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A Map Through Time – Virtual Historic Cities: New Ways of Exploring Digital Collections

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A Map Through Time Virtual Historic Cities



NEW WAYS OF EXPLORING DIGITAL COLLECTIONS

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY
JAMIE ROGERS

Coral Gables – Virtual Historic City & Unearthing St. Augustine's Colonial Heritage



- What do these projects have in common?
 - They were both built upon existing collections and partnerships
 - They were initiated by a drive to increase user access through new modes of discovery
 - They both reach new audiences through cross-discipline content, discoverable through a single interface
 - They were both built on a common software platform, SobekCM (developed by UF), furthering the technical collaboration between FIU and UF

Coral Gables – Virtual Historic City

Partnerships

- City of Coral Gables, City Hall and the Coral Gables Historical Resources Department - since 2005
- Florida International University Digital Collections Center (DCC)
- Florida International University Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Department
- Florida International University Department of Landscape Architecture
- University of Florida Digital Collections (UFDC)



Coral Gables – Virtual Historic City



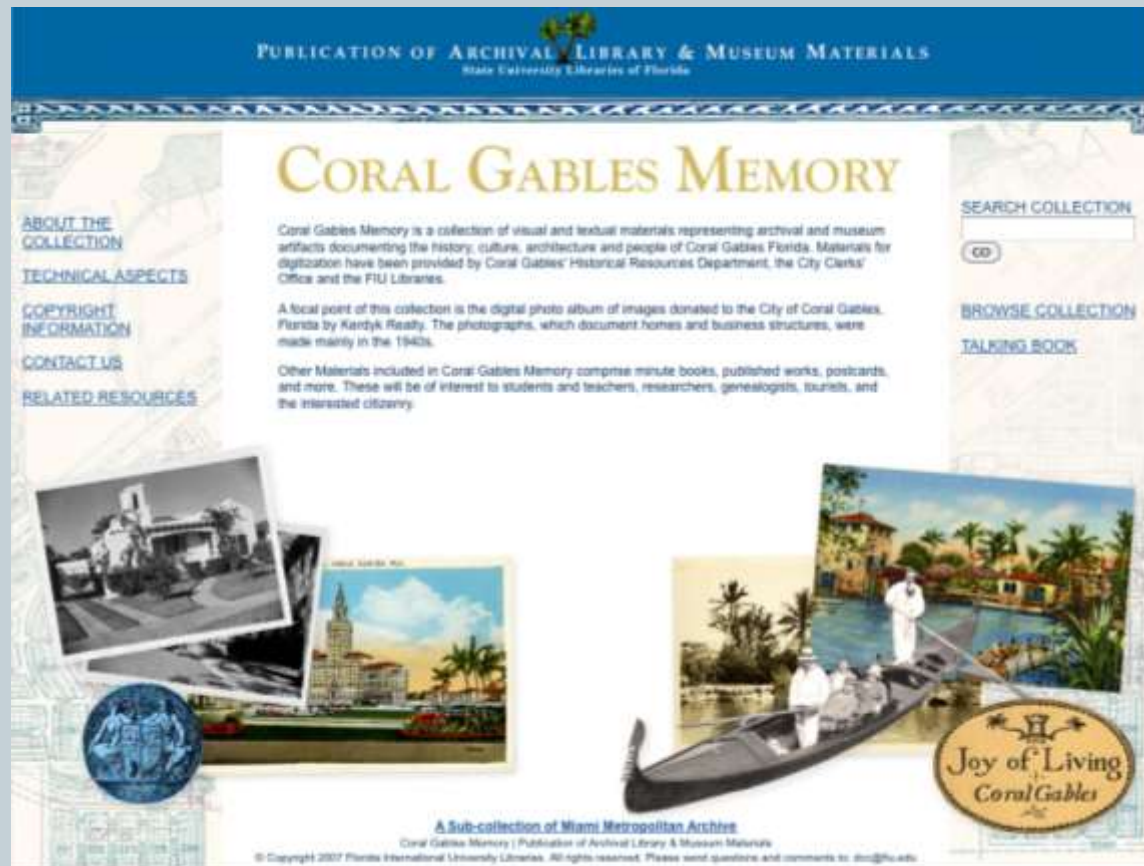
- **Project Background**

- Project plans to incorporate multiple collections from the South Florida Region
- Advisory Board consisting of museum professionals, archivists, library professionals, GIS experts, architects, city officials, etc.
- Coral Gables funding of initial project scope
- Successes, new partnerships, and expanding the project
 - ✦ NEH and IMLS grant proposals have been submitted

History of Collaboration



Coral Gables Memory – <http://coralgables.fiu.edu/>



The Talking Book

The Talking Book is an online interactive book, which focuses on the people, places, and events that shaped the City of Coral Gables in its early history.

The project has two parts. The first is a narrative telling the story of the City's history. The second is a database of photographs, texts, and ephemera related to the City.

Coral Gables Memory ~ Talking Book

HOME • ABOUT • CONTRIBUTORS • RESOURCES • CORAL GABLES MEMORY • SEARCH PALMM COLLECTION GO

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1. Pioneers
2. Where Dreams Become Reality
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5. Frank M. Butler
6. 1920s Boom and Bust
7. Fit for a King
8. Music of the Era
9. The Role of Black Laborers
10. Trouble in Paradise
11. Toven and Gowitt
12. More Trouble in Paradise
13. The Great Depression and the WPA

There is no way to quantify how many individuals have come to South Florida looking for a fresh start, but no doubt that such promise has always been part of the area's appeal. In 1898, shortly after Henry Flagler extended his railroad southward from Palm Beach and the City of Miami was born, **Solomon Merrick**, a Congregationalist minister at the Old Plymouth Church in Duxbury, Massachusetts, sat in his snowbound Cape Cod home mourning the loss of his young daughter Ruth to pneumonia. The streets outside were veritable canyons of ice, and Ruth was among 40 residents who succumbed to the disease in the past week. So many had died and the weather was so bad that many victims lay still unburied.

When an old friend came to pay his respects and mentioned to the elder Merrick that he had just returned from Florida, a place which he described in terms that would make Marco Polo's tales seem tame, Merrick had heard enough. He and his wife Althea both suffered from Quinsy, a chronic form of rheumatism exacerbated by the harsh New England climate, and they had five other young children — how

many more might they lose in the frigid winters to come?

Solomon Merrick made inquiries and learned that a quarter section (160 acres) of farmland some five miles southwest of the 500-person



Althea Merrick
City of Coral Gables Historical Resources Department

<< previous next >>

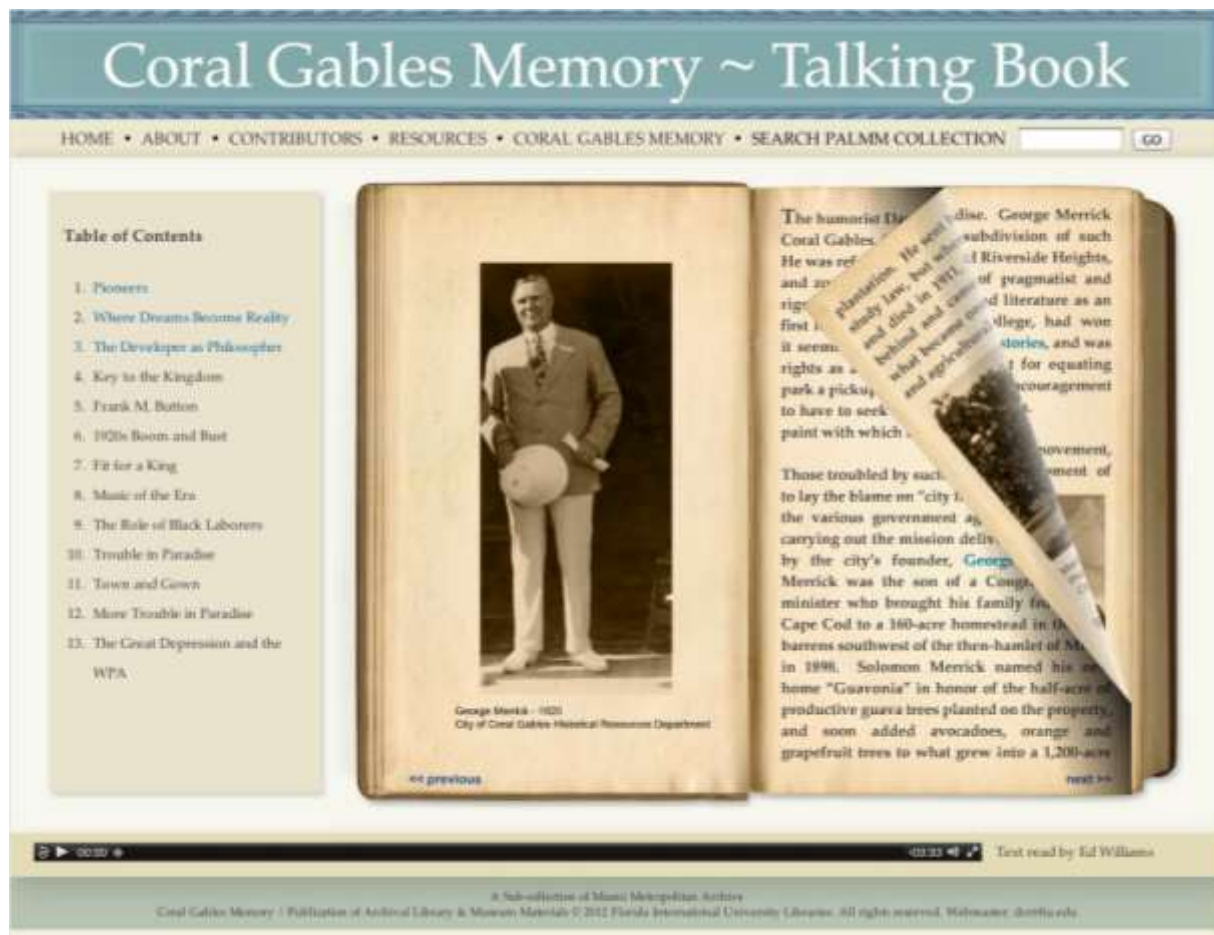
Text read by Ed Williams

A Sub-collection of Miami Metropolis Archive
Coral Gables Memory : Publication of Archival Library & Museum Materials © 2012 Florida International University Libraries. All rights reserved. Webmaster: daniel@fiu.edu

A great benefit of online publishing is the ability for users to make connections with additional information sources.

The majority of the work performed by the Digital Collections Center at FIU is the digitization and dissemination of primary source materials (photographs, rare texts, ephemera, oral histories, etc.)

The talking book provided an opportunity to make these materials available in a way that delivers context for the user, and allowing them to venture on an information discovery path.



The Talking Book provided context to the existing digital collection.

Existing Digital Collections



Collection	Media	Scope/Description	Time Period	# of Items
Coral Gables Memory	Photographs	Coral Gables Homes	1940s – 1950s	5,000+
	Photographs	Historical People/Places/Events	1920s –	180+
	Ephemera	Postcards, Booklets, Advertisements	1920s –	10+
	Texts	Minute Books and other	1925 – 1952	20+
Miami Metropolitan Archive	Texts	Zoning, Development, Advertising, Housing	1930s –	6

Architecture



Aerial Views



Historic Landmarks



Local History



Popular Culture



Fashion



Postcards



M5:—BILTMORE HOTEL, CORAL GABLES, FLA.



Legislative Minute Books



1

MINUTES OF THE FIRST MEETING OF
THE CITY COMMISSIONERS OF THE CITY
OF CORAL GABLES - May 1st, 1925.

The City Commissioners of the City of Coral Gables, met pursuant to the provisions of the Municipal Charter, incorporating said city, at the Administration building, in the City of Coral Gables, Florida, which was temporarily designated as the City Hall. Said meeting was held at 12 o'clock noon, the 1st day of May, A. D. 1925.

All of the members of the City Commission were present.

George A. Merrick
Edward A. Dammers
Welfair Knight
W. R. Baldwin
F. W. Webster

Mr. George A. Merrick was nominated and unanimously elected as temporary Chairman of the meeting. Mr. Edwin W. Bishop was requested to perform the duties of Clerk.

The Chairman announced that the first business to come before the meeting was the election of a Mayor for the new City of Coral Gables. And thereupon with due formality and in compliance with the provisions of the said City Charter, Mr. Edward A. Dammers was nominated as Mayor of the City of Coral Gables, Florida. Upon motion duly made and unanimously carried, it was moved that the nominations be closed and the Clerk passed the unanimous ballot of the City Commissioners for Mr. Edward A. Dammers as Mayor. This having been duly accomplished, Mr. Merrick resigned the Chair to Mr. Edward A. Dammers, who assumed the duties of Mayor.

The Mayor thereupon announced that it was now in order to formally accept the City Charter incorporating the City of Coral Gables. Mr. Bishop, as Clerk, was thereupon directed to read same for the information of the Commissioners. This having been done, said City Charter was duly accepted and adopted as a City Charter for said City of Coral Gables.

New Resources



Task	Quantity Completed
Create audio narratives for the Coral Gables Virtual Tour, which include information about the city's historic landmarks	48 landmark descriptions and associated audio
Add geospatial metadata and standardize temporal metadata of existing collection (Kerdyk residential photographs as well as other digital objects)	5000+ records, 10000+ files
Digitize content for the collection (photographs and other ephemera) held at the Coral Gables Historical Resources Department as well as textual materials	732 photographs, 1000+ files
	23 books, pamphlets, etc.
Digitize maps held at the University of Miami	14
Digitize aerials from 1920s and on	10
Test load items into current beta digital repository system	100 records

GIS Data



Type	Description
Historical Aerial Photographs	1920's – 2010 at 25 Year Intervals
Sanborn Maps	1899 – 1924 Property Parcels, Streets, Building Outlines
Historical Maps (with Streets and Landmarks)	1880-1920 Landmarks and Streets
Vegetation Data	1820's – Vegetation
Census Historical/Municipal Boundaries and Census Boundaries	Census Places; Census Tracts from 1970 On
NOAA Historical Hurricane Data	1926 -

Audience



architects
urban planners
entrepreneurs
environmental analysts historians
community k-16 students
policy administrators sociologists
educators businesses
south florida

Functionality



- **Temporal tool**
 - sliding time bar
- **Spatial tool**
 - display of search results on Google maps
 - geo-locate all historic archive items
- **Overlay tool**
 - scanned and rectified historical maps can be dragged onto Google Maps interface
 - transparency can be adjusted to see changes take place over time
- **Virtual tour**
 - routing tool connects one or more historic landmarks, which has audio, text and photos imbedded
- **3D models**
 - historic landmarks

Search & Discovery



Start search by entering condition in the box below

Please enter the condition here. [Search](#)

Historical Collections List: All Collections

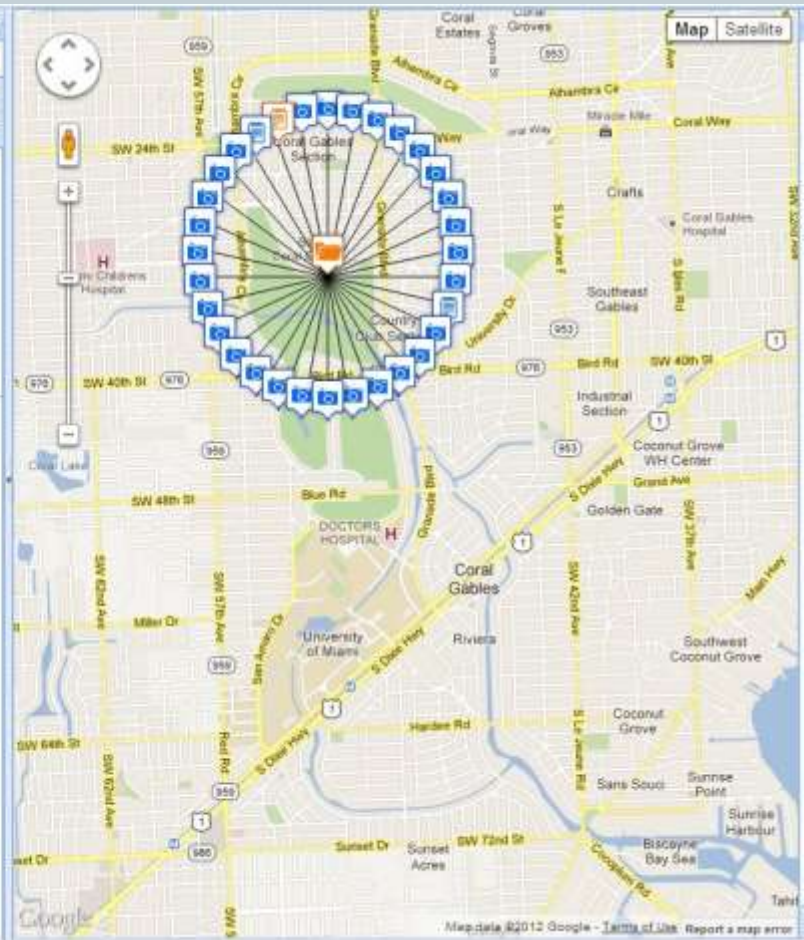
Detail Information

*Enter the only American hotel
strong in our magnificent corner—
the Biltmore Hotel. With its
luxurious interior, its
golf course, its tennis courts,
its swimming pool.*

Download Links:
[F11071105.pdf](#)
[F11071105.pdf](#)

Complete File Information:

Title:Biltmore Re-opening Letter
Author:
Contributor:
CreateDate:8/31/2012 7:07:52 PM
Description:
Format:
Identifier:
Publish Place:undefined
Publish Year:1926
Right:undefined
Subjects:Coral Gables (Fla.)—History,
Miami Biltmore Hotel & Country Club.
Type:Book



3D models



Virtual Tour



Coral Gables Virtual Tour

BUILD YOUR TOUR

Added Landmarks

Your selected Landmarks. Drag to re-order the stop points of your tour.

- Balboa Plaza
- Boy Scout Troop 7 Fireplace
- Church of the Little Flower
- Cocoplum Woman's Club
- Columbus Plaza
- Coral Gables City Hall
- Coral Gables Elementary School
- Florida Pioneer Village
- Italian Village

Generate Tour **Clear All**

List of Landmarks

- ☐ Alhambra Water Tower
- ☒ Balboa Plaza
- ☐ Biltmore Hotel and Country Club
- ☒ Boy Scout Troop 7 Fireplace
- ☒ Church of the Little Flower
- ☒ Cocoplum Woman's Club
- ☐ Colonnade Building
- ☒ Columbus Plaza
- ☒ Coral Gables City Hall
- ☐ Coral Gables Congregational
- ☐ Church
- ☒ Coral Gables Elementary School
- ☐ Coral Gables Merrick House

Reset Tour **Back to Start** **Slow Down** **Play** **Speed Up** **Jump to Next**

Coral Gables Elementary School
Click to remove landmark from tour

By switching mode, your work on the current page will be lost. Would you like to continue?
Yes **No**

Image © 2012 TerraMetrics
Data SIO, NOAA, U.S. Navy, NGA, GEBCO
© 2012 Google

A Map Through Time



- **Future Directions**

- 1) Crowd-sourcing tools for populating content
- 2) Incorporation of quantitative data (e.g. historical census data) within the virtual city
- 3) Inclusion of a bicycle/pedestrian route planner for visiting historic sites
- 4) Expansion of the Virtual City to other historical cities in Florida or US

Contact Info



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Unearthing St. Augustine's Colonial Heritage

An Interactive Digital Collection for the Nation's Oldest City

Funded by a National Endowment for the Humanities grant.

UF and St. Augustine

- Long history of UF working with city (archaeology, architecture/historic preservation, etc.)
- Management of state-owned properties (38 buildings and 23 parcels managed by UF)



Digitization of St. Augustine Holdings

- Given importance of city and research demand, UF has been scanning items over the last 15+ years (mostly internal funding)
- UF Digital Collections (UFDC, <http://ufdc.ufl.edu>)
- UFDC uses the UF-developed open-source SobekCM software (<http://ufdc.ufl.edu/sobekcm>)
- 2009 Historic St. Augustine project (<http://ufdc.ufl.edu/hsa1>) – scanned Historic St. Augustine Preservation Board block/lot files
- Two Grant-Funded Projects:
 - Saving St. Augustine's Architectural Treasures (2010-2012)
 - Unearthing St. Augustine's Colonial Heritage (2012-2014)

Architecture, Archaeology & History

A Tentative Time-Table
for the GOVERNOR'S MANSION PROJECT

	PRESENT	JAN. 1 '69	JULY 1 '69	JULY 1 '70	JULY 1 '71	JAN. 1 '72
RESEARCH						
ARCH. CONSULT.						
DEMOLITION						
ARCHAEOLOGY						
CONSTRUCTION						
FUND. ACQUISITION						
GENERAL						



Project Partners

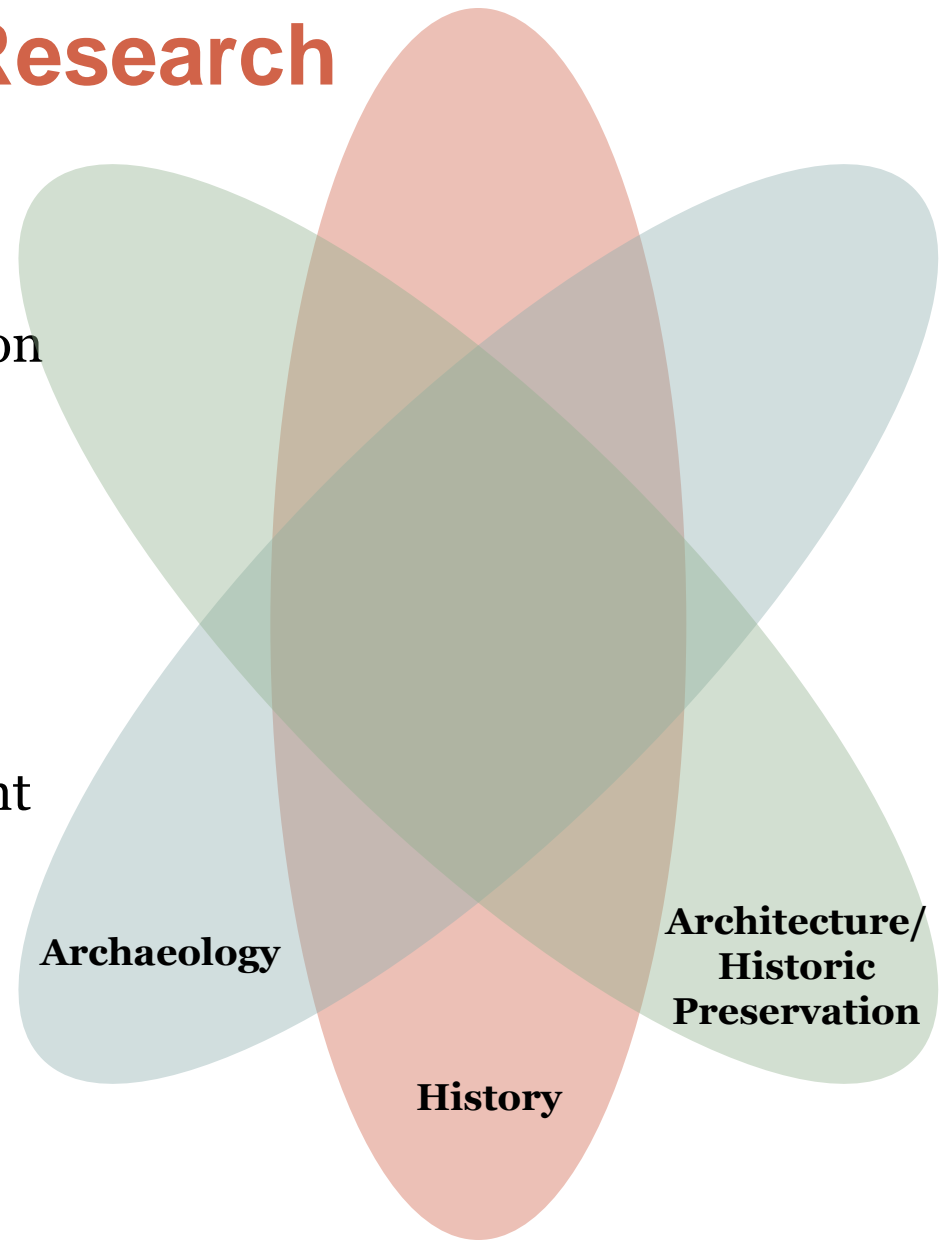
- University of Florida (UF) George A. Smathers Libraries
- City of St. Augustine Heritage Tourism
- City of St. Augustine Archaeology program
- St. Augustine Historical Society

Collections

- Government House – maps and overlays of the city, architectural drawings of historic structures, etc.
- St. Augustine Historical Society – Spanish Colonial documents, transcriptions and English language translations
- St. Augustine Archaeology Program – records, photographs and site summaries for 100 excavations
- Herschel Shepard Collection (UF Libraries - Architecture Archives) - drawings, photos and documents related to Shepard's preservation, restoration and reconstruction of colonial buildings
- P.K. Yonge Library of Florida History (UF Libraries) - maps and historical documents.

Supports Diverse Research

- Architecture/historic preservation
- archaeology
- Florida and U.S. history
- Spanish & British colonies
- Native Americans
- slavery
- exploration
- social and economic development
- urban planning
- missionary work
- military defenses and warfare
- etc.



Identifying Structures/Sites

- Structure/site name(s)
- Street address(es)
- Florida Master Site File number, City Archaeology number, Plat book number, etc.
- Lat/Long coordinates
- Township/Range
- Block-Lot number

Example: Segui-Kirby Smith House
aka Segui-Smith House
aka Old Public Library

6 Artillery Lane or 12 Aviles Street

Aviles Street = Hospital Street



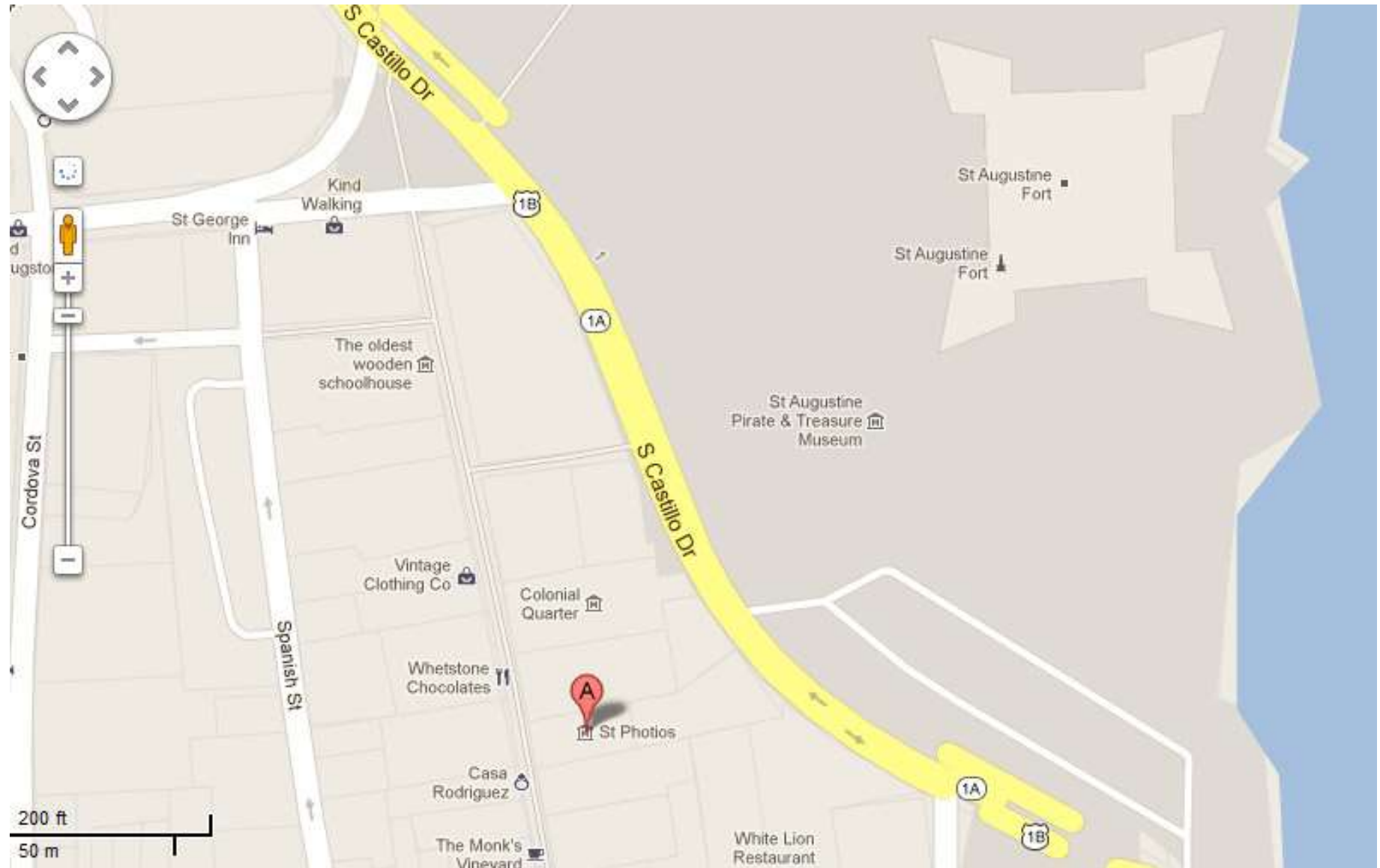
Search Elements/Facets

- Archaeological sites (well, building foundation, trash pit, defensive wall, etc.)
- Building's architectural style
- Building structural system (wood, stone, etc.)
- Dates of construction
- Principal historic period (1st Spanish Colonial, British Colonial, 2nd Spanish, Territorial, etc.)
- Significant renovation/reconstruction dates
- Historical use (residence, worship, government, business)
- Street address
- National Register?

+ PLUS +

- Object-specific metadata (e.g., creator, subject, date, etc.)

Google Map-based searching/browsing



Ability to create/save maps



Overlay Maps/Images





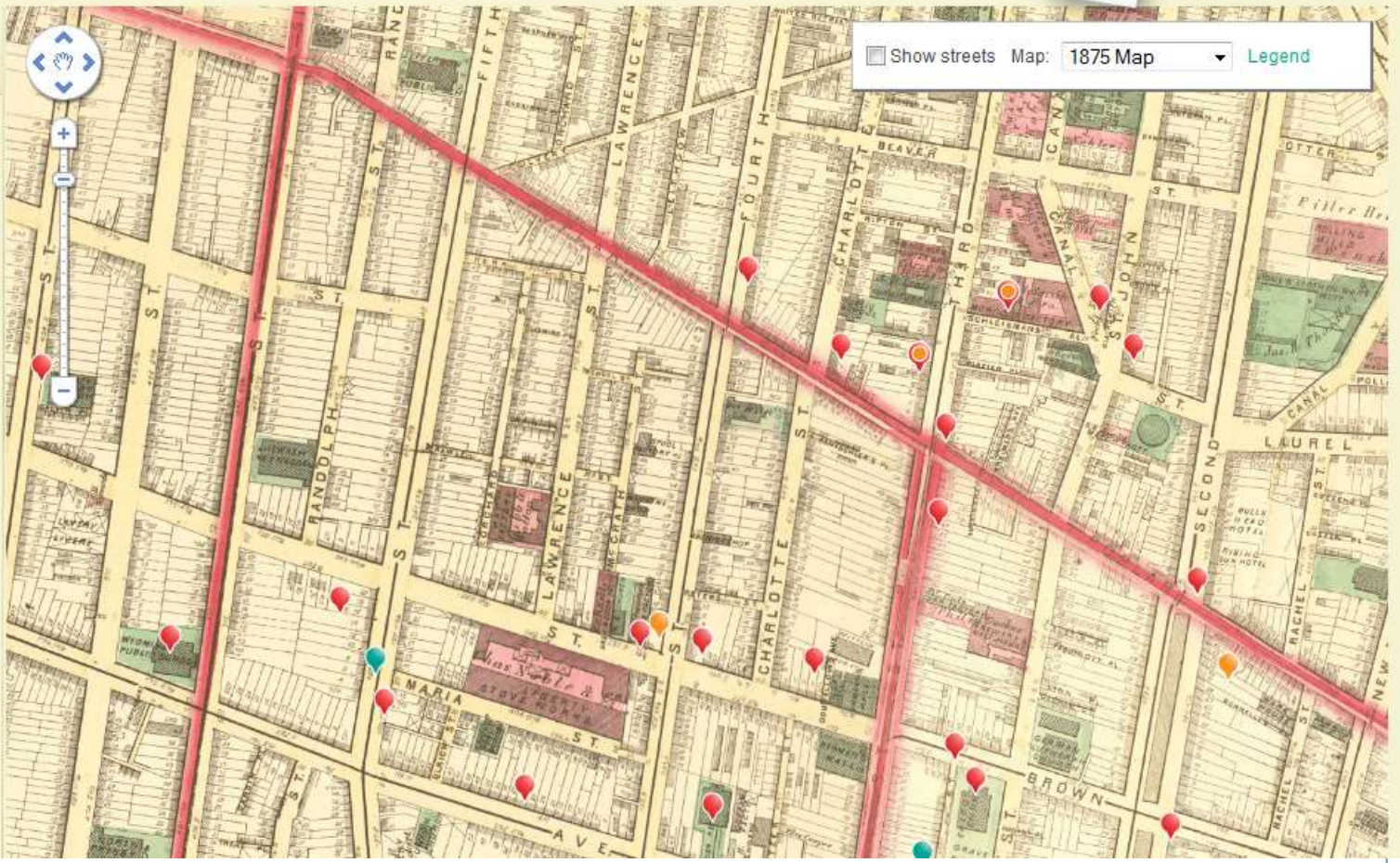
Source: <http://www.davidrumsey.com>

Find Places

Choose a Neighborhood [\(more info\)](#)
All Neighborhoods

Show
☒ All

- Topic (select one or more)
- ☐ baseball fields
 - ☐ Cemeteries
 - ☐ Churches (buildings)
 - ☐ circuses
 - ☐ Civic Life & Politics
 - ☐ Education & Schools
 - ☐ Food & Foodways
 - ☐ Health
 - ☐ Immigration & Migration
 - ☐ Journeys South
 - ☐ Landscape & Architecture
 - ☐ Neighborhood parks
 - ☐ Oral Interviews
 - ☐ Philadelphia Athletics (Baseball team)
 - ☐ Public & Social Life
 - ☐ Religion
 - ☐ Religious Life & Belief
 - ☐ secondary education
 - ☐ Social Reform & Philanthropy



Source: <http://www.philaplace.org>

Future Directions

- Expanding scope (non-Colonial St. Augustine)
- Crowd-sourcing to generate descriptive content/geospatial metadata
- Investigating new methods allowing researchers to control how they interact with digital resources
- New partnerships (e.g., St. Augustine Historic Preservation & Special Projects Planning – mobile tours)

Unearthing St. Augustine's Colonial Heritage

<http://ufdc.ufl.edu/usach>

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Coral Gables – Virtual Historic City

Unearthing St. Augustine's Colonial Heritage

- **What is the long-term significance of these projects?**
 - More resources available online, of course (and more diverse types too)
 - New/better ways for researchers to discover/use/interact with our resources (geographical, temporal, etc.)
 - Both projects can serve as models for other cities/regions in Florida/Caribbean/worldwide.
 - Not only methodology, but also technology (e.g., open-source SobekCM)

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Questions / Comments?