

7 "Cattle Drive on Marion Avenue"

Artist: Michael Vires



Dedication: June 21, 2007 - West Side of Rooney Building

Known as Cracker Cattle, they were brought to Florida almost 500 years ago by the Spanish. This mural pays tribute to the breed which is still being carried on by today's modern Florida cattle ranches. This mural also brings attention to the Cow Hunters, their breed of horse and dog, that were used in finding, rounding up, and managing the cattle.

8 "Post Cards in Time"

Artist: Jack Reto



Dedication: April 19, 2007
East Side of Andrews Building

The seven "post cards" depict scenes of Punta Gorda from early 1900 to the 1930's. The first card shows the fountain that was located in the center of Marion Ave. The spring source was moved to the corner of Marion and Taylor where it is still in use. Other panels show "Teddy" Roosevelt in town fishing and hunting. Along with other notables, he was a frequent guest at the Princess Hotel. Next in line is the former fishing pier where boats unload their catches; a popular family owned bakery; a view of early "downtown;" the party held for the opening of the Barron Collier bridge and the "tin can" trailer park that was once located in the current Lashley Park. The mural is sponsored by Dr. and Mrs. Robert Andrews. Some observers have stated that the couple shown at the fountain mural looks like the Andrews. If so, perhaps this was the fabled "Fountain of Youth" sought by Ponce de Leon upon his visit to these shores.

9 "Lest We Forget"

Artist: Liz Hutchinson



Dedication: 2005 - Next to Lashley Park Gazebo

This mural was dedicated as part of the Kiwanis Veterans Garden Project on Veterans Day 2005. The mural has a theme of peace, signified by a yellow ribbon tying the various war scenes together. The mural closely resembles the mural that the artist had painted on an interior wall of the old post office in 1991, but which was lost when the old post office was torn down.

10 "Nature's Harmony"

Artist: Liz Hutchinson



Dedication: May 17, 2007 - Lashley Marina Building

This is a reconstruction of a mural that was destroyed by Hurricane Charley. It depicts the harmony of nature, and focuses on the contributions of two important Punta Gorda residents. On the left side, Harry "Pete" Goulding developed several new strains of hibiscus plants by cross breeding and special pollination techniques. On the right is Phil Lashley, a prominent Punta Gorda politician, and the man for whom Lashley Park was named.

11 "Captivating Charlotte County"

Artist: Liz Hutchinson



Dedication: October 18, 2007 - Lashley Marina Boat Ramp

Captivating Charlotte County represents a celebration of wildlife found in Charlotte County. Two distinctly different environments are depicted. The split screen format shows aquatic life, grasses and mangroves that thrive beneath the water line. Snook hide in the mangrove roots searching out smaller fish, crabs scurry along the grassy harbor bottom, turtles dive while dolphin and manatee skim the surface. A large alligator looms in the corner. Above the water line shows the distinctive habitat of local bird life. A great blue heron perches on the mangrove limbs along with a green heron. Seagulls soar in the air while a Sandhill Crane, along with her chicks, Roseate Spoonbills and Sandpipers fish the shoreline. In addition, this mural has some "hidden" wildlife for viewers to discover.

12 "End of the Line"

Artist: Richard Currier

Dedication: April 8, 1997
South and East Side of Strang Building



Punta Gorda prospered when the railroad came to town, and was the end of the line. There are two murals on this building. The murals depict town founder Isaac Trabue, and Henry Plant, the man who built railroads on the west coast of Florida, specifically the end of the line in Punta Gorda.

One mural, taken from historic photos, is of steam locomotive Number 11 pulling into town. The second mural has emphasis on items shipped from this area. They included citrus, pineapple, cattle and seafood. These murals were sponsored by the Kiwanis Club of

End of the Line - Continued

Punta Gorda through a donation from Bob and Faye Strang, owners of the Strang Building. Artist Richard Currier says many don't know that Trabue and Plant did not like each other, but the developer and railroader needed each other. He said he purposely put a scowl on the faces as they appear looking at each other.

13 "First City Council"

Artist: Charles Peck



Dedication: 2001 - West Side of City Hall Annex

The original picture of the first City Council is dated 1889. The men are identified as (L to R) Thomas Hector, City Clerk; J.O. Swisher, Alderman; E.L. Fishback, Marshal; W.H. Burkland, Alderman; Kelly B. Harvey, Alderman; Neil Dahl, Alderman and James L. Sandlin, Alderman. No one is designated as Mayor and no mention is made of W.H. Simmom, who was elected Mayor at the 1887 incorporation meeting. Further, Fishback seems to have replaced John Stanfield who was elected Marshal at that meeting.

14 "School Marms on the Bay"

Artist: Peter Carey



Dedication: April 8, 1997

West Side of Building on Sullivan St. and W. Virginia Ave.

The mural titled "School Marms On The Bay" was taken from historic photos. It shows three school teachers rowing across the river to their school house in Charlotte Harbor (now the site of School House Square Shopping Center). The local mail boat of the times is shown with the historic Hotel Charlotte Harbor in the background.

Helpful Resources

Punta Gorda Historic Mural Society

www.puntagordamurals.com

Enterprise Punta Gorda

941-575-9099 www.enterprisepuntagorda.org

Main Street Punta Gorda

941-575-9099 www.mainstreetpuntagorda.org

Punta Gorda Chamber of Commerce

941-639-3720 www.puntagorda-chamber.com

Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce

941-639-2222 www.charlottecountychamber.org

www.puntagordashopping.com

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A walking guide to help you explore our heritage. The tour begins at the public parking lot across from the Historic Court House and includes 14 historic murals. The entire walk takes approximately one hour to walk (without stops) and is 2.4 miles.

The Punta Gorda Historic Mural Society is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization dedicated to bringing Punta Gorda's cultural, art, and history alive through educational murals.

To help us repaint our lost murals and to paint new ones, please mail your check to:

Punta Gorda Historic Mural Society
PO Box 510506
Punta Gorda, FL 33951-0506

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Instructions for Safety

The walking tour begins from the public parking lot **S** at the corner of W. Olympia Ave. and Sullivan Street just west of the historic Charlotte County Courthouse. (Of course, you may choose to begin the tour anywhere on the map.) Always use the sidewalks provided. Use caution when crossing any road and always use the pedestrian crosswalks when available. Most crossing points have pedestrian crossing signals. Please use these signals. **The user of this guide accepts all risks.**

1 "Classics of the Past"

Artist: Patrick Cleland
Dedication: 2004
North and East Side of Steve's Auto Shoppe



There are 4 murals representing classic cars of the past. The mural facing North on W. Olympia is a 1932 Ford Coupe. Moving around to the front of the station on North 41, the 3 murals on the service bays depict from left to right, a 1948 Ford, a 1957 Chevrolet, and a 1957 Thunderbird.

2 "Saving Dollars Makes Sense"

Artist: Don Gutcher
Dedication: 1998
East Side of Bank of America Building



These six mural panels show the history of banking in downtown Punta Gorda. The first panel shows Punta Gorda Bank, which opened in 1894 at the corner of W. Marion and Taylor Street. The bank moved to a new location in 1897 at W. Marion and Cross Street (Panel 2). In 1912 a rival bank, The Merchants Bank of Punta Gorda (Panel 3), opened on W. Marion between King and Taylor Streets. The white columned building is occupied now by Caldwell Trust Co. The old Punta Gorda State Bank was reorganized in 1917 (Panel 4). During the bank run of 1929, legend has it that the bank was saved when Collier arrived with a suitcase full of cash and depositor confidence was restored. It survived for a while but later failed. In 1925, the Charlotte Bay Hotel was built at W. Marion Ave. and Taylor St. That prime corner was occupied by the "Fidelity Trust Company" (Panel 5), a subsidiary of the "First National Bank of Punta Gorda." Fidelity Trust collapsed in the 1929 depression. Punta Gorda Federal Savings & Loan (Panel 6) was organized in 1934.

3 "Natural Beauty"

Artist: Michael Vires
Dedication: January 17, 2008
On the north wall of the FPL sub-station.



This mural is a re-creation of the original mural that was painted at the town's busiest intersection of W. Marion Ave and Tamiami Trail (US 41 North), which was destroyed by Hurricane Charley. This is a four panel mural. It includes the city flower, the Punta Gorda Hibiscus; the city bird, the yellow crowned night heron; a roseate spoonbill; and the famous tarpon sporting fish.

4 "Black History in Punta Gorda"

Artist: Fran Hines
Dedication: November 15, 2007
Baker Center School on East Charlotte Ave.



This mural is a rippling scroll with 11 portraits and scenes of people who were involved in the development of Punta Gorda. Included are portraits of Cornelius Ponder, John Lomas, O. B. Armstrong, Daniel Smith, Robert Meacham, Charles Bailey, Lucille Allen, and, of course Benjamin Baker, for whom the Baker Center School was named.

5 "Fishing Tales"

Artist: Jack Reto
Dedication: 1998
North Side of Foot and Ankle Center Building



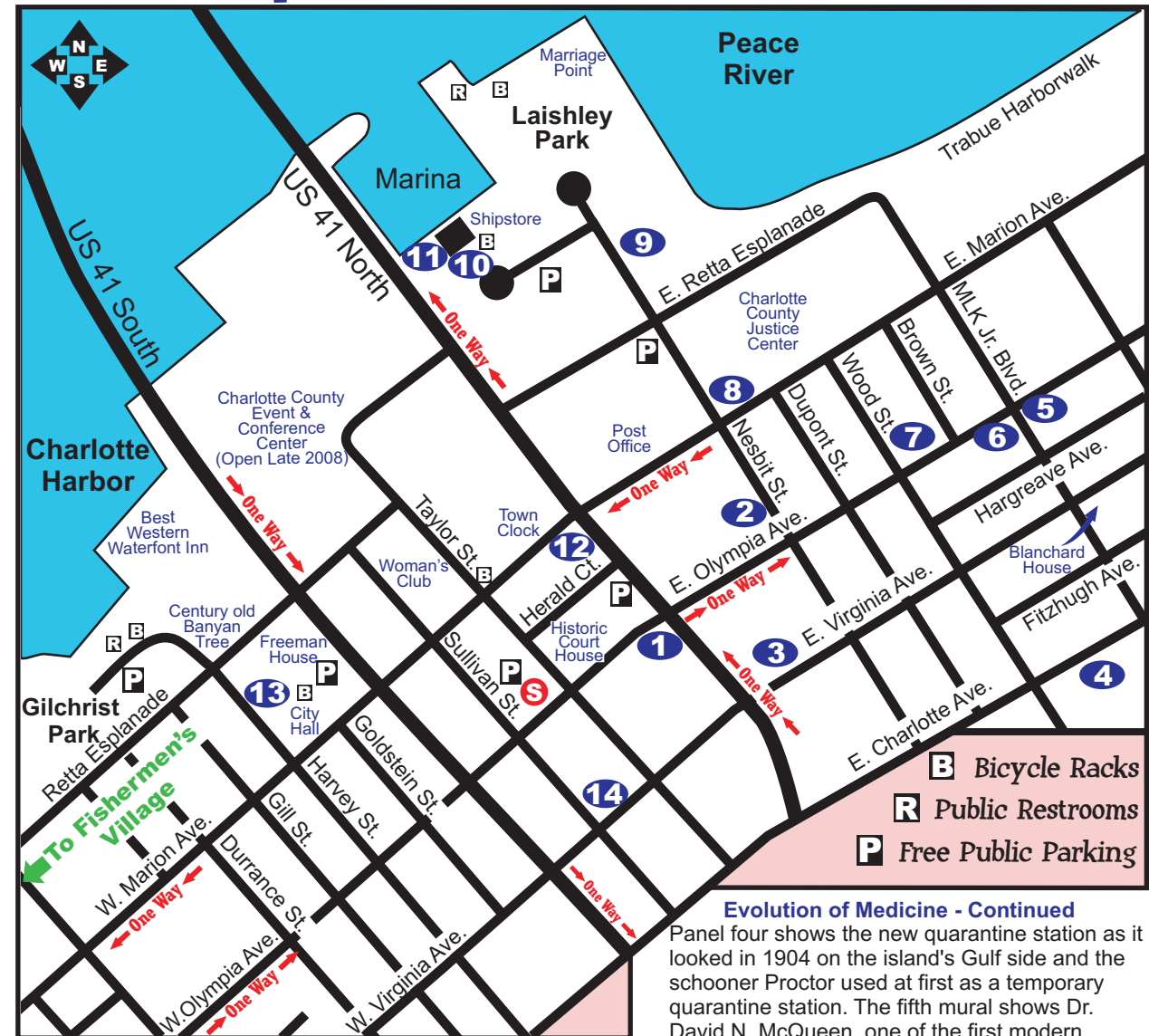
This mural depicts the importance of commercial and sports fishing to the development and history of Punta Gorda. When the United States acquired Florida from Spain, small fishing villages like Charlotte Harbor appeared. In 1886, the railroad was extended to what is now Punta Gorda, allowing fish to be sent north. Shrimp ("Pink Gold") became an important industry after WWII. Tarpon was, and remains, the top sports fish in the area. Tarpon tournaments have been here for years. The vivid pink and orange of the mural reflect the area's glorious sunscapes and the importance of Pink Gold.

6 "Evolution of Medicine"

Artist: Charles Peck
Dedication: March, 1998
North Side of SW Regional Imaging Building
The first panel shows three Calusa Indian medicine



Map of Downtown Punta Gorda



Evolution of Medicine - Continued
men and priests trying to heal a sick woman. Archaeologists and university officials supplied information to make the mural as authentic as possible. The second panel depicts conquistadors and a combat surgeon taking care of some of their soldiers. Panel number three was based on a 1882-83 malaria epidemic. The scene is inside a quarantine station on the bay side of Boca Grande. The station was moved to the Gulf side when they found it was the mosquito that carried the disease and the bay side was infested with the mosquitoes.

Evolution of Medicine - Continued
Panel four shows the new quarantine station as it looked in 1904 on the island's Gulf side and the schooner Proctor used at first as a temporary quarantine station. The fifth mural shows Dr. David N. McQueen, one of the first modern doctors to settle in our county near the turn of the century. Panel six is a painting of the first hospital built in Charlotte County in 1947. The facility had a dozen beds. Also shown are three scenes of early x-ray, operating table and patient bed.

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