

1913 view of the Miami Canal and Everglades in background

Panel 1.6

FROM WARSHES TOFARNS

Drainage of the marshes south of Lake Okeechobee uncovers rich muck soils, attracting farmers intrigued by year-round harvests. The Everglades Agricultural Area, a 16,000-acre area of land developed by William Conners, provides extraordinary crop yields. By 1920, this vast area is cultivated with tomatoes, beans, peas, peppers, potatoes and small amounts of sugarcane. Drainage canals also provide navigational access. Post World War I finds Florida in full swing with its first land boom; speculators and tourists travel to South Florida on the Flagler Railroad. Seminoles start alligator wrestling to attract tourist dollars. The state's population reaches MARVEL 970,000 in 1920. The median age is 21, with FARMS men outnumbering women. The commonplace attitude of viewing wildlife as a nuisance or an unlimited resource begins to shift. Recognizing the value and necessity of conservation, Florida A model of Marvel Farms, a developer's dream for the Tamiami Trail. In 1923, creates the Department of Game and Fresh Barron Collier begins building the highway across 76 miles of the Everglades frontier to connect Miami with Tampa. The state road department comes to Water Fish in 1925. his aid three years later in 1926 and the final cost is \$8 million or about



\$25,000 a mile

1913

An intensive Everglades Report is accepted by the state legislature. The Randolph Report suggests the Everglades could be drained at a cost equal to the value of the drained land. Everglades Drainage District funding changes from the



1925

The St. Lucie Canal is completed.

Recommended by the Randolph Report and begun in 1916, the St. Lucie Canal now extends from Lake Okeechobee eastward to the tidewater. Unlike other canals constructed at least partially along the alignment of natural creeks or rivers, the St. Lucie Canal winds through uplands with no natural drainage patterns. Its sole purpose is to channel excess water from the lake to the Atlantic Ocean.

levying of an acreage tax to the use of bonds based on future tax. Major construction begins. Between 1913 and 1927, six large drainage canals and numerous smaller canals, totaling 440 miles — including 47 miles of levees and 16 locks and dams — are constructed.

3,000-year-old cypress tree harvested from South Florida's swamps early in the 20th century

1917

Four major canals are completed.

The Everglades Drainage District completes the construction of the Miami, North New River, Hillsboro and West Palm Beach canals — from Lake Okeechobee through the Everglades to the coastal tidewater.

A hurricane makes landfall over the Florida Keys. A category 4, it is the sixth most intense hurricane to hit the U.S. in history. It kills more than 600 people.

The Great Miami Hurricane strikes a blow. It sends floodwater over Lake Okeechobee's earthen embankments (built by local farmers) in 1915 from muck and sand) into Moore Haven (the region's largest town). The storm kills more than 400 people.

E X T R A MIAMI LIFE, SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 1926 F R
City Manager's Proclamation
Martial law is declared in Miami Beach. EVERYONE MUST BE OFF THE STREETS AT 6 O'CLOCK. We will deal harshly with anyone who profiteers on food or any commodity.
No food, water or other necessity will be sold without first obtain- ing a permit at the City Hall. No motor cars shall move without a permit.
There is a supply of drinking water on hand to last at least four days, at which time it is believed that plenty will be available. Food supplies are also believed sufficient.
Dr. Roche is in charge of sanitation. All available nurses and doc- tors should report to him immediately at the Alladin building. Cliff Sawyer is in charge of the wholesale food distribution. All men who can should report at the city hall to clear the wreck- age and to volunteer for police duty.
C. A. RENSHAW, City Manager A death list running into the hun- ing. 23 bodies had been recovered at Hialeah while it was
dreds and propert damage running into the millions is left in the wake of the tropical hurricane which Friday night and Saturday morning turned the play- ground of America into the playground of the elements.
recovered at Miami Beach, the death list is conservatively estimated at ten. Several lives were probably lost when the dredge stationed at the entrance to the heav wat swamped not far from the
Million Dollar Pier. Seventeen of the crew swam ashore, two drowned and three more are missing. the Alladin building and at the Floridian Hotel. The Damage to north beach hotels was heavy, roofs collapsing and interiors being badly damaged. But folks, just remember you're here to read this.

to declare martial law in Miami Beach





1927

1919

The Florida Inland Navigation District is created.

Completion of the Intracoastal Waterway in 1912 does not solve the problem of inland water transportation from Jacksonville to Miami due to the difficult task of maintaining the minimum depth. To comply with conditions imposed by Congress for improvements, the state legislature creates the navigation district to take over what was formerly in private ownership, eliminating tolls and ensuring a maintenance schedule.



A boat trip along the South Florida portion of the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway