

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**

historic name St. Augustine Beach Hotel and Beachfront

other names/site number SJ08040

**2. Location**

street & number 370 State Road A1A ☐ not for publication

city or town St. Augustine Beach ☐ vicinity

state FLORIDA code FL county St. Johns code \_\_\_\_\_ zip code 32080

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☒ nationally ☒ statewide ☒ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Bureau of Historic Preservation, Division of Historical Resources, Florida Department of State  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that the property is:

☐ entered in the National Register

☐ See continuation sheet

☐ determined eligible for the  
National Register

☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined not eligible for the  
National Register

☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ removed from the National  
Register.

☐ other, (explain) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

St. Augustine Beach Hotel and Beachfront  
Name of Property

St. Johns County, FL  
County and State

## 5. Classification

### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☐ private  
☒ public-local  
☐ public-State  
☐ public-Federal

### Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- ☐ buildings  
☒ district  
☐ site  
☐ structure  
☐ object

### Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include any previously listed resources in the count)

#### Contributing

#### Noncontributing

1	0	buildings
1	0	sites
2	0	structures
0	0	objects
4	0	total

### Name of related multiple property listings

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

### Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

## 6. Function or Use

### Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE: outdoor recreation

COMMERCE: business

GOVERNMENT: city hall

### Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE: outdoor recreation

VACANT

## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19<sup>th</sup> AND EARLY 20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY AMERICAN

MOVEMENTS: Mediterranean Revival

### Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls STONE

STUCCO

roof CERAMIC

other WOOD

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☐ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property.
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

### Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

### Bibliography

Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

#### Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 36) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey  
# \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL HISTORY: Civil Rights

ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION

COMMERCE

### Period of Significance

1964 (Civil Rights)

1940-1971

### Significant Dates

1964

### Significant Person

N/A

### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

### Architect/Builder

Hollingsworth, Francis A., architect

#### Primary location of additional data:

- ☐ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State Agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of Repository

# \_\_\_\_\_

St. Augustine Beach Hotel and Beachfront

Name of Property

St. Johns County, FL

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## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property roughly 3.41 acres

### UTM References

(Place additional references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1	7	4	7	4	3	9	7	3	3	0	2	9	4	2
	Zone			Easting						Northing					
2															

3															
	Zone				Easting						Northing				
4															

☐ See continuation sheet

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Leslee Keys, Ph.D., principal; Andrew Waber, Historic Preservationist

organization Keys and Associates, LLC date October 2021

street & number 207 Mission Cove Circle telephone (904) 814-1022

city or town St. Augustine state FL zip code 32084

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

#### Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

#### Additional items

(check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

### Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name multiple

street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and amend listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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National Park ServiceSt. Augustine Beach Hotel and  
Beachfront

Name of Property

St. Johns, Florida

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**Section number 7 Page 1**SUMMARY**

The St. Augustine Hotel and Beachfront, at 370 A1A Beach Boulevard, is located about five miles east of St. Augustine, in the municipality of St. Augustine Beach, St. Johns County, Florida. The site includes minor contemporary landscaping of palm trees and small shrubs at the one-story west entry. The nomination consists of four resources: the St. Augustine Beach Hotel, the boardwalk, the seawall, and the beachfront. The building was constructed between 1939-1940 as part of a federal Works Progress Administration (WPA) project that showcased greater St. Augustine's Spanish heritage and the use of native coquina stone. The two-story, rectangular building includes a one-story addition. Plate glass windows are featured on the first floor. Single light, double hung sash windows are found on the second story. The upper story windows are covered with plywood as storm protection for the floor that is awaiting reuse. The spaces within the building have included a variety of commercial uses on the first story and hotel rooms on the second floor. The building has undergone a number of changes since its construction, including a spatial rearrangement of the first floor and the removal of interior walls on the second floor. Despite these changes, the building retains its integrity for listing in the National Register.

In addition to the building, there is the boardwalk and seawall, which along with the hotel, are surviving elements of the WPA project. These structures along with the beachfront featured prominently in the 1964 wade-ins conducted by civil rights protestors. The boardwalk is a masonry slab structure that runs from the south side of the hotel northward past the pier. Adjacent to it is a masonry block seawall with a poured concrete cap. The beachfront itself is a stretch of sand extending from the seawall to the ocean. Historically, during the wade-ins, there would have been rocks to the south of the pier similar in appearance to the beach on the north side of the pier. These resources all retain their integrity for listing.

**SETTING**

The St. Augustine Beach Hotel and Beachfront is located immediately adjacent to the Atlantic Ocean on the northern third of Anastasia Island, a fourteen-mile-long barrier island east of St. Augustine. The building is located on a flat, sand over limestone based, beachfront property. A low masonry concrete boardwalk and bulkhead/seawall separates the water and land sides. North of the property and accessed by the boardwalk is a fishing pier. To the south of the subject property is a mid-rise residential condominium complex. To the west of the property is SR A1A, part of the A1A Scenic and Historic Coastal Byway. The hotel building is visible from the highway and the ocean. Throughout most of the history of the area, certainly through European occupation until the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the property remained in a natural state and was used passively.

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**Continuation Sheet**Section number 7 Page 2**NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION**Exterior

The St. Augustine Beach Hotel is two stories with a square corner tower overlooking the ocean at the northeast corner (photo 1). The 10,500 square-foot, L-shaped building includes a one-story wing to the south (photos 3-6). The total size measures approximately 109 feet by 95 feet. The entire structure rests on a masonry slab foundation. The wood frame building is sheathed in more than 15,000, four-inch random coquina stone blocks used as a veneer. The square corner tower is sheathed in stucco. The building includes a hipped parapet roof covered in clay barrel tiles with narrow boxed and bracketed eaves. The main roofs on the two and one-story portions are flat. The building was reroofed after damage from Hurricanes Floyd (1999), Frances and Jeanne (both 2004).

In the two-story building, first floor windows are plate glass installed above a low knee wall. Weather events that took place in the early years of municipal government use resulted in additional changes. On September 11, 1960, Hurricane Donna passed by St. Augustine and the beaches as a Category 2 storm with 103 mph winds. Almost exactly four years later, at midnight on September 10, 1964, Hurricane Dora struck St. Augustine as a Category 3 storm with 115 mph winds. Openings throughout the first floor were filled with masonry or coquina veneer. That infill was removed for the plate glass installation.

Upper story windows in the two-story building are the original wood frame, one over one, double hung sash. They are paired for the hotel/apartment rooms, and single for the bathrooms, over plain cast concrete sills. The tower windows are located under blind arches. A door opening remains on the east oceanside of the second floor which leads to a small, wood balcony with a shed roof.

InteriorFirst Floor

The building is accessed by two principal entries, one on the north façade at the west end closest to the parking area. This led directly to the second-floor staircase (photo 1). The one-story south wing has an entrance on the west façade adjacent to the two-story section of the building (photos 3 and 4). The interior floor plan maintains large open, rectangular spaces along the north, east, and south facades. These accommodated the hotel functions and related recreational uses. As examples, the Dance Hall/Studio faced the ocean and the north parking lot. The Bowling Lanes was located in the one-story section to the south. As it typical, changes were made throughout the hotel's history to meet the changing needs of the industry. Small interior, windowless rooms met needs for offices and restrooms. The original wood floors were damaged by storms and termite-eaten. In the 1960s solid surface vinyl marley flooring, a reversible modification, was developed for dance studios and used in the building.

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N/A

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The original features or details of the interior of the building were modified in 1985 when the City of St. Augustine Beach had grown its municipal functions and needed additional office and meeting spaces. The Bowling Lanes became the Commission Meeting Room.

As context, today's interior floor plan reflects modifications made with the assistance of two State of Florida grants to save the building (photos 7-16). The first grant, a Small Matching Grant-in-Aid awarded in 2003 for \$40,000 enabled planning for work to meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. In 2005, a Special Category Grant in the amount of \$302,932 enabled implementation of that planned scope of work.<sup>1</sup>

Second Floor

Access to the second floor of the hotel is via an open well two-run staircase with a landing on the west end of the building. The original staircase features paneled newel posts and plain balusters, two per tread. A central hall runs east-west with air and light provided by a window on the west end and a door on the east end. Individual rooms are accessed from wooden, two-panel doors with unadorned metal hardware and hung on butt hinges. An enclosed staircase provides access to the tower. Flooring is pine; baseboard and trim are plain.

Currently, the upper story windows are protected by plywood. This measure was undertaken in 1999 in preparation for evacuation due to Hurricane Floyd. The system has remained in place due to Tropical Storm Gabrielle (2001), Hurricanes Charley, Frances, Ivan and Jeanne (2004), Katrina and Wilma (2005), Hurricanes Irene and Katya (2011), Hurricane Matthew (2016) and Hurricane Irma (2017).

Seawall, Boardwalk, and Beachfront

In addition to the hotel building, the seawall, boardwalk, and beachfront all contribute to the nomination (29-32). The beachfront south of the pier near the hotel building is where the most dramatic events of the 1964 wade-ins took place. The boardwalk and seawall are simple concrete structures built for erosion and flood control. A metal rail extends over the seawall. The beachfront is a simple flat stretch of sand extending from the seawall to the ocean. Originally, there were rocks adjacent to the seawall on the south side of the pier similar in appearance to the rocks found north of the pier but these have since been removed.

<sup>1</sup>The Florida Legislature elected not to fund SC grants in 2004, but the funds were awarded the following year. St. Johns Cultural Council, Archival Records. Personal knowledge of the author who served as the Florida Division of Historical Resources St. Augustine Regional Preservation Office Director and representative/advisor to the SJCC in its efforts to save the St. Augustine Beach Hotel.

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**Continuation Sheet**Section number 7 Page 4**ALTERATIONS**

The hotel's first floor was altered several times, particularly in 1985 for its use as the St. Augustine Beach City Hall. Though an ambitious design anticipated additions to the structure, those were not implemented. Interior modifications accommodated municipal services. Partition walls, drop ceilings, and acoustical tiles were installed. The incompatible replacement materials have been removed, and the interior spaces have been reconfigured for cultural facilities' use over the past twenty years.

The interior walls of the second floor retain their original configuration. The floor was closed off for several decades, resulting in termite, rodent, and pigeon infestation. Measures undertaken to address the resulting health hazard included removal of the plaster and lathe. As a result, currently the interior spaces on the second floor are delineated by wall studs.

There have been some changes to the seawall structure and beach since the historic period of significance. Due to damage from the from Hurricane Dora, which occurred a few months after the civil rights protests in 1964, the wall sustained significant damage and needed to be repaired and reinforced. Originally, the beach was several feet lower on the wall but due to subsequent beach replenishment efforts, the sand is higher and nearer to the top of the seawall. The caps on the seawall were put in place after Hurricane Dora to protect the concrete walkway and buildings. Sometime after the period of significance, metal rails were installed on the top of the seawall for public safety reasons. The wood access steps over the top of the seawall, which serves as a primary beach access point for the county park, is also a non-historic addition. The height and length of the core of the seawall has remained the same.

**INTEGRITY**

The property retains integrity of Location, Setting, Design, Feeling, and Association. The St. Augustine Beach Hotel remains in its original oceanfront location with an intact historic setting and building constructed during the New Deal era in the present-day municipality of St. Augustine Beach. The building retains its original construction shape, size, and form with original exterior materials and surfaces. Openings have been adapted sensitively in response to weather events, continuing to meet the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

The setting has changed a bit since the original construction of the hotel building. Integrity measures have been compromised with regard to adjacent sites related to the Civil Rights significance at St. Augustine Beach. Originally, a north hotel, sand parking lot, and wooden fishing pier were components of the facilities. The north hotel was demolished. The parking lot was replaced by a concrete plaza and



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pavilion. The fishing pier was rebuilt in concrete and extended in length after weather events destroyed the wooden pier, and the sand beach was altered. Beginning in 1977, beach renourishment became a consideration. The US Army Corps of Engineers began a series of projects to create a deep beach as a measure to control wave action. Three major renourishment projects have been completed since 1996. As a result of these changes, the oceanfront is different from its 1960s appearance. The sand is much higher on the seawall than it was during the 1960s. As this has been in continuous use as a public beach access point since 1940, changes to parking areas, beachfronts, and other facilities such as the north hotel building and the pier are common. The south hotel retains its visual connection to the beach and is still situated adjacent to a primary public beach access point.

The beachfront boardwalk and seawall paralleling the ocean retain integrity as the site has changed little eighty years. Due to the higher sand level, the seawall was capped sometime after the period of significance with curved cast concrete structures. Metal rails were also added for public safety measures. The sand accumulation was the result of the natural accretion of the barrier island, wave action due to the periodic dredging of the inlet, and erosion that prompted beach re-nourishment. Access to the beach has remained the same with the low seawall separating the hotel building from the oceanfront. A concrete boardwalk runs parallel and adjacent to the seawall, a feature of the setting since the Pier Project construction completed in 1940. Originally, the hotel beach walkover and the 16<sup>th</sup> Street entrance were marked by wood ramps. Pedestrians, including civil rights protestors, accessed the beach using these ramps. They were damaged regularly by wind, sand, and water and have been removed. The sand beach access at 16<sup>th</sup> Street remains, however. Hence, the complex and beach retains its integrity of setting.

Integrity measures of Materials and Workmanship have been compromised on the building's interior due to alterations over the years. The second story's use as storage beginning in the 1980s enabled vermin and insects to occupy that portion of the building. Required elimination of the resulting health and safety hazard necessitated removal of interior plaster and lathe. Wood stud wall framing, door and window openings, room sizes and arrangements remain intact. Windows remain in place, though they are concealed by plywood as protective measures. Doors remain stored within the rooms on the second floor for reuse. Staircases, railings, and wood sub-floors remain in place. The hotel retains integrity of exterior design, materials, and workmanship. The beach and associated structures, although modified in response to programmatic and maintenance requirements, retain integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. Although the buildup of sand has obscured much of the seawall and the structure itself has been capped, altering its appearance, the core of the wall remains at its original length and height.

While the beach is different in appearance than it was in the 1960s and most of the surviving buildings and structures associated with the wade-ins have either been removed or altered, it is also important to take into consideration the exceptional significance of the 1964 civil rights protests in St. Augustine

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N/A

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when evaluating integrity. The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. targeted St. Augustine specifically to generate attention and political pressure on the federal government as it was debating the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. While protests occurred in several other places, including historic downtown St. Augustine, the swim-ins and wade-ins that occurred at the beach and the Monson Motor Lodge pool generated the most attention in the international media. As the Monson lodge and pool are no longer extant, the beachfront between the pier and 16<sup>th</sup> Street entrance along with the associated surviving building and structures are the best surviving resources connected to this aspect of the St. Augustine civil rights movement. The most significant visual elements tying this stretch of the beach to the events, the end of 16<sup>th</sup> Street, the seawall, the hotel, and the pier, either remain or, as was the case with pier, replaced in-kind over or close to the original location of the older structure. The length and elevation of the beach, like many other shorelines, has changed over time due to a combination of natural and manmade causes. The beach has also remained in continuous use as a public recreational beach, a key factor in its selection by protestors.

Finally, as a natural landform that is constantly changing, the primary feature of the beach is its location where the land meets the sea, and where people go to swim. It is not reasonable to expect the beach to retain the same extent or sand as it possessed in the period of significance, especially after the passage of hurricanes and other severe storms. Only drastic changes, such as the complete replacement of the beach with artificial breakwaters, the total closure of beach access points, or the complete loss of the strand of sand in front of the seawall, would destroy the beach's integrity of location, setting, design and materials. Overall, the beach and the hotel retains integrity of Association and Feeling.

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N/A

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# **National Register of Historic Places**

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### **SUMMARY**

The St. Augustine Beach Hotel and Beachfront is nominated to the National Register for its significance at the local, state, and national level under Criterion A: Social History, Civil Rights, with the period of significance being the year 1964. The property is also nominated at the local level for its significance under Criterion A: Commerce and Entertainment/Recreation, with a period of significance from 1940-1971. Constructed in 1939-1940 by the Works Progress Administration, the building, boardwalk, and seawall are the sole surviving elements of the St. Augustine Auxiliary Pier Project. Designed to reinvigorate local tourism, the public beachfront facilities were prominent local landmarks within St. Augustine Beach. The pier complex quickly became one of the most popular beach access points for both residents of St. Augustine and tourists visiting the area. For St. Augustine Beach, which relied on beach tourism, the business generated by the pier complex played a key role in the economic development of the community. The acquisition of the hotel building shortly after the incorporation of the City of St. Augustine Beach in 1960 provided the new city with much needed funding that the municipal government used towards city services.

Constructed with public funds, the St. Augustine Auxiliary Pier Project and beachfront, which were reserved for white people as were beaches throughout Florida, became obvious examples of the dichotomy between public beach facilities available for blacks and whites in St. Johns County in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. In 1964, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) targeted St. Augustine during their larger national push to pressure the federal government into passing the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Protest organizers selected the beachfront extending from the end of 16<sup>th</sup> street northward to the St. Augustine Beach Hotel property, five miles east of downtown St. Augustine, as part of the staging area for a series of wade-ins to desegregate local beaches. The wade-ins, which took place from June 17 to July 1, 1964, launched from the end of 16<sup>th</sup> Street, running northward between the fishing pier and the south property line of the Hotel. These protests were significant elements of the larger St. Augustine civil rights demonstrations that attracted international attention to the plight of African Americans in the United States. Occurring as Congress debated the Civil Rights Act of 1964, these protests are widely credited for providing pressure for the federal government to enact this legislation, which President Lyndon B. Johnson signed into law on July 2, 1964. The property remains as the extant component of this complex.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Florida State Archives. "Report by Captain A. D. Cosson Concerning Violence During a Civil Rights Demonstration on St. Augustine Beach, June 22, 1964." Accessed August 8, 2021, <https://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/346388>. Florida State Archives. "Report by State Beverage Agent Jerry H. Harris Concerning Violence During a Civil Rights Demonstration on St. Augustine Beach, June 22, 1964." Accessed August 8, 2021, <https://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/346389> <https://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/346389?id=2>. Florida Legislative Investigative Committee. *Racial and Civil Disorders in St. Augustine*, Appendix 19, Civil Rights Library of St. Augustine. Flagler College. Accessed August 2, 2021, <https://civilrights.flagler.edu/digital/collection/p16000coll4/id/1210/rec/268>. Smithsonian National Museum of African American History. Archival Footage, St. Augustine Wade-in. Florida State Archives, Florida Highway Patrol. "St. Augustine Civil Rights Demonstrations, 1964." [St. Augustine Beach is labeled erroneously as Butler Beach.] Accessed August 1, 2021, <https://www.facebook.com/NMAAHC/videos/archival-footage-st-augustine-fl-wade-in/10155415189151990/>. "Governor

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N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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The most dramatic of the Civil Rights events took place on Thursday, June 25, 1964, at the Hotel property. Led by the Ku Klux Klan (Klan), white segregationists planted two Confederate flags, then formed a horseshoe pattern to block integrationists from proceeding from the beach boardwalk into the water. Police with batons and police dogs arrested and jailed about ten members of each group. National media chronicled the entire event which was broadcast nationally on television, radio, and in print.<sup>3</sup>

### **HISTORIC CONTEXT**

#### St. Augustine's Beach Enclaves

For centuries, St. Augustine's boundaries included the barrier island to its oceanside, Anastasia Island. Military fortifications on the mainland, the Castillo de San Marcos (1672-1695) on the north and Fort Matanzas (1740-1742) on the south, provided protection for the barrier island and the mainland. Property on Anastasia Island remained open land with isolated parcels developed through the 1862 Homestead Act. That situation changed after the new St. Augustine Lighthouse was completed atop a sand dune in 1874, providing a beacon for navigation and an inspiration for development. A series of unincorporated enclaves developed oceanside, each with a distinct name and public beach access. Other than St. Augustine's beach formalized as St. Augustine Beach, these small predominantly residential communities were devoid of recreational facilities or related improvements. Their attraction was then, and remains so, direct access to the Atlantic Ocean.

Authors Harriet Beecher Stowe and Constance Fenimore Woolson writing in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* espoused the benefits of sunshine and sea bathing at St. Augustine's barrier island beaches. A few years later, Henry Flagler built two resort hotels and other structures in downtown St. Augustine. Entertainment and recreation for his guests included activities at North Beach and South Beach, defined by each's location relative to the Matanzas River's north inlet. Property ownership changed as demand for waterfront property along the coast increased.<sup>4</sup>

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Invokes Police Powers to Keep Peace in St. Augustine." *Florida Times-Union*, June 16, 1964, 18. St. Augustine Historical Society Research Library. Vertical File. "African Americans, Civil Rights Movement 1 of 2, Newspaper Clippings." Max Royle, City Manager, City of St. Augustine Beach, Interview with Leslee Keys, September 15, 2021.

<sup>3</sup>Garrow, 66. Federal Bureau of Investigation. FBI Report of 1964-06-26. Civil Rights Library of St. Augustine. Flagler College. Accessed August 1, 2021, <https://civilrights.flagler.edu/digital/collection/p16000coll4/id/1416/rec/177>. Smithsonian National Museum of African American History. Archival Footage, St. Augustine Wade-in. Florida State Archives, Florida Highway Patrol. "St. Augustine Civil Rights Demonstrations, 1964." [St. Augustine Beach is labeled erroneously as Butler Beach.] Accessed August 1, 2021, <https://www.facebook.com/NMAAHC/videos/archival-footage-st-augustine-fl-wade-in/10155415189151990/>.

<sup>4</sup>Jean Parker Waterbury, Editor. "Let's Go to the Beach!" *East Florida Gazette*, Vol. 3, No.2, June 1879, St. Augustine Historical Society Research Library, Vertical File: St. Augustine Beach (City of): Miscellaneous—prior to 2000. Constance Fenimore Woolson, "The Ancient City," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, Vol. 50 (December 1874) and 51 (January 1875). Accessed August 31, 2021, [https://www.visitstaugustine.com/history/PDF/the\\_ancient\\_city.pdf](https://www.visitstaugustine.com/history/PDF/the_ancient_city.pdf).

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Oceanside of the lighthouse was a tract of land that included the coquina quarries, home to the limestone derivative used for construction of Fort Marion/Castillo de San Marcos and Fort Matanzas. The federal government staged troops at this site on the barrier island to protect the coast during the Spanish-American War of 1898. Half a century later, this 1,600-acre segment at the north end of South Beach became Anastasia State Park located within the corporate boundaries of the City of St. Augustine. Passive recreation and limited facilities retain the important ecological focus. The Historical Map of St. Augustine, ca. 1940 illustrates this relationship and is included with this nomination (page 49).

### St. Augustine Beach

At South Beach, in 1895, on behalf of the Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund of the State of Florida, George McWhorter transferred property to Moses J. Taylor, Jr. McWhorter was a Florida Supreme Court Justice (1885-1887) and Railroad Commissioner of the State of Florida (1887-1891). Taylor was affiliated with the enterprise that became the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad. He was a settler in central Florida's Lake County, a founder of the town of Eustis, a citrus grower, and real estate developer. In 1901, Flagler's attorney William W. Dewhurst secured a legal decision from the Supreme Court that enabled development of oceanfront land. In 1906, the Model Land Company, Flagler's development entity, acquired the property after pursuing a change in state law.<sup>5</sup>

Races on the beach, on foot, bicycles, motorcycles and then cars were popular, as were boat tours and offshore sailing. Fishing, including harvesting clams, crabs, and sea turtles, was popular as well. The St. Augustine Yacht Club had been chartered in 1873, coinciding with the Lighthouse construction. Henry Flagler, also a yachtsman, was honored as a lifetime member. The beach was the location for St. Augustine celebrations, including Fourth of July festivities. In 1891, attendance at the events was recorded at 500.<sup>6</sup>

The beach area enjoyed establishment of another asset: "St. Augustine Beach: In 1911, Anastasia Island was selected as the site of the summer Chautauqua for the Methodist Church. Flagler's Model Land Company donated 200 acres of oceanfront, and Chautauqua Beach was platted." The Methodist Assembly purchased the 269-acre DeMedici Tract for construction of the Chautauqua complex. In March 1914, the Methodist Assembly began selling lots for individual cottages. Those attracted people from central Florida to enjoy weekends at the beach. Nearby, the Assembly Hotel opened that April for

<sup>5</sup>Florida Supreme Court. "Justice George Gray McWhorter." Accessed August 1, 2021, <https://www.floridasupremecourt.org/Justices/Former-Justices/Justice-George-Gray-McWhorter>. National Register of Historic Places Nomination. National Park Service. "Taylor, Moses J., House." 1997. *Susan Parker*. "Oldest City: Our shoreline was one home to Florida's 'South Beach.'" *St. Augustine Record*, April 18, 2018. Accessed August 27, 2021, <https://www.staugustine.com/news/20180429/oldest-city-our-shoreline-was-once-home-to-floridas-south-beach>.

<sup>6</sup>David Nolan. *The Houses of St. Augustine*. (Sarasota, Florida: Pineapple Press, Inc.), 55. Personal knowledge of the author Leslee Keys who served a variety of roles for the St. Augustine Yacht Club, most recently as Vice Commodore, 2017-2018 and is writing a history of the organization. "A Big Success." *St. Augustine Evening Record*, July 15, 1891. St. Augustine Historical Society Research Library, Vertical File: St. Augustine Beach (City of): Clippings 1890-1909.

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the summer season. Surfing is documented at the beach in 1915. This development was aided by the St. Johns Electric Company trolley line that provided service from King Street in downtown St. Augustine eastward to a stop north of the beach near the site of today's St. Augustine Amphitheater and ultimately to the oceanfront at St. Augustine's beach.<sup>7</sup>

The timing of these developments paralleled improvements to rural roads, trails, and pathways that created A1A. This 390-mile coastal route along the Atlantic coast of the Florida peninsula began at Fernandina Beach at the Georgia border and ended briefly at Miami, before an extension as the Overseas Highway through the Florida Keys to Key West. Creation of the road acknowledged the importance of Florida as a tourist destination, the increasing dominance of cars as a preferred travel mode, and the influence of northern industrialists and entrepreneurs in shaping Florida's Atlantic Coast. The latter included Henry Flagler, James and Charles Deering, Charles Merrick, and Carl Fisher.<sup>8</sup>

A1A facilitated development of St. Augustine's beaches. During Florida's 1920s land boom, the Florida Amusements and Development Company built the first St. Augustine Beach Hotel. After the boom went bust, the building became a New Deal Camp for unemployed women before being demolished.<sup>9</sup>

### Summer Haven and Crescent Beach

Two small residential developments at the Atlantic beaches paralleled interest in oceanfront property throughout Anastasia Island. Neither development included recreational facilities or were considered public beaches. The enclaves were adjacent to each other and were used by the property owners, both whites and blacks. All of the owners and their guests enjoyed the beaches.

<sup>7</sup>Scenic and Historic A1A Corridor Advocacy Group, Corridor Management Council, St. Johns County. *Scenic and Historic A1A Corridor Management Plan*. April 2009. Accessed August 27, 2021. St. Augustine Historical Society Research Library, Vertical File: St. Augustine Beach (City of): Miscellaneous – prior to 2000.

[http://www.co.st.johns.fl.us/LongRangePlanning/SpecialProjects/media/A1ACorridor/A1A\\_Corridor\\_Complete.pdf](http://www.co.st.johns.fl.us/LongRangePlanning/SpecialProjects/media/A1ACorridor/A1A_Corridor_Complete.pdf).

Tingley, Charles. "St. Augustine at the Beach: From the Civil War to 1914." *East Florida Gazette*. Vol. 36, No. 2, Winter 2021. "St. Augustine's Summer Resort," *St. Augustine Evening Record*, April 11, 1913, 2. St. Augustine Historical Society Research Library, Vertical File: St. Augustine Beach (City of): Clippings 1890-1909. "Aero Station St. Augustine Beach Assured." *St. Augustine Evening Record*, November 12, 1919, 4. St. Augustine Historical Society Research Library, Vertical File: St. Augustine Beach (City of): Clippings 1890-1900. Visit St. Augustine. "St. Augustine Surf Culture History and Museum." Accessed September 11, 2021, <https://www.visitstaugustine.com/thing-to-do/st-augustine-surf-culture-and-history-museum>.

<sup>8</sup>Personal knowledge of the author who was one of four professionals who documented the Florida Keys in 1996 for Scenic Highway designation. Henry Leifermann, Florida's Grand Old Highway." *New York Times*, December 14, 1986. Accessed September 11, 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/1986/12/14/travel/florida-s-grand-old-highway.html#:~:text=A1A%20was%20built%2C%20beginning%2075,original%20U.S.%201%20in%20Florida>. Herbert L. Hiller, *Highway A1A: Florida at the Edge*. (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2005), 55-74.

<sup>9</sup>Parker, Susan. "Oldest City: Our shoreline was one home to Florida's 'South Beach.'" *St. Augustine Record*, April 18, 2018. Accessed August 27, 2021, <https://www.staugustine.com/news/20180429/oldest-city-our-shoreline-was-once-home-to-floridas-south-beach>. Charles Tingley, "St. Augustine at the Beach: From the Civil War to 1914." *East Florida Gazette*. Vol. 36, No. 2, Winter 2021.



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On July 4, 1885, the Thomas Mellon family, of the Pittsburgh industrial and banking dynasty, founded an enclave Summer Haven eleven miles further south on the barrier island. The family continued to own and vacation at the properties for more than a century and maintains ownership of part of the land.<sup>10</sup>

In 1936, longtime Summer Haven resident and black oysterman Gene Johnson opened a restaurant at his pre-Civil War shack. This outpost was part of an isolated settlement by African-Americans made possible by the 1862 Homestead Act. For the next four decades, Johnson and his family entertained all manner of residents and visitors. Author Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings wrote about him in her 1942 *Cross Creek Cookery*. Rawlings lived near Gainesville, but used a cottage at Crescent Beach, south of Summer Haven. Crescent Beach became a refuge for authors including Ilya Tolstoy, John Dos Passos, and Key West resident Ernest Hemingway. Johnson died in the 1970s; the shack deteriorated, then collapsed in 1989. Today, the site is recognized by Gene Johnson Road.<sup>11</sup>

### Butler Beach

In 1914, Georgia-born, black entrepreneur Frank B. Butler began businesses in the Lincolnville community of St. Augustine. There, the 29-year-old opened Palace Market and, in 1925, College Park Realty Company, both on commercial Washington Street and patronized by blacks and whites. In 1927, he bought oceanfront land on Anastasia Island, a parcel about five miles equidistant between St. Augustine Beach and Summer Haven. At this site, he developed Butler Beach, an African-American beach that ran along a narrow spit of the barrier island from the Atlantic Ocean the short distance westward to the Matanzas River. Initially, the beach featured a single amenity, off-street parking. A decade later, in 1937, he launched the Sea Breeze Kaseno, followed by Butler's Inn. This timing coincided with the WPA "Pier Project" improvements under development at St. Augustine Beach. After World War II, Butler expanded his beach facilities to include a bathhouse. Also, he developed building lots for African-Americans on surrounding land he had purchased two decades earlier.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup> McCoy, Kimeko. "History of Summer Haven home connects past to present." *St. Augustine Record*, August 2, 2015, Accessed August 29, 2021 <https://www.staugustine.com/article/20150802/NEWS/308029947>

<sup>11</sup> Nolan, 55-57.

<sup>12</sup> Barbara Walch, *Frank B. Butler: Lincolnville Businessman and Founder of St. Augustine, Florida's Historic Black Beach*. (St. Augustine: Rudolph B. Hadley, Sr., 1992), 1-19. St. Augustine Historical Society. "Frank B. Butler." Accessed August 28, 2021, <https://staugh.com/frank-b-butler/>. Florida State Archives. Florida Conservation Voters. "Butler Beach." Accessed September 12, 2021, <https://fcvoters.org/2021/02/10/butler-beach/>. "Beach-goers assembled for a group portrait by the bath house at Butler Beach – Anastasia Island, Florida." ca. 1950, Accessed August 28, 2021, <https://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/34846>. Florida State Archives. "Butler Beach – Anastasia Island, Florida." ca. 1940, Accessed August 28, 2021, <https://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/34851>. Florida State Archives. "Butler Beach – Anastasia Island, Florida." ca. 1950, Accessed August 28, 2021, <https://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/34848>. St. Johns County Visitors and Convention Bureau. "African-American History by the Sea on Florida's Historic Coast: Historic Butler Beach Offers a Glimpse at African-American History and American Race Relations." May 19, 2020, Accessed August 27, 2021, <https://www.floridashistoriccoast.com/blog/african-american-history-sea-floridas-historic-coast/>.

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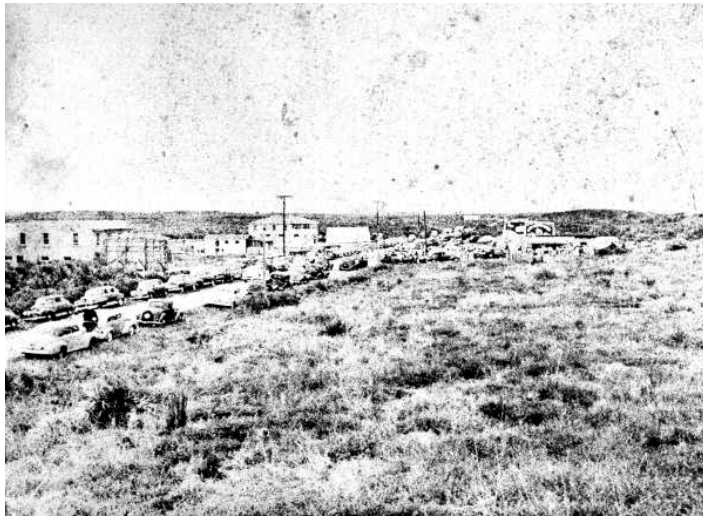
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Butler promoted his endeavors. He participated as the only African-American in the "Florida State Negro Exhibit in Florida Hall" at the 1933-1934 Century of Progress World's Fair in Chicago. Also, he retained young white St. Augustine photographer and co-founder of the local Pen and Brush Club, F. Victor Rahner, to photograph his enterprises, an affiliation that lasted nearly half a century.<sup>13</sup>

Butler Beach was established to provide a beach facility for African Americans, as they were precluded from public beaches along the Atlantic Coast. The privately-owned Butler Beach shared status with other Florida Atlantic coast beaches created for the same reason. They are American Beach about 80 miles to the north in Nassau County and Bethune-Volusia Beach about 75 miles to the south in Volusia County. Each property was developed and operated privately, with no charge for admission. A. L. (Abraham Lincoln) Lewis, founder of the Afro-American Life Insurance Company in Jacksonville bought oceanfront land near Fernandina Beach in Nassau County in 1935 and established American Beach. A decade later, in December 1945, Mary McLeod Bethune purchased oceanfront land south of Daytona Beach, establishing what became known as Bethune-Volusia Beach. Frank Butler, A. L. Lewis and Mary McLeod Bethune were recognized in the Great Floridians 2000 Program.<sup>14</sup>



Butler Beach - Anastasia Island, Florida, ca. 1940  
(Florida State Archives)



Butler Beach - Anastasia Island, Florida, ca. 1950  
(Florida State Archives)

<sup>13</sup>Walch, 11-12. Robert Torchia, *Lost Colony: The Artists of St. Augustine, 1930-1950*. (St. Augustine: Lightner Museum, 2001), 9. Margaret Rahner, 7 Trident Lane, St. Augustine, Florida. Interview with Leslee Keys, July 26, 2021.

<sup>14</sup>Michael Card, "A. L. Lewis was a Giant in Jacksonville." *Florida Times-Union*, February 16, 2020, Accessed September 7, 2021, <https://www.jacksonville.com/story/opinion/columns/2020/02/16/al-lewis-was-giant-in-jacksonville/112234934/>. American Beach Museum, "Preserving the Spirit of American Beach." Accessed September 7, 2021, <https://americanbeachmuseum.org/>. Matt Grimison, "Historically Black Beach Fades into Oblivion after Integration," *Daytona Beach News-Journal*, October 13, 2003. Accessed September 7, 2021, <https://www.sun-sentinel.com/news/fl-xpm-2003-10-13-0310120463-story.html>. Florida Department of State. Great Floridians 2000 Program. Accessed September 12, 2021, <https://dos.myflorida.com/historical/preservation/great-floridians-program/great-floridians-2000/>.



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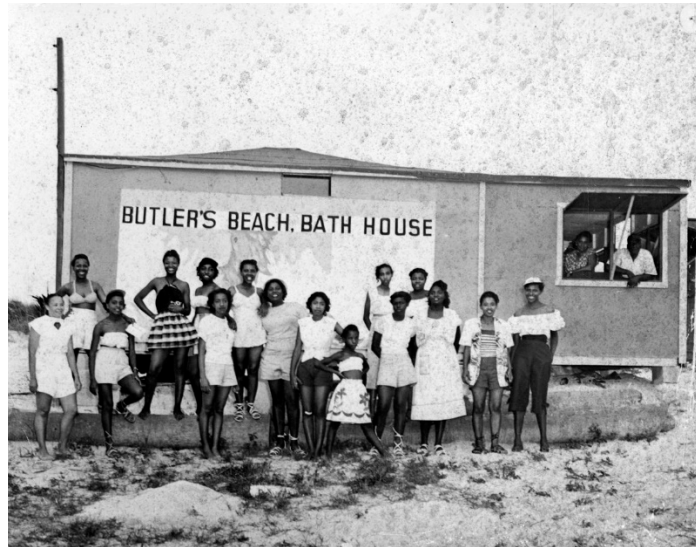
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Beach-goers assembled for a group portrait by the bath house at  
Butler Beach – Anastasia Island, Florida

Segregated beaches were not unique to St. Augustine or Florida. They were part of the Jim Crow history of the post-Civil War South. Moreover, they were common throughout the North, Midwest, and across the United States. Beaches on rivers, lakes, and the oceans were segregated. This was standard for beaches along the Atlantic Ocean to those on the Pacific Ocean, and for many of the recreational waterways in between. Waterfront leisure was created for and maintained by white populations. This pattern of segregating leisure facilities coincided with the rise of the Ku Klux Klan and the organization's nationwide appeal by the 1920s. Challenges to this pattern of segregated leisure facilities did not take place until the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century and the origins of the Civil Rights movement.<sup>15</sup>

Efforts to Rescue St. Augustine's Tourism Economy

By 1933, during the Great Depression and with leadership from the Carnegie Institution of Washington, D.C., an ambitious public-private partnership was conceived to avoid bankruptcy for the tourist destination of St. Augustine, Florida. This included creation of non-profit house museums, public ownership of historic sites, and interpretation of Forts Marion and Matanzas as attractions. Marineland, a major waterfront attraction at the south inlet developed by Cornelius Vanderbilt Whitney, Ilya Tolstoy, and Douglas Burden, opened with great fanfare in late 1938. Florida participated in the 1939 New York

<sup>15</sup>Florida Humanities Council. "Water as a Divider: When Beaches were Not for All." April 7, 2021. Accessed August 28, 2021. <https://floridahumanities.org/water-as-a-divider-when-beaches-were-not-for-all/>. Andrew W. Kahrl, "America's Segregated Shores: Beaches' Long History as a Racial Battleground." *The Guardian*, June 12, 2018, Accessed September 1, 2021, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jun/12/americas-segregated-shores-beaches-long-history-as-a-racial-battleground>.

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World's Fair to generate national attention, building on the state's participation in the 1933-1934 Chicago World's Fair. The comprehensive effort included oceanside recreation facilities. Though functionally remaining associated with St. Augustine, legally the City of St. Augustine donated the land south of present-day Anastasia State Park to St. Johns County.<sup>16</sup>

In 1935, the St. Johns County government, in partnership with the federal government, proposed a comprehensive oceanfront recreation effort. St. Augustine architect Francis (F. A.) Hollingsworth championed adding mirror image twin hotels to a pier construction project. These "recreational buildings" were proposed to be built adjacent to the boardwalk and flanking a new fishing pier. The St. Johns County Government approved the additional construction. On July 1, 1936, the federal Works Progress Administration (WPA) approved the St. Augustine "Pier Project" at the beach. The development consisted of an 1,800-foot-long fishing pier, a boardwalk, a parking area, and two recreational buildings. The Flagler Model Land Company offered land for the Pier Project, and the acquisition was accepted. On February 8, 1938, the ocean pier construction was announced, thanks to leadership from Florida Senators Claude Pepper and Charles O. Andrews, with Congressman Joe Hendricks securing funding authorization through President Franklin Delano Roosevelt.<sup>17</sup>

The St. Augustine Beach Hotel or south building, was constructed in 1939-1940 as the second half of the Auxiliary Ocean Fishing Pier Project. Susan Parker's 2005 *El Escribano* article describes the facilities.

"The Beach Hotel offered rooms, apartments, commercial space for a sweetshop, bath house, cocktail lounge, ball room, and dining rooms. The two buildings operated as a single business, whose advertisements seldom specified which building housed a particular activity. Each structure offered nine apartments of three rooms or less. The top floor of each tower held a penthouse apartment. The north building, referred to as a 'wing,' was conceived to appeal to adults. The south building' was prepared 'with an eye to pleasing sonny boy and mama's daughter,' offering a recreation room with a soda fountain. The adjacent dance area opened to the beach. In addition, a grocery store was located in the south building. Each building boasted sundecks with colorful beach umbrellas."<sup>18</sup>

The buildings opened on September 2, 1940, Labor Day, as part of the St. Augustine's 375<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The cost was \$142,617 with the federal government's share \$96,513 and the County

<sup>16</sup>Leslee F. Keys, *Hotel Ponce de Leon: The Rise, Fall, and Rebirth of Flagler's Gilded Age Palace*. (Gainesville: University Press of Florida), 2015, 108-15. Royle Interview, September 15, 2021.

<sup>17</sup>"Money Released for Buildings at Ocean Pier: County Gets WPA Fund for Auxiliary Project." *St. Augustine Record*, April 4, 1939. St. Augustine Historical Society Research Library. Vertical File. "St. Augustine Beach; Clipping 1930-1949."

"District Manager of WPA Notifies County Commission That Federal Work is Done." *St. Augustine Record*, July 14, 1940. St. Augustine Historical Society Research Library. Vertical File. "St. Augustine Beach; Clipping 1930-1949."

<sup>18</sup>Susan Richbourg Parker. "St. Augustine Beach Hotel: A New Deal Project," *El Escribano*. Vol. 2005, St. Augustine: St. Augustine Historical Society, 2005, 92.

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providing \$45,504, mostly for materials. Just over a year later, the United States entered World War II. A blackout of the city and beaches was ordered, an action that remained in place until the war's end.<sup>19</sup>



"Dance at the Beach Hotel – Saint Augustine, Florida."  
August 1, 1949. (Florida State Archives)



"Four young people having fun near the ocean pier: St. Augustine, Florida." September 1949. (Florida State Archives)

After World War II, the hotels and beaches reopened. For the south hotel, the dance hall served as a popular indoor location as did the bowling lanes/alley. Water sports, including fishing, were popular activities in the ocean adjacent to the hotel.<sup>20</sup>

In the 1950s, road construction and the interstate highway system decreased the importance of oceanfront hotels. Motor hotels, or motels, and motor courts became popular. They were convenient with car parking adjacent to the guest rooms. Many featured in-ground swimming pools and restaurants. Haley's Court and the Magic Beach Motel were constructed near the Grand Vilano Casino, both at North Beach. Correspondingly, in South Beach, Chester's Matanzas Court and Restaurant was built at Summer Haven after the opening of Marineland.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>19</sup> "District Manager of WPA Notifies County Commission That Federal Work is Done." *St. Augustine Record*, July 14, 1940. St. Augustine Historical Society Research Library. Vertical File. St. Augustine Beach; Clipping 1930-1949."

Board of County Commissioners Meeting Minutes. "Building of Old St. Augustine Beach Pier." Prepared by S. B. Lockhart. Condensed and Compiled from the Minutes, February 4, 1935-August 9, 1938. St. Augustine Historical Society Research Library. Vertical File. "St. Augustine Beach, City of St. Augustine Beach Pier Includes Pavilion."

<sup>20</sup>Florida State Archives. Florida Department of Commerce. "Dance at the Beach Hotel, St. Augustine, Florida." August 1, 1949, Accessed August 8, 2021, <https://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/69292>. St. Augustine Historical Society Research Library. "Bowling Lanes at St. Augustine Beach Hotel." St. Augustine Record photo, PHO10975-13. [bowlingPHO10975-13.tif](https://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/69292).

<sup>21</sup>The Historical Marker Database. "Vilano Beach Casino Historical Marker." Accessed September 13, 2021, <https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=125688>. Digital Commonwealth, Massachusetts Collections Online. "Chester's Matanzas Court and Restaurant." Accessed September 13, 2021, <https://www.digitalcommonwealth.org/search/commonwealth:41687n291>.

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In downtown St. Augustine, motels were constructed along the Bayfront, facing the Intra-coastal Waterway on the Matanzas River. This was part of the effort to return tourism to the economically-devastated historic city in time for the state's Ponce de Leon 450<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 1963 and the St. Augustine 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 1965.<sup>22</sup>



View of St. Augustine Beach, circa 1950s. Note the Bowling Lanes at St. Augustine Beach Hotel on right (St. Augustine Historical Society Research Library)



Leonards Dance Studio  
(St. Augustine Historical Society Research Library)

In 1958, ballet husband-and-wife duo Larry and Pamela Leonard moved to St. Augustine and opened The Leonards Ballet Theater in the two-story portion of the hotel. The studio was on the first floor, and they lived in a second-floor apartment. This followed the couple's successful career from California throughout the world, and to Miami where they owned a dance studio as well. Their St. Augustine Beach ballet studio continued in part of the hotel until 1983. In 2000, one of the former students, Lori Ladwig became a teacher at The Dance Company in the former hotel. In 2021, Pamela Merrie Leonard, age 97, resides in Palm Coast and has thus far danced for ten decades.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>22</sup>Keys, 113-15.

<sup>23</sup>Chuck Huber, "The Beach Hotel- Background." *The Traveler*. November 2-8, 1977. St. Augustine Historical Society Research Library. Vertical File. "St. Augustine Beach; Clipping 1970-1989." Lorraine Thompson, "Back where it all began." *St. Augustine Record*, October 30, 2011. Accessed August 8, 2021, <https://www.staugustine.com/article/20111030/LIFESTYLE/310309977>. Tracy Jones, "At 90, Pamela Leonard is Still Dancing." *St. Augustine Record*, September 27, 2014. Accessed August 9, 2021, <https://www.staugustine.com/article/20140927/LIFESTYLE/309279934>.

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### Incorporation of City of St. Augustine Beach

In 1959, property owners in the area of St. Augustine beach petitioned St. Johns County government for authorization to incorporate. The new City of St. Augustine Beach represented a population of 396 and a rectangular geographic area of 2.2 square miles. The focus of the new government, a five-member city commission, was to generate revenue primarily from sales tax on cigarettes and alcohol. Those revenues defrayed costs for street maintenance and lighting, and garbage collection. A marshal was appointed to cover law enforcement. In 1964, The new municipality entered into a 30-year lease-purchase agreement with St. Johns County Government for \$40,000 “for public or community interest or welfare.” Tenant rents from the hotel building provided revenues for the acquisition. The newly-incorporated City operated out of a small frame ancillary service building west of the hotel structure (now demolished).<sup>24</sup>

Weather events that took place in the early years of government use resulted in additional changes. On September 11, 1960, Hurricane Donna passed by St. Augustine and the beaches as a Category 2 storm with 103 mph winds. Almost exactly four years later, at midnight on September 10, 1964, Hurricane Dora struck St. Augustine as a Category 3 storm with 115 mph winds. In 1962, a nor’easter took out most of the beach. Storm surge overtopped the seawall and damaged both hotel buildings.<sup>25</sup>

The County government retained ownership of north hotel. The building was vacant, and funds were not provided for maintenance. Lightning damaged the north building, and heavy rains detached the coquina block veneer from the underlayment. The blocks were stolen from the site. In 1981, despite community protests for reuse of that structure, including those from St. Augustine Beach mayor and renowned local architect Craig Thorn, the County razed the north hotel.<sup>26</sup>

In 1985, the financially stable and growing City of St. Augustine Beach needed additional space. The former hotel with its commercial uses on the first floor and residential occupancy on the second floor ceased. The building underwent a major renovation to become the new City Hall with the hotel’s first

<sup>24</sup>Max Royle, City Manager, City of St. Augustine Beach, St. Augustine Beach, Florida. Interviews with Leslee Keys, August 27 and September 15, 2021.

<sup>25</sup>“Beach Pier has Long and Stormy History,” *St. Augustine Record*, July 9, 1980. St. Augustine Historical Society Research Library, Vertical File: St. Augustine Beach (City of): Driving/Parking (on beach).

<sup>26</sup>“What’s Going to Happen to the Old Hotel at Beach?” *St. Augustine Record*, December 31, 1977-January 1, 1978. St. Augustine Historical Society Research Library, Vertical File: St. Augustine Beach (City of): Govt. City Hall, (formerly St. Aug. Beach Hotel). “Commissioners Debating Fate of Old Beach Building,” *St. Augustine Record*, July 23, 1981. St. Augustine Historical Society Research Library, Vertical File. “St. Augustine Beach; Clipping 1980-Present.” Feagin, Jackie. “What’s Going to Happen to the Old Hotel at Beach?” *St. Augustine Record*, Dec 31, 1977-Jan 1, 1978, 11-B. St. Augustine Historical Society Research Library, Vertical File. “St. Augustine Beach; Clipping 1970-1989.” Feagin, Jackie. “Beach Hotel Coming Down.” *St. Augustine Record*, July 24, 1981. St. Augustine Historical Society Research Library, Vertical File. “St. Augustine Beach; Clipping 1970-1989.”



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floor as municipal offices and meeting space. The second floor was relegated to storage. The City government operated in the building for the next fifteen years.<sup>27</sup>

The St. Augustine beach communities experienced dramatic growth in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century as did most of the rest of the state. As the century concluded in 1999, Hurricane Floyd ravaged Northeast Florida, bringing 3' of storm surge and 110 mph winds to St. Augustine Beach. The municipality relocated City Hall and related services to an upland parcel on the primary arterial thoroughfare at 2200 A1A Boulevard and E. 16<sup>th</sup> Street. In 2001, the City of St. Augustine Beach vacated the building, and the St. Johns Cultural Council stepped forward in a long-term partnership with the municipality to enable the property to become a cultural arts center.<sup>28</sup>

**HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE**Criterion A: Entertainment/Recreation and Commerce

The St. Augustine Beach Hotel is the extant building remaining from a "Pier Project" by the federal Works Progress Administration (WPA) that was completed with an opening on Labor Day 1940. Built with the intention of jumpstarting the struggling local economy during the Great Depression, the pier complex became one of the most popular beach access points for local residents and tourists. The St. Augustine Beach Hotel was a popular recreational area in its own right, with a dance hall and bowling alley that attracted a significant number of residents and visitors.

For St. Augustine Beach, which relied on beach tourism, the business generated by the pier complex played a key role in the economic development of the community. The hotels provided visually appealing commercial spaces for private local businesses and hotel spaces for tourists. The newly incorporated City of St. Augustine Beach used revenues from the building to help establish and maintain municipal infrastructure.

**HISTORIC CONTEXT**The SCLC and the St. Augustine Civil Rights Movement

In the early 1960s, two parallel tracks of U.S. history collided in St. Augustine, Florida. The United States was strengthening its political ties and business interests with Latin America. This was a

<sup>27</sup>Royle Interview, September 15, 2021.

<sup>28</sup>Personal knowledge of the author who served on the initial St. Johns Cultural Council Board of Directors as the Florida Division of Historical Resources Northeast Florida Regional Preservation Office Administrator.

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Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., comforts young  
protestor in St. Augustine  
(source: Civil Rights Movement Archive)

response, in part, to the recent rise of Fidel Castro in Cuba and the nation's anti-community sentiment. In 1962-1963, President John F. Kennedy appointed a federal commission of thirteen white men to oversee the upcoming 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the nation's oldest city of St. Augustine, Florida in 1965. The group included locally and nationally-elected officials, religious leaders, educators, and executives of major corporations. The last of that group had business interests in Latin America.<sup>29</sup>

Concurrently, the U.S. Civil Rights Movement was strengthening in its campaign to legally end segregation. In 1961, Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), joined local citizens in Albany, Georgia in the first of three major stands in the South. The second stand took place in April

of 1963 in Birmingham, Alabama. In early 1964, President Kennedy met with Rev. King, who enlisted the President's support for federal civil rights legislation.<sup>30</sup>

In March, 1963, Vice President Lyndon Johnson came to St. Augustine on behalf of President Kennedy to kick-off the upcoming Quadricentennial celebration. That was the year that the State of Florida commemorated the 450<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Spanish explorer Ponce de Leon landing off the coast of what he named for the feast of flowers, "la Florida." St. Augustine and its environs, including the beaches, were the centers of media coverage.<sup>31</sup>

Rev. King chose St. Augustine, with the national and international attention, as the third stand for passage of the Civil Rights Act. He was impressed by the small, but stalwart African-American community centered in the Lincolnville neighborhood adjacent to downtown. He sent Andrew Young to the community as his emissary to meet with black community leaders. Though many citizens participated, one of the most vocal and respected was dentist and military veteran Dr. Robert Hayling.

<sup>29</sup>Keys, 118-19.

<sup>30</sup>Andrew Young, *A Way Out of No Way: The Spiritual Memoirs of Andrew Young*. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers), 1994. Andrew Young, *Conversations with Leslee Keys*, Flagler College, St. Augustine, Florida, 2010, 2014.

<sup>31</sup>Keys, 119-22.

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Young and Hayling united efforts. Peaceful demonstrations began in the July of 1963 with aggressive responses by white community leaders.<sup>32</sup>

Dan Warren, State Attorney for the Florida 7<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit beginning in 1963, provided first-person documentation of the St. Augustine situation. As typical of Southern cities, St. Augustine was segregated. Community leaders were white men. Most belonged to the white supremacist John Birch Society and the Ku Klux Klan (Klan) that terrorized the Lincolnville community. Joseph Shelley's election as mayor exacerbated the situation. His belief in home rule and disdain for outside government interference resulted in Florida Highway Patrol (FHP) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) coming to St. Augustine to maintain order and address violence. National Klan leader Connie Lynch came from California to St. Augustine, heightening the unrest.<sup>33</sup>

Dr. King arrived in St. Augustine, and on June 11, 1964, was arrested. Though he campaigned for civil rights in other Florida locations, the St. Augustine Sheriff's office has the distinction of being the only entity in the state to arrest him. The incarceration was short, but the action inspired increased activities in the community. Also, whites blistered King's rented beach cottage with 21 bullet holes. The action did not dissuade his efforts.<sup>34</sup>

Peaceful demonstrations took place each evening from Lincolnville along King Street to the Plaza downtown. At the east end of the Plaza was the city market which had been renamed after the Civil War

<sup>32</sup> "Restoration Program is Underway: Spain, Latin Americans Are Participating," *Saint Augustine and St. Johns County Explorer*, Fall-Winter 1965.

<sup>33</sup> Dan R. Warren, *If It Takes All Summer: Martin Luther King, the KKK, and States' Rights in St. Augustine, 1964*. (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2008), 10. Ibid., 16-32. David J. Garrow, editor. *St. Augustine, Florida, 1963-1964: Mass Protest and Racial Violence*. (Brooklyn: Carlson Publishing Inc.), 1989, xiv. Federal Bureau of Investigation. FBI Report of 1964-06-22. Civil Rights Library of St. Augustine. Flagler College. Accessed August 1, 2021, <https://civilrights.flagler.edu/digital/collection/p16000coll4/id/1419/rec/46>. Federal Bureau of Investigation. FBI Report of 1964-06-25. Civil Rights Library of St. Augustine. Flagler College. Accessed August 1, 2021, <https://civilrights.flagler.edu/digital/collection/p16000coll4/id/1415/rec/176>. Federal Bureau of Investigation. FBI Report of 1964-06-26. Civil Rights Library of St. Augustine. Flagler College. Accessed August 1, 2021, <https://civilrights.flagler.edu/digital/collection/p16000coll4/id/1416/rec/177>. Federal Bureau of Investigation. FBI Report of 1964-06-28. Civil Rights Library of St. Augustine. Flagler College. Accessed August 1, 2021, <https://civilrights.flagler.edu/digital/collection/p16000coll4/id/1417/rec/178>. Federal Bureau of Investigation. FBI Report of 1964-06-30. Civil Rights Library of St. Augustine. Flagler College. Accessed August 1, 2021, <https://civilrights.flagler.edu/digital/collection/p16000coll4/id/1418/rec/179>. Federal Bureau of Investigation. FBI Report of 1964-07-01. Civil Rights Library of St. Augustine. Flagler College. Accessed August 1, 2021, <https://civilrights.flagler.edu/digital/collection/p16000coll4/id/1419/rec/180>

<sup>34</sup> Recently, the Sheriff's Office donated MLKing's arrest card to the Lincolnville Museum and Cultural Center. Personal knowledge of the author. "Whites, Negroes Cross Paths; St. Johns Police Avert Fight." Florida Times-Union, June 25, 1964. St. Augustine Historical Society Research Library. Vertical File. "African Americans, Civil Rights Movement 1 of 2, Newspaper Clippings.



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as the “slave market” by tour promoters, recognizing an antebellum role the building played. St. Augustine’s Quadricentennial celebration and its role in US civil rights history made national news.<sup>35</sup>



James Brock pouring acid into the Monson Motor Lodge pool  
(source: Flagler College)

As the Civil Rights Act of 1964 moved through Congress, a series of wade-ins and swim-ins gained attention in St. Augustine (Figures 1-3). On June 18, the first swim-in took place at the Monson Motor Lodge on the Bayfront midway between the fort and the plaza. A week earlier, Rev. King targeted this motel, where he was arrested. While in jail, he arranged for Rabbi Israel Dresner to recruit rabbis to join the St. Augustine protests. In response, 17 rabbis showed up to protest the Monson’s whites only policy. The June 18 swim-in occurred concurrently with the protests of the rabbis and the wade-ins occurring at St. Augustine Beach. In one of the most notorious events of the civil rights movement, Monson Motor Lodge proprietor James Brock poured muriatic acid into the pool in an effort to get the protestors out. The image of Brock pouring the acid into the pool caused widespread outrage and brought international condemnation to the city. The following day, June 19, 1964, the Senate finally passed the Civil Rights Act.

On June 17, on St. Augustine Beach, south of the pier near the south St. Augustine Beach Hotel, the wade-ins began. The protestors approached the beach from the end of 16<sup>th</sup> Street via a wood ramp. Each day, the activities grew in number of participants and intensity. As examples, on June 22, 19 African Americans were recorded at the beach, and 6 Klansmen were arrested. On June 24, records indicate that 30 whites attempted to block the beach and the entry of 30-70 African Americans into the water. About 100 Florida state troopers were present to protect the latter.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>35</sup>Garrow, 98.

<sup>36</sup>Garrow, 98-99. Florida State Archives. “Report by Captain A. D. Cosson Concerning Violence During a Civil Rights Demonstration on St. Augustine Beach, June 22, 1964.” Accessed August 8, 2021, <https://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/346388>. Florida State Archives. “Report by State Beverage Agent Jerry H. Harris Concerning Violence During a Civil Rights Demonstration on St. Augustine Beach, June 22, 1964.” Accessed August 8, 2021, <https://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/346389> <https://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/346389?id=2>. Florida State Archives. “Reports Concerning Racial Violence on St. Augustine Beach and the Arrest of Peter Bancroft, June 1964.” Accessed August 8, 2021, <https://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/346386>.

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Between June 15 and 27, more than 300 whites were arrested for opposing peaceful demonstrations in St. Augustine's downtown and at St. Augustine beach. FHP participated with 275 officers maintaining the peace. The FBI efforts focused on activities of the Klan and the John Birch Society.<sup>37</sup>



St. Augustine Beach wade-ins, June 24 and 25, 1964, Civil Rights Library of St. Augustine, Flagler College

Law enforcement reports and judicial witnesses verify that Thursday, June 25, 1964, proved to be the most violent day of the St. Augustine Campaign. The June 25<sup>th</sup> wade-in pushed into the stretch of beach between the hotel and the pier. Derogatory chants by whites in town against blacks at the ocean preempted another afternoon wade-in at the St. Augustine Beach Hotel and the boardwalk. After planting two Confederate flags, white segregationists formed a horseshoe pattern to block about 75 integrationists' entry into the water. Led by the Klan, the whites shouted racial slurs and obscenities at the African Americans. Quickly, FHP responded, using batons and police dogs. About 10 members of each group were arrested and taken to jail in town. Media coverage includes video footage of segments of the action, verifying the Hotel in the background.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>37</sup>Bradley McCallum Studio. "Wade in the Water." Exhibition, 2012, New York, Accessed August 2, 2021, <https://bradleymccallum.com/project/oil-on-linen-toner-on-silk-1>. New York Times Archives. "Segregations Break Up Wade-ins at St. Augustine." *New York Times*, Associated Press, June 23, 1964. Accessed August 5, 2021, <https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1964/06/23/98857286.html?pageNumber=1>.

<sup>38</sup>Garrow, 66. Federal Bureau of Investigation. FBI Report of 1964-06-26. Civil Rights Library of St. Augustine. Flagler College. Accessed August 1, 2021, <https://civilrights.flagler.edu/digital/collection/p16000coll4/id/1416/rec/177>. Smithsonian National Museum of African American History. Archival Footage, St. Augustine Wade-in. Florida State Archives, Florida Highway Patrol. "St. Augustine Civil Rights Demonstrations, 1964." [St. Augustine Beach is labeled erroneously as Butler Beach.] Accessed August 1, 2021, <https://www.facebook.com/NMAAHC/videos/archival-footage-st-augustine-fl-wade-in/10155415189151990/>.

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Florida State Archives. Florida Highway Patrol. "St. Augustine Civil Rights Demonstrations, 1964."  
Also available through the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History. Archival Footage

That evening, 200 African Americans conducting a peaceful march around the Plaza were attacked by about 500 whites led by Klansmen. The latter focused on demonstrators and the police officers that had protected the integrationists at the wade-in earlier that day. The police subdued the attackers. The line of marchers was interrupted again in front of the Catholic Church (Cathedral Basilica) before all sides withdrew for the evening.<sup>39</sup>

The final marches and wade-ins took place on July 1 and were covered by national media. President Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 on July 2. In the final marches, the FHP officers formed protective line around the protestors, standing in the ocean water fully uniformed. According to Andrew Young, in his memoirs, most of the St. Augustine community passively adjusted to integration almost immediately after the law passed. He returned to the St. Augustine Beach Hotel property and noted the lack of interest in precluding all people from using the recreational facilities. As recorded by FHP, the exception was on July 4 when 150 Klan members paraded through downtown, about half of whom were robbed. Although Young may have witnessed a calming of tensions, desegregation within St. Johns County was not immediate.

<sup>39</sup>Florida Legislative Investigation Committee. *Racial and Civil Disorders in St. Augustine*. Report of the Legislative Investigation Committee. February 1965, 20-21, 42-44. Civil Rights Library of St. Augustine. Flagler College. Accessed August 1, 2021, <https://civilrights.flagler.edu/digital/collection/p16000coll4/id/1190/rec/247>  
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Other civil rights leaders visited St. Augustine and participated in the peaceful demonstrations and/or wade-ins. These listings include their contemporary professional titles Rev. Hosea Williams (1926-2000), Ambassador Andrew Young (1932-), and Congressman John Lewis (1940-2020). The latter two returned to Florida. Each reflected on the civil rights era of a half-century earlier and lessons for contemporary life. Young made several visits between 2010 and 2014 as a guest of the City of St. Augustine and Flagler College. He served as the college's Commencement speaker in 2014 as well. Lewis joined the same visit to St. Augustine in 2010, then spoke at the University of South Florida-St. Petersburg in 2016. At the latter event, regarding the St. Augustine wade-ins, Lewis noted that he did not know how to swim and was not sure which he feared more, drowning or being beaten by Klan members.<sup>40</sup>



Lucille Plummer holding beach ball  
intended to burn her house down  
(Source: *Miami Herald*)

Despite the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, segregationists within the community continued to exclude blacks from white establishments. White business owners kept their businesses segregated, fearing retaliation from the Klan and loss of business from white customers. This prompted a lawsuit and new round of protests from the local SCLC, led by local chair Lucille Plummer. Violent scare tactics in response continued well into 1965. A group of white men set Plummer's house afire, placing a kerosene-filled beach ball beneath a gas tank. Undeterred, local activists pressed forward. In July 1965, a group of 16 African Americans and 3 white college students staged a wade-in at St. Augustine Beach. They were accosted by a group described as "Klan-like terrorists," some of whom caused trouble the year before, while in the presence of local sheriff officers. There were two arrests, including one of the protestors, whom sheriff deputies charged with using profanity in public. The mixed group, led by Plummer and James Jackson, responded by returning the following day. This second group, consisting of 10 African Americans and 4 white people, were confronted by a crowd of about 300 people who gathered there. A group of white youths began throwing sand at the protestors

and assaulting them. For safety reasons, the protestors decided to withdraw early. Although deputies arrested one of the rioters, a man from Jacksonville, Plummer later stated she witnessed sheriff deputies stand by as a white man beat up a black child attempting to swim in the beach. Shortly afterward, a group of 21 African American youths attempted to sit downstairs at the Matanzas Theater instead of in the balcony. A group of white youths confronted them in the parking lot, and the groups began throwing

<sup>40</sup>Young, Andrew. Conversations with Leslee Keys, Flagler College, St. Augustine, Florida, 2010, 2014.



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bottles and rocks at each other. Despite violence from both sides, the only arrests made were of African Americans.<sup>41</sup>

Although the tensions that flared up in 1965 were much smaller and invited less attention than the year prior, it drew enough media coverage for Florida Governor Haydon Burns to threaten the use of the National Guard. The governor promised law protection only if the civil rights protestors ceased with their demonstrations. In response, Plummer immediately planned another wade-in. After a discussion with the governor, on July 25, Plummer led an integrated group of 19 African Americans and whites back to St. Augustine Beach escorted by sheriff deputies. This time, the wade-in took place without incident.<sup>42</sup> The precise location on the beach of these wade-ins is unclear. It is also unclear if there were any further demonstrations that occurred on the beach. Gradually, the public beaches, much like other places of public accommodation in St. Johns County, were integrated without further incident.

**HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE**Criterion A: Social History, Civil Rights

The wade-ins that occurred at St. Augustine Beach were significant elements of the larger St. Augustine Movement. In 1964, the national leadership of the SCLC targeted the city as it celebrated the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its founding, hoping to draw attention to the plight of African Americans. Working closely with the media, the SCLC carefully orchestrated and staged protests designed to generate attention to their cause at a time when the federal government was debating and filibustering the much-delayed Civil Rights Act of 1964. Of the protests planned by the SCLC and local civil rights activist groups, the swim-ins of the Monson Motor Lodge pool and wade-ins at St. Augustine Beach generated the most attention. Media outlets captured the dramatic images of the motor lodge owner James Brock pouring acid into the pool and of the violent confrontations between white supremacists and civil rights protestors on St. Augustine Beach and broadcasted them across the world.

Civil rights activists conducted wade-ins of St. Augustine Beach continuously from June 17<sup>th</sup> until July 1, 1964, the day before President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 into law. The wade-in that occurred at the beach on June 25 is perhaps the best known, with segregationists attacking protestors along the beach. Images of the Florida Highway Patrol breaking up the riot and standing fully uniformed in the ocean to protect the protestors were among the most circulated of the entire St. Augustine Movement.

<sup>41</sup> *Kansas City Star*, "Home of Negro Burns," July 7, 1965; *Miami Herald*, "State Probes Fire at Home of Augustine Rights Boss," July 8, 1965; *Orlando Sentinel*, "Deputies Arrest Two in 'Wade-In' at Beach," July 18, 1965; *Miami Herald*, "Racial Clash Erupts at Augustine Theater," July 23, 1965.

<sup>42</sup> *Palm Beach Post*, "Integrated Group Swims at Beach in St. Augustine," July 25, 1965.

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Although the protests accomplished relatively little immediately for the local movement, the images of the incidents in St. Augustine have been widely credited for expediting the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

The St. Augustine Beach beachfront and hotel building are the best surviving resources associated with the wade-in and swim-in activities of the St. Augustine Movement. These protests generated some of the most dramatic images of the entire national civil rights movement. The Monson Motor Lodge, where the press took the infamous photograph of the motel owner pouring what appeared to be acid in a pool full of protestors, has since been demolished along with its associated pool. Although the beachfront and boardwalk where the St. Augustine Beach wade-ins took place has been altered, the key landmarks that visually delineated the stretch of beach, the end of 16<sup>th</sup> Street, the seawall, the St. Augustine Beach Hotel, and the pier, are still extant. Although the current pier is a complete replacement of the older structure, it was built over the same location.

**ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXT**

As part of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) St. Augustine Auxiliary Pier Project, prominent local architect Francis A. Hollingsworth designed mirror image twin hotels featuring coquina stone veneer. The Spanish architecture so evident in St. Augustine's colonial development provided the theme for the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century construction. Coquina is the native building material used by the Spanish for colonial construction, most notably on the Castillo de San Marcos (1672-1695). The Anastasia Island quarry was reopened for construction of WPA buildings, specifically the twin beach hotels, and in downtown St. Augustine, the Custom House and Post Office/Government House (1937) and the St. Augustine Civic Center/Visitor Information Center (1934). At the inlet in south St. Johns County, the administration building at Fort Matanzas (1937) was constructed of coquina as well.<sup>43</sup>

In 1915, architect and Virginia native Francis A. Hollingsworth (1885-1974), moved to St. Augustine. He worked for the Florida East Coast Railway (FEC). He designed the FEC headquarters, a trio of Commercial Style structures built in 1922, 1923 and 1926, respectively. In 1921, he prepared plans to rebuild the fire damaged St. Francis Barracks, headquarters for the Florida National Guard. He designed the Sons of Israel synagogue (1923) on Cordova Street and the Exchange/Atlantic Bank Building (1927) on Cathedral Street, the city's only skyscraper. In 1928, Hollingsworth redesigned the St. Augustine Water Works (1898) on North San Marco Avenue for a Community Center.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>43</sup>Florida Division of Historical Resources. "The Conservation and Preservation of Coquina: A Symposium on Historic Building Material in the Coastal Southeast." St. Augustine, Florida, January 24-26, 2000.

<sup>44</sup>Leslee F. Keys, "13 Hollingsworth House." Flagler College Phone App Tour. Florida Stories. Unpublished research.

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Other Hollingsworth projects include the addition to the St. Augustine Record newspaper building, and four local schools: Ketterlinus High School (demolished), R. B. Hunt Elementary, Murray High School, and St. Augustine High School (Orange Street Administration Building). West of St. Augustine, in Hastings, Florida, The Potato Growers Building (1926) and the City Hall (1935, demolished).

Hollingsworth designed a number of residences in St. Augustine neighborhoods, including the Abbott Tract, Nelmar Terrace, and Fullerwood Park. In 1951, Hollingsworth designed his personal residence, a Colonial Revival cottage in St. Augustine. He lived there with his wife until his death in 1974. She sold the property to Flagler College in 1979 for a guest residence.<sup>45</sup>

The St. Augustine Beach Hotel is the single extant structure at St. Augustine Beach that is evidence of his work and the single extant historic resource in the City of St. Augustine Beach.

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<sup>45</sup>Keys, "13 Hollingsworth House." Unpublished research. National Register of Historic Places Nomination, National Park Service, "St. Augustine Waterworks," 2014.

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N/A

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National Park ServiceSt. Augustine Beach Hotel and  
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the University of Georgia Libraries through a National Leadership Group for Libraries grant award through the Institute for Museum and Library Services.

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**Continuation Sheet**Section number 10 Page 39**Verbal Boundary Description**

The boundary of the St. Augustine Beach Hotel and Beachfront encompasses portions of tax parcel numbers 162990-0000 and 162970-0000, St. Johns County, Florida (October 2021) and extends to portions of the public beach from the beachfront south boundary line of parcel number 162970-0000 eastward to the median high water mark and northward to the St. Johns County Ocean and Fishing Pier. Please see boundary map for more details.

**Boundary Justification**

The property boundary includes the property historically associated with the St. Augustine Beach Hotel as well as the sections of the beachfront associated with the 1964 wade-ins. Due to non-historic infill within parcel numbers 162990-0000 and 162970-0000, the boundary cuts through these parcels. Although the activities relevant to the wade-ins occurred to the south of the pier, the boundary extends north to include the entire seawall and boardwalk, which are continuous structures extending from south of the hotel to north of the pier. The boundary was selected after careful examination of available primary source materials. Due to the private ownership situation of the beachfront to the south of the hotel and 16<sup>th</sup> Street, the southern boundary line was cut off further to the north. It is recommended in the future to extend the boundary further south to roughly the south end of 16<sup>th</sup> Street. The boundary also may be further expanded or adjusted in the future as more information becomes available.

**National Register of Historic Places  
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Images captured from original FHP video recording, showing wade-in protestors approaching beach  
(source: State Archives of Florida)



**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**Section number Figures Page 41**Figure 2**

Image captured from original FHP video recording, showing white segregationist fleeing after assaulting a photographer. Note white onlookers and/or segregationists viewing wade-ins from seawall  
(source: State Archives of Florida)



**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**Section number Figures Page 42**Figure 3**

Images captured from original FHP video recording, showing violent confrontations on June 25<sup>th</sup>.

Note prominent view of pier, seawall, and hotel in the confrontations

(source: State Archives of Florida)



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**Additional Documentation (Figures, plans, historic photos)**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered in the order they are referenced in the manuscript, and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log.

Property Name:	<u>St. Augustine Beach Hotel and Beachfront</u>		
City or Vicinity:	<u>St. Augustine Beach</u>	County:	<u>St. Johns</u> State: <u>FL</u>
Photographer:	<u>Leslee F. Keys</u>	Date Photographed:	<u>June 12, 2021; Oct 2021</u>

**Description of photograph(s) and number, including description of view indicating direction of camera:**

1. Front (North) Façade of hotel with evidence of arcade and Street (West) Façade, facing East/Southeast
2. Front (North) Façade of hotel from Beach Park, facing East/Southeast
3. Street (West) Façade of hotel, facing East/Northeast
4. Street (West) Façade and Entry of hotel, facing West
5. Oceanside (East) Façade of hotel, facing West/Northwest
6. Rear (South) Façade of hotel, facing North
7. First Floor Art Gallery on North section of two-story building of hotel, facing South
8. First Floor Art Gallery on North section of two story building of hotel, facing East
9. First Floor, Dance Company, Lobby of hotel, facing East/Southeast
10. First Floor, Dance Company, Lobby of hotel, facing West
11. First Floor, Dance Company, Studio of hotel, facing North/Northeast
12. First Floor, Dance Company, Studio of hotel, facing East
13. First Floor, Dance Company, Studio of hotel, facing West/Northwest
14. First Floor, Dance Company, Studio of hotel, facing North/Northeast
15. First Floor, Dance Company, Hallway of hotel, facing South
16. First Floor, Dance Company, Storage of hotel, facing East
17. First Floor, Dance Company, Locker Room of hotel, facing East
18. First Floor, Dance Company, Studio on south end of hotel, facing East
19. Staircase to Second Floor, west end of two-story building of hotel, facing South
20. Staircase to Second Floor, west end of two-story building of hotel, facing South
21. Second Floor Hallway of hotel, facing East
22. Second Floor Bath of hotel, facing East/Southeast
23. Second Floor Hotel Rooms, Wall Stud Framed Rooms and Stored Doors of hotel, facing North
24. Second Floor Hotel Rooms, Stud Rooms and Stored Doors of hotel, facing North



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25. Second Floor Hotel Rooms, Secured Windows of hotel, facing South
26. Second Floor Hotel Rooms, Secured Windows of hotel, facing South
27. Second Floor Tower Interior of hotel, facing North
28. Second Floor, View from Tower of hotel, facing North
29. View of northeast façade of hotel building and seawall, facing Southwest
30. View of concrete boardwalk, pier, and beachfront, facing North
31. View of concrete boardwalk, hotel, and beachfront, facing South
32. View of seawall north of the pier, facing Northwest

## St. Augustine Beach Hotel and Beachfront

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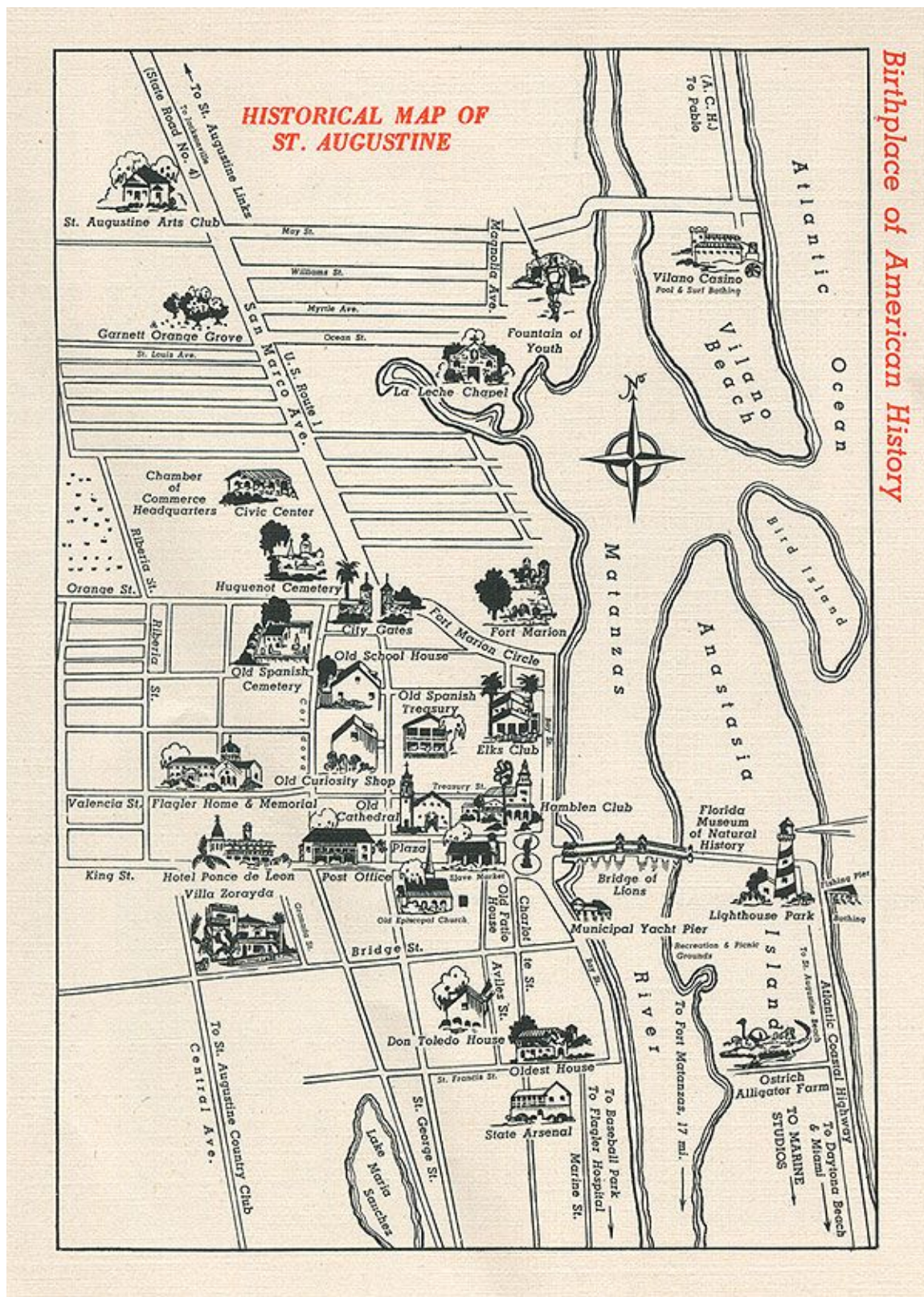
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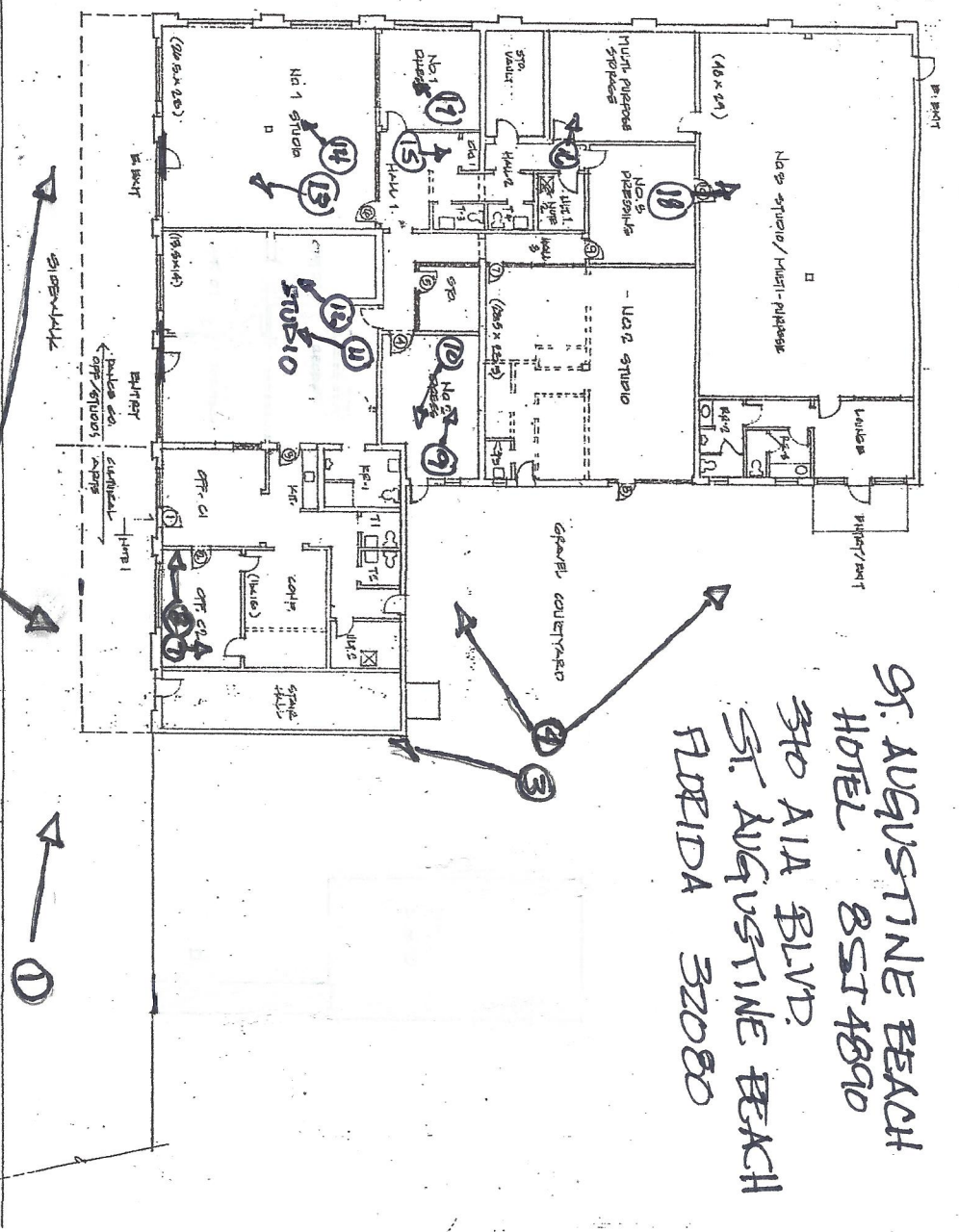
ST. AUGUSTINE BEACH  
HOTEL 851 4890  
370 AIA BLVD.  
ST. AUGUSTINE BEACH  
FLORIDA 32080

GENERAL NOTES:

- 1) ADD NEW DOOR #1 at PASSAGE OFFICE  
SPRINKLER BAY
- 2) RELOCATE OR REPLACE EXIST'G  
A/C UNIT #4 RECONNECT TO EXIST'G DUCTS.

LEGEND

- NEW DOOR AS SHOWN LBO.
- NEW WALL
- EXIST'G WALL
- EXIST'G WALL & OR DOOR  
TO BE REMOVED.



PHASE I REHABILITATION PLAN



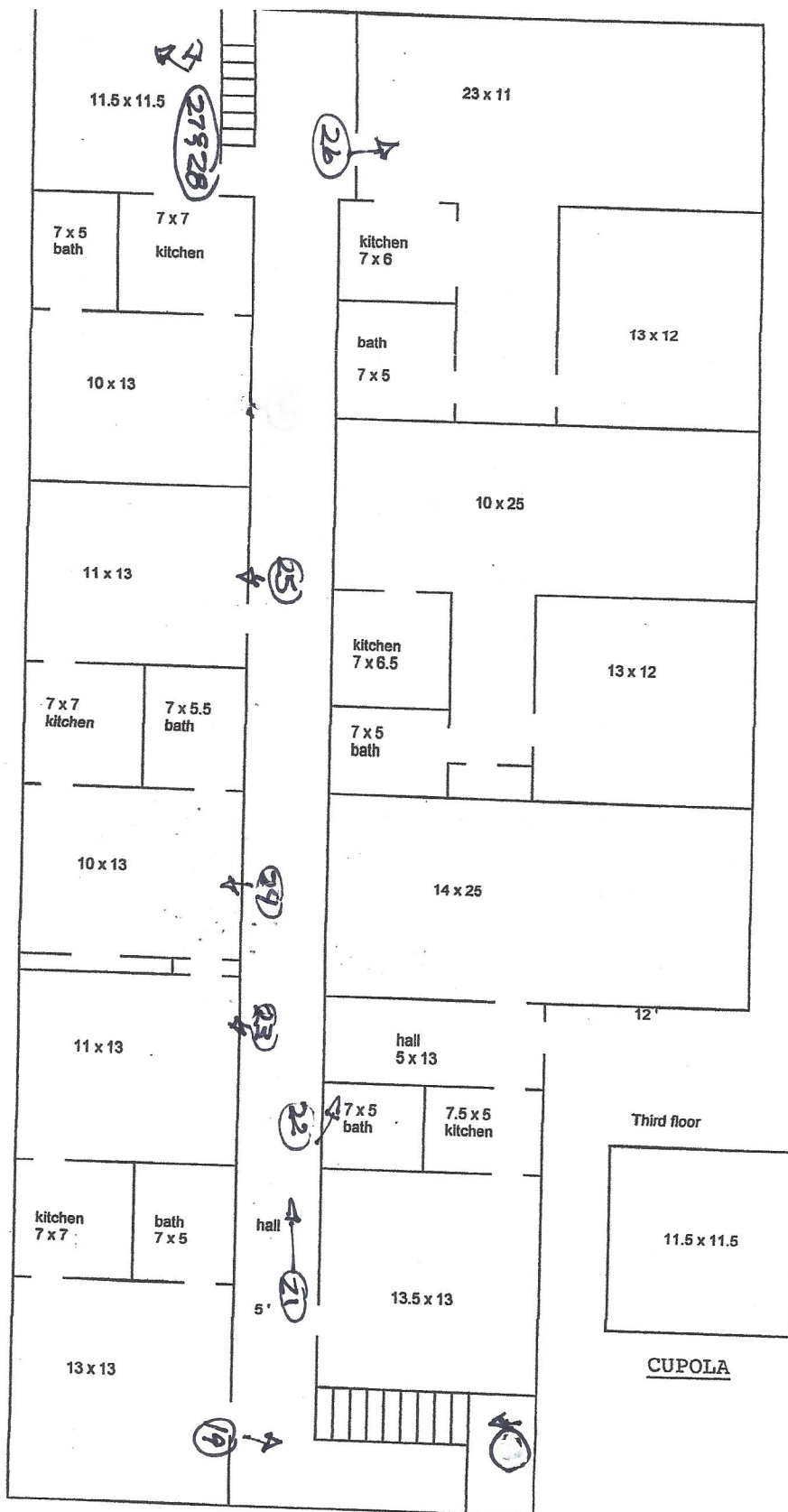
CULTURAL ARTS CENTER

307 AIA BEACH BOULEVARD  
ST. AUGUSTINE BEACH, FLORIDA

THOMAS & RAINVILLE P.A.  
ARCHITECTURE - INTERIORS

SCALE:	4" = 12'-0"
DATE:	10.15.01
BY:	
CHECKED:	
APPROVED:	

1



SECOND FLOOR CITY HALL

ST. AUGUSTINE BEACH HOTEL

# St. Augustine Beach Hotel and Beachfront

## BOUNDARY MAP

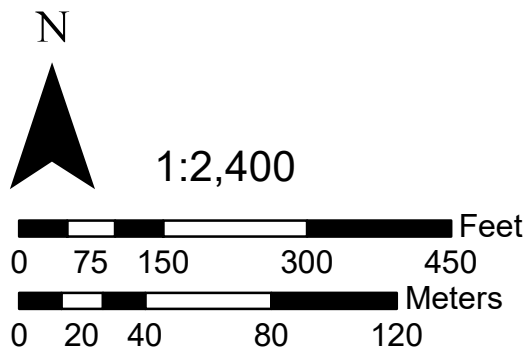
370 State Road A1A  
St. Augustine, St. Johns Co., FL

UTM Reference:

17R 474397 3302942

Datum: WGS84

 NR Boundary



Prepared by:  
Andrew Waber  
Florida Division of  
Historical Resources





# St. Augustine Beach Hotel and Beachfront

## TOPOGRAPHICAL MAP

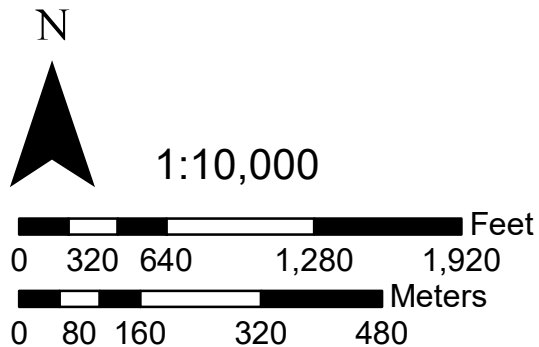
370 State Road A1A  
St. Augustine, St. Johns Co., FL

UTM Reference:

17R 474397 3302942

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 NR Boundary



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Boundary Map  
Set Within County  
Parcel Map

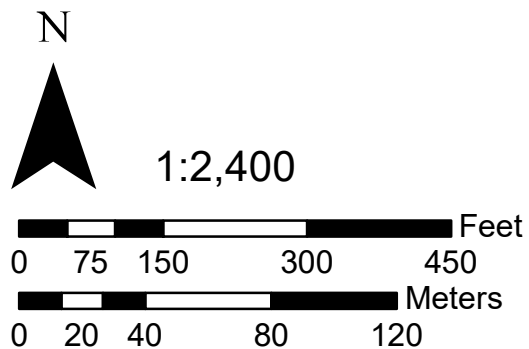
370 State Road A1A  
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17R 474397 3302942

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 NR Boundary



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