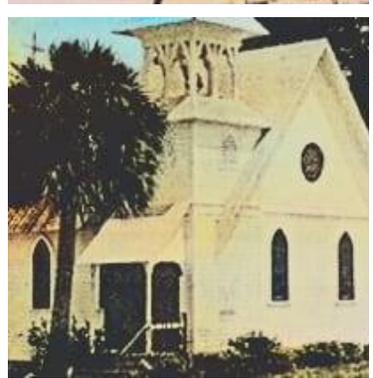
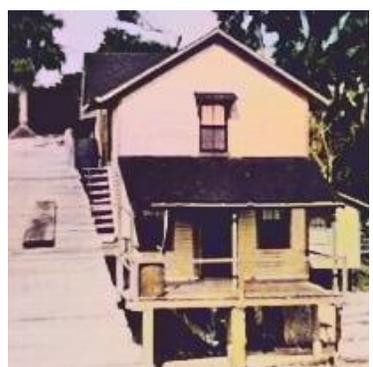


Martin County  
Historic Preservation Board



# Annual Report

2024





## Introduction

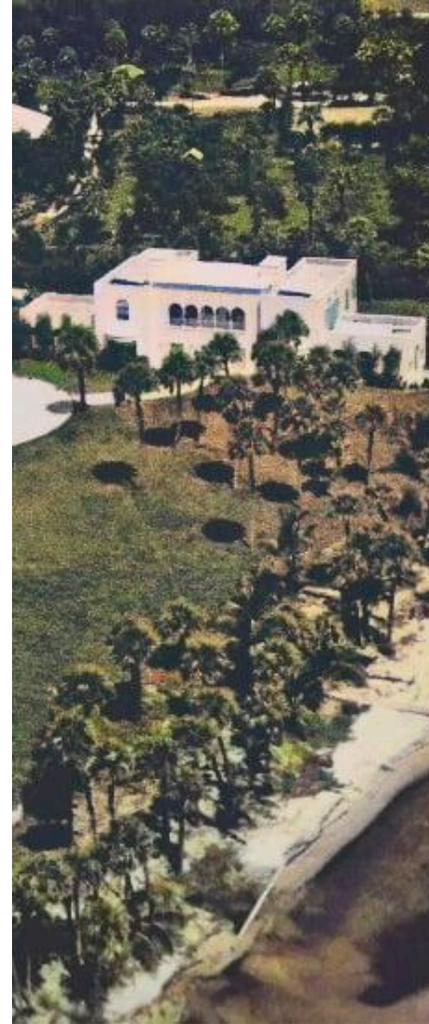
The Martin County Historic Preservation Board (HPB) was created in 2003 when the Martin County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) adopted a Historic Preservation Ordinance to ensure the preservation and protection of local historic sites. Members of the HPB are citizen volunteers appointed by the BOCC for a term of four years to assist with implementation of the ordinance.

## Mission Statement

The mission of the Historic Preservation Board is to advance local designation of the county's historic structures and landmarks in order to raise awareness of the importance of the county's architectural and archaeological legacy to community identity and the preservation of Martin County's unique past.

## Board Members

- Evan Anderson, Chair
- Sherry Lee, Vice Chair
- Joette Lorion Rice
- Rodney Johnson
- Douette Pryce
- William Weiss
- Robert Steele
- Jaqui May



## Duties

Primary duties of the Historic Preservation Board include:

- Recognize archaeological geo-environmental zones as identified on an Archaeological Survey of Martin County.
- Designate historic sites and districts pursuant to section 4.584.
- Approve historical markers and issue certificates of designation.
- Establish procedures for the issuance of certificates of appropriateness.
- Recommend zoning and building code amendments to the proper authorities.
- Promote an awareness of the benefits of historic preservation to the community.
- Perform periodic updates to the historic archaeological and architectural surveys.
- Record and maintain records of the HPB's actions and decisions.
- Provide an annual report to the Board of County Commissioners.
- Review, develop and recommend ordinances to the Board of County Commissioners that promote the preservation and rehabilitation of historic resources.
- Seek out worthy projects for matching grants-in-aid from sources which have as their purpose the preservation for public benefit of properties that are significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, and culture.
- Review applications for all buildings, properties and sites in unincorporated Martin County nominated for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.
- Establish criteria and procedures for the expedited review of certain projects by staff.
- Seek expertise on matters or proposals requiring evaluation by a professional or a discipline not represented on the HPB.
- Provide an annual budget to the Board of County Commissioners.
- Attend pertinent informational or educational meetings, workshops, and conferences.

The Martin County Historic Preservation Board meets on the third Monday of every other month starting in February with the addition of a March meeting leading up to Historic Preservation Month. The information below summarizes the general activities, projects and accomplishments of this board.





## General Activities

During 2024, general activities of the Historic Preservation Board and staff included:

- Historic Preservation Board members revised their goals and objectives for 2025 to include measurable baselines.
- Staff continued to work with the multi-departmental Historic Preservation working group on promotional efforts.
- Historic Preservation Board recommended approval for the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget.
- Historic Preservation Board explored potential for designating historic districts.
- Evan Anderson accepted the Historic Preservation Month Proclamation from Martin County on behalf of the Historic Preservation Board.
- Joette Lorion Rice accepted the Historic Preservation Month Proclamation from the City of Stuart on behalf of the Historic Preservation Board.
- Douette Pryce accepted the Historic Preservation Month Proclamation from the Town of Sewall's Point on behalf of the Historic Preservation Board.



# 2024 Projects and Accomplishments

## Historic Preservation Month

For more than a decade, the Martin County Historic Preservation Board (HPB) has coordinated a wide variety of events to celebrate Historic Preservation Month with the rest of the country. Each year, community support of this celebration has grown stronger. In 2008, the HPB's first year observing this very special month, the schedule listed a week of six events. In 2019, the HPB had a schedule of thirty-three events, with some repeating on different dates. In February 2020, the HPB began planning for the Historic Preservation Month activities but by May 2020, the HPB and its partners in preservation decided to postpone any and all events due to the COVID-19 worldwide health pandemic.

This year we, the historic preservation community, planned 22 events for the month of May. The 2024 schedule of events included the kickoff event at the Stuart Heritage Museum, tours and open houses at historic buildings, dramatizations of iconic figures in local history, "American Dream" Schoolhouse Exhibit at the Salerno Colored School hosted by the Black Heritage Initiatives, Martin County Genealogical Society Presentation of Palm City's History by Historian Sandy Thurlow and the Historic Preservationist of the Year award reception. Historic Preservation Month offered a variety of programs for all to enjoy. We also promoted a lot of Martin County Historic Preservation information through our social media platforms which received a great deal of positivity.





## Preservationist of the Year

Kathy Spurgeon, a lifelong resident of Martin County since 1945, has dedicated much of her life to preserving the historical legacy of Hobe Sound. Named the 2024 Preservationist of the Year, Kathy's work with the Apollo School stands as a testament to her deep-rooted commitment to the community. As the founder and president of the Apollo School Foundation, Inc., she was instrumental in saving this historic 1924 two-room schoolhouse from decay and potential demolition. Her successful campaign to restore and repurpose the Apollo School preserved one of Hobe Sound's oldest landmarks, transforming it into a center for cultural, educational, and historical events that continues to enrich the community.

Kathy's preservation efforts have extended beyond the walls of the Apollo School. Under her guidance, the schoolhouse was listed on the National Register of Historic Places and added to the Martin County Historic Register. She rallied support from dedicated volunteers, ensuring that the building's original architectural features, like the Dade County Pine floors, remain intact. Her passion and leadership have not only saved an important piece of history but have also fostered a sense of pride and continuity within Hobe Sound. Honored during Martin County Historic Preservation Month, Kathy's work reflects an enduring commitment to heritage that will inspire future generations to cherish and protect their local history.



## Multi-Departmental Historic Preservation Working Group

- Martin Digital History by the Martin County Library System
- #LoveMCHistory was used on multiple platforms including Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter by incorporating “Then and Now” photo comparisons, Throwback Thursday photos with historic information, Historic Preservation Month Activities, etc.
- Continued promotion of local historic sites in the County Connection e-newsletter.

