parks and Recreation

Acevedo, Jose  
Adorno, Ludie  
**Adorno, Pablo**  
Anderson, Jeff  
**Apperson, Nancy**  
Arcadi, Rachel  
**Ball, Kathy**  
**Baranski, Doreen**  
**Barilla, Dorothy**  
**Barilla, Nicole**  
Bates, Sandra  
Benson, Heather  
Bergstresser, Dan  
**Berra, Dave**  
**Billman, Larry**  
Blasingim, Keith  
Boutwell, Phillip  
**Boyd, Lynn**  
Britton, Ray  
Brooks, Josh  
Broomfield, Mary  
**Brotherton, Carol**  
Cahill, Kathy  
Cain, Terri  
Callwood, Anna  
Calvert, Dan  
Campbell, Ella  
Campbell, Luther  
Campbell, Thomas  
**Cardona, Daisy**  
Carney, Ryan  
Carter, Carla  
**Carter, Cindy**  
**Castillo, Jeannie**  
**Cerdan, Dean**  
Chitwood, Christine  
Cintofanti, Joe  
**Clark, Roger**  
Clay, Rick  
Clemmons, Belinda  
**Clemons, Donna**  
Coffee, Lee  
Coffey, Jeff  
Conrad, Ryan  
Cooke, Jim  
**Corbett, Velton**  
Cox, Steve  
Crosby, William  
**Daleiden, Greg**  
**Daleiden, Wendy**

Davis, Christie  
**DeBacker, Joe**  
Deibler, Jerry  
**Dennington, Justin**  
DePiro, Amy  
Dering, Lou  
**Derums, Debbie**  
**Derums, John**  
Diaz, Reinaldo  
Digennaro, Jim  
Duvall, Paul  
Eash, James  
Eckert, Tim  
Edwards, Whitley  
English, Mae  
**Evans, Shelby**  
Fassett, Bruce  
Ferguson, Edward  
Ferster, Steve  
Fischer, Todd  
**Flanjack, Alise**  
Fortier, Andrew  
**Fowler, Faye**  
Franklin, Skip  
**Furnari, Sherri**  
Geary, Aaron  
Geissler, Jim  
George, Chris  
Gerz, Mary Lou  
Gierut, Colleen  
Goodman, Thomas  
Gordon, Tom  
**Graves, Bobbi**  
Green, Bob  
**Green, Jim**  
Greeno, Laura  
Gurri, Andy  
**Gutierrez, Amanda**  
Hall, Yancey  
Hamilton, Ella Mae  
Hammond, Mike  
**Harner, Dave**  
Harper, Maryellen  
Harris, Rick  
**Haugen, Sue**  
Hayes, Doug  
Hernandez, Toni  
Herrin, Korina  
Hertling, Lee  
Highland, Rick  
**Hill, John**

Hillier, George  
Honnen, Debbie  
Honnen, Ron  
**Hood, Don**  
Hopkins, Jeanne  
Hornbaker, Richard  
Horne, Dana  
Hurley, Shawn  
Jasper, Bonnie  
Johnson, Ben  
**Johnson, Fred**  
Jones, Bob  
Katzenmeyer, Charles  
Kessinger, Scott  
**Kirkpatrick, Jim**  
Kiseda, John  
Krause, Marybeth  
LaRose, Ron  
Lavender, Jesse  
Lawhon, Terry  
Leo, Rick  
Little, Vicki  
**Lloyd, Carla**  
Long, Mary Lou  
Loomis, Kathy  
MacPhee, Billy  
MacPhee, Chris  
**MacPhee, Nancy**  
Magdic, Joe  
Malcomb, John  
Maldonado, Albert  
**Marshall, Brady**  
Martinez-Vargus, Manny  
Mason, Alphonso  
McHenry, Rick  
**McIntyre, Ed**  
McIrvin, Jason  
McKee, Danny  
**Mee, Larry**  
Merced, Jose  
**Miller, Mickey**  
**Mills, Ken**  
**Mitar, Cindy**  
Morales, Miguel  
**Morgan, Jeff**  
Moser, Glen  
**Mulligan, Mike**  
Noughton, Laura  
Oakley, Dennis  
Olbrich, Dustin  
Olive, Libby

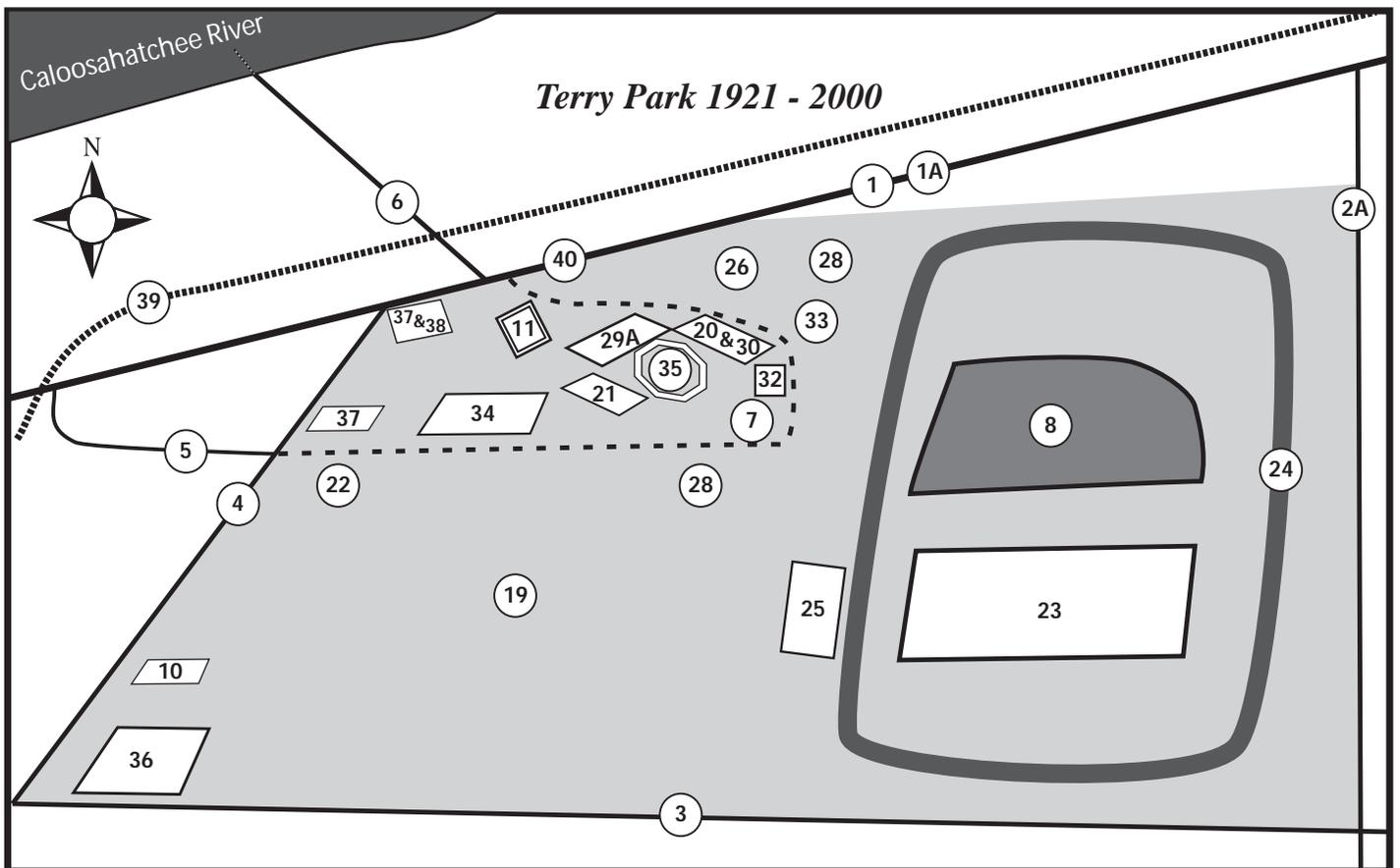
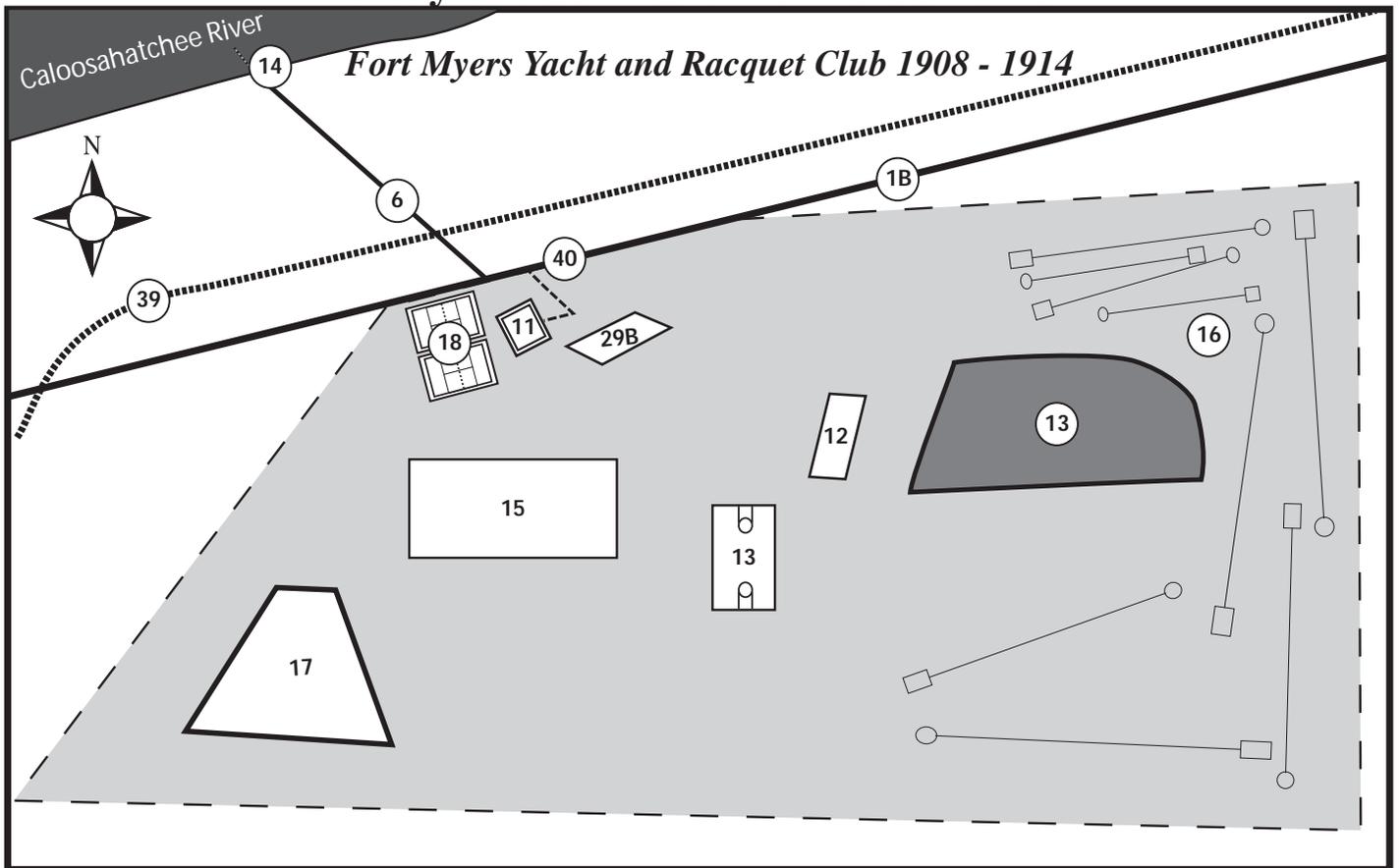
**Olson, Cathy**  
Padgett, Kevin  
**Peters, Bonnie**  
**Pflaumer, Louise**  
Pittro, James  
Pollack, Glen  
**Porter, Gary**  
Proyer, Jack  
Putnam, Pat  
Raybuck, Dave  
Reilly, Kerry  
Repenning, Bob  
Reyes, Irma  
Reynolds, Sandy  
Richey, Russell  
Rinden, Craig  
Rinella, Nick  
Rivera, Angel  
Rodriguez, Tito  
Roemer, Patrick  
Rogers, Shannon  
Roob, James  
**Rooney, Joe**  
Ross, Levi  
Rouse, Cindy  
Rouff, Gene  
Rude, Mary  
Ruffin, Bennie  
Ryan, Kelly  
Santiago, Miguel  
Satalino, Laurie  
Schirmer, Christine  
**Schmidt, Gayle**  
Scott, Ivory  
Slawson, Terry  
Slingerland, Sue  
Smith, Byron  
Smith, Cristi  
Smith, Earl  
Snearley, Trevor  
Soto, Ezra  
Sparks, Bruce  
Sparks, Joni  
**Staten, Annabel**  
Strickland, Jeff  
Tally, William  
Tambunga, Maria  
Thomas, Ray  
Thomas, Ron  
Thomas, Sandra  
Thomas, Shay

Thurman, Mike  
Tice, Bob  
**Toms, Brent**  
Torgerson, Dana  
Torres, Ramon  
Troia, Mary  
**Trudo, Troy**  
Tyre, Nicole  
Vance, Brad  
VanSelow, Scott  
Vega, Kristi  
Vega, Mabel  
Vocaturro, Fred  
Walker, Joe  
**Weaver, Ed**  
Weiss, Joyce  
Wewerka, Laura  
Wheeler, Brad  
Wheeler, Dee  
Wice, Linda  
Wier, Joe  
Wilk, Brenda  
**Williams, Chris**  
Williams, Eli  
Woods, Lisa  
Woosley, Steve  
Wortman, Stacy  
Wurm, David  
Yacobelli, Paul  
Yoder, Chad  
Young, Mack  
Zavacky, John  
Zukaitis, Nancy

### Extension Service

**Abbott, Pamela**  
**Becker, Thomas**  
**Beckford, Fitzroy**  
**Brown, Stephen**  
**Conner, Vera**  
**Cruz, Peggy**  
**Giacinti, Letha**  
**Markwood, Mel**  
**Tice, Rhonda**  
**Tice, Ruth**  
**Wasno, Bob**

# Terry Park Facilities Over The Years



All of the items identified on this map were at TP sometime between 1921 and 2000. Some of these facilities have "come and gone" while some still exist today. To see which facilities are still in the park please refer to the photo on page 27.

# Terry Park 2006

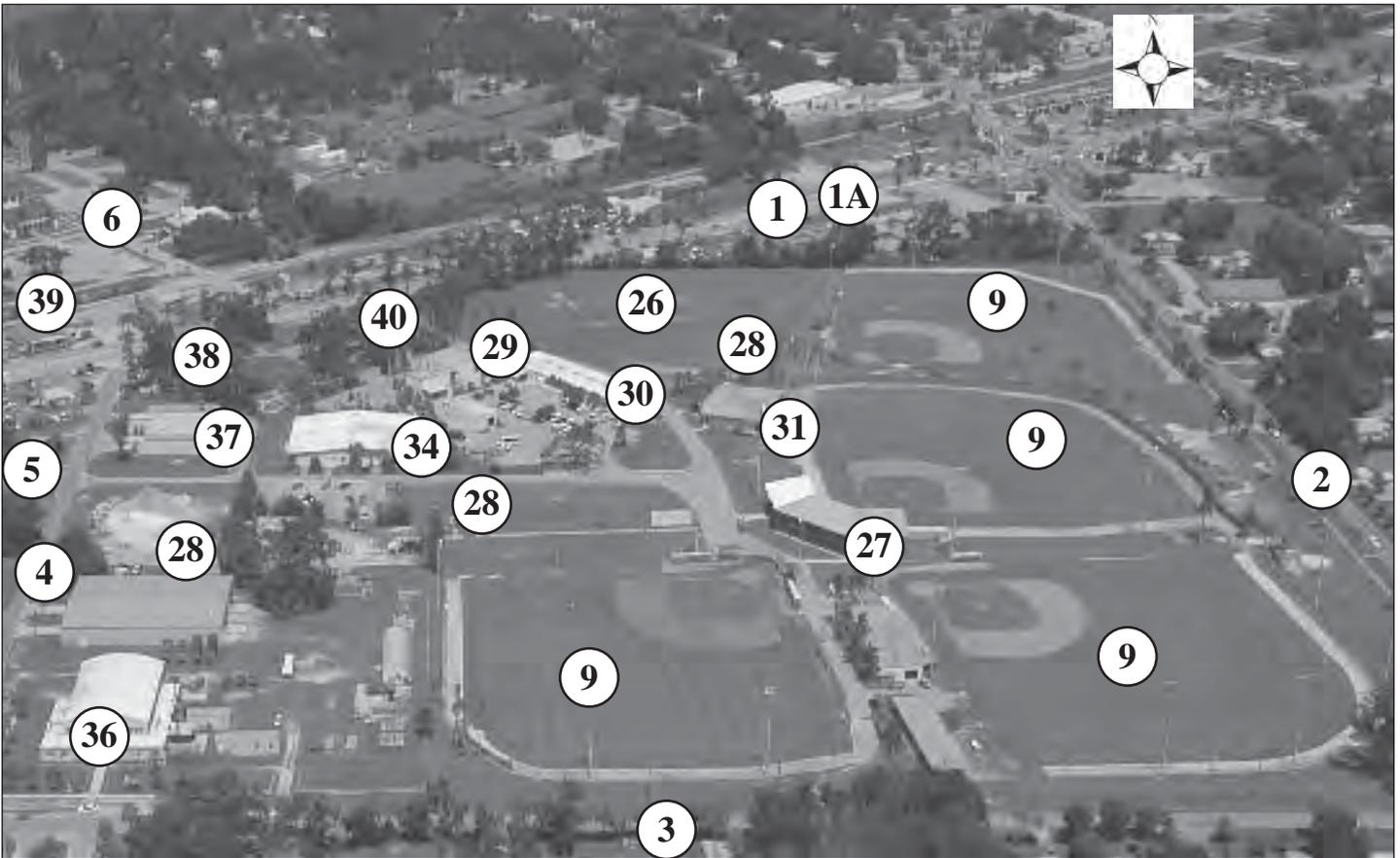


Photo – Julie Palermo Valdes, Aerial Innovations Inc, 2005

## Legend

### **I. Park Boundaries & Streets**

1. Palm Beach Boulevard  
AKA ( 1A ) State Route 80  
( 1B ) Ft Myers to Ft Thompson Road
2. Veronica S Shoemaker Boulevard  
AKA ( 2A ) Palmetto Avenue
3. Marion Street
4. Terry Avenue
5. Royalston Avenue
6. Tarpon Street

### **II. Recreational Facilities**

7. Artesian Well ( small concrete pond )
8. Baseball Stadium Original Wooden Grandstand & Ballfield
9. Baseball Fields
10. Boys Club Building
11. Clubhouse
12. Country Club Grandstand
13. Country Club Baseball Field & Basketball Court
14. Country Club Pier
15. Country Club Croquet Courts
16. Country Club Golf Course
17. Country Club Gun Traps
18. Country Club Tennis Courts
19. Fairgrounds & Midway
20. Fairgrounds Livestock Barn
21. Fairgrounds Vehicle Display Barn
22. Fairgrounds Tent City ( fair employees set up campers & tents)
23. Football Field

24. Half Mile Track
  25. Locker-room for Baseball Stadium & Football Field
  26. Open Recreation Field
  27. Park T. Pigott Memorial Stadium
  28. Parking Lots
  29. Parks & Recreation Administration Building  
AKA ( 29A ) School Exhibits Building,  
( 29B ) Building
  30. Parks & Recreation Staff Offices
  31. Proposed Florida Spring Training Museum ( former KC Royals  
locker room )
  32. Restrooms for Baseball Stadium & Football Field
  33. Rodeo Grounds
  34. University of Florida IFAS Lee County Extension Building  
AKA – Lee County Extension Service Building
  35. Wooden Circle of Sheds  
AKA - Turner's Circle
- ### **III. Other Facilities**
36. Florida National Guard Armory
  37. Ft Myers Fire Department Station # 2
  38. Lee County Emergency Medical Service Station # 3
  39. Railroad Tracks
  40. Terry Park Entrance

# Acknowledgments

Creating this Terry Park history program would not have been possible without the cooperation, teamwork and dedication of a number of individuals and organizations.

They include:

## **GOVERNMENT**

### **Lee County Board of County Commissioners**

Douglas R. St Cerny, Tammy Hall, Ray Judah, John E. Albion, Bob Janes

*Administration*

*Libraries*

Donald D. Stilwell, William H. Hammond,

Cynthia Cobb, Madeleine Plummer and

Holly Schwartz, Pete Winton

the Ft Myers branch staff

*Public Works*

*Facilities Management*

Jim Lavender

Rich Beck, Lin Behr

*Community Development*

*County Lands*

Mary Gibbs, Gloria Sajgo

Karen Forsyth, Kevin Rau, Sheila Bedwell, Ken Pitt

*Extension Service*

*Public Resources*

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Elizabeth Walker

### **Office of the Surgeon General , US Army**

Dr. John Greenwood

### **State Library of Florida and Archives**

Noreen Boynton, N. Adam Watson

### **Florida National Guard**

Robert Barber, Stephen Hudson, Greg Moore

### **New York National Guard**

Michael Stenzel, Tom Duclos, Jim Gandy

### **Florida 20th Judicial Circuit**

*Court Administration*

Virginia Groth

### **Lee County Clerk of Circuit Court/Minutes Department**

Lisa Pierce, Michele Cooper, Wilma Pope

### **Lee County Sheriff's Department**

Gene Sims

### **City of Fort Myers Clerk**

Marie Adams

### **City of Fort Myers Fire Department**

Richard Chappelle, Don Stonestreet ( retired )

### **City of Ft Myers Edison & Ford Winter Estates**

Pamela Minor

### **City of Fort Myers Southwest Florida Museum of History**

Matt Johnson, Victor Zarick, Harriett Smith, Sarah Terrell

## **PROFESSIONAL and COMMUNITY GROUPS**

### **National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum**

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### **Kansas City Royals**

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### **Fort Myers Miracle**

Steve Gliner

### **News-Press**

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### **Baseballibrary.com**

### **Society for American Baseball Research**

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**Southwest Florida and Lee County Fair Association**

Alta Mosley

**Southwest Florida Historical Society**

Judy Farrell, Sara-Nell Gran, Pete and Genevieve Bowen

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Pablo Adorno, Chris Barnes, Doug Bartleson Jr, Jim Bartley, Glenn Cary, Dean Davis, John Doherty, Waldo Farabee, Lynn Gerald Jr, Kathy Geren, Bill Grace, Sue Bennett Grimes, Woody Hanson, Grady Helveston, Lloyd Hendry, Debbie Hime, Susan Hedge, Harold Horne, Tom Horne, Nick Kelly, Tim and Tena Jones, Diane Maddox, Frank Mann, Ed McIntyre, Stan Mulford, Mike Mulligan, Frank Pavese, Horace Pervatt, Frank Pigott, Charlie Powell, Frank Richards, James Seals, Bruce Sparks, John Sheppard, Chris Stafford, Mike Strayhorn, John Terry, T. Rankin Terry Jr, Antoinette Thrift, Matt Uzzell, Sam Watkins, Lavon Wisher, John Yarbrough

**Beaumont ( Texas ) Convention & Visitors Bureau**

Kathi Weathington Hughes, Stephanie Molina

**WGCU Public Media**

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**Mary's City of David**

Ron Taylor

**SJC Boxing**

Steve Canton

**Araba A.A.O.N.M.S.**

John Warren

**The King and His Court**

Eddie and Anne Marie Feigner

and

**The CITIZENS of LEE COUNTY**

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**Lee County Government Program Production Staff**

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