

Episode 1: Preview

A Podcast Narrated by
Dr. Robert A. Cassanello

RICHERS Podcast Documentaries

University of Central Florida RICHERS of Central Florida

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*A RICHES Project: Regional Initiative for Collecting the History, Experiences,
and Stories of Central Florida*

University of Central Florida

Interview Histories

Interviewers:	Dr. Robert A. Cassanello
Interviewees:	Dr. Alan Bliss, Dr. Richard Adicks, Dr. Lori Walters, and Phil Cross
Transcriber:	Krystal Carrion

The recordings and transcripts of the interview were processed in the offices of the RICHES of Central Florida Department, University of Central Florida, Orlando, Florida.

Project Detail

RICHES of Central Florida is an umbrella program housing interdisciplinary public history projects that bring together different departments at UCF with profit and non-profit sectors of the community.

Central Florida has often been associated with large-scale, commercial tourism and housing development. While those aspects of Central Florida are important to the economic growth of the region, much of its history has remained unnoticed and under researched. The Public History program at UCF links many projects under one initiative to promote the collection and preservation of Central Florida history. By facilitating research that records and presents the stories of communities, businesses, and institutions in Central Florida, RICHES seeks to provide the region with a deeper sense of its heritage. At the same time, the initiative connects the UCF students and faculty with the community and creates a foundation on which Central Floridians can build a better sense of their history.

RICHES Podcast Documentaries are short form narrative documentaries that explore Central Florida history and are locally produced. These podcasts can involve the participation or cooperation of local area partners.

Legal Status

Scholarly use of the recording and transcript of the podcast is unrestricted. The interview agreement was signed in 2011.

Abstract

Episode 1 of RICHES Podcast Documentaries: Preview. RICHES Podcast Documentaries are short form narrative documentaries that explore Central Florida history and are locally produced. These podcasts can involve the participation or cooperation of local area partners. Episode 1 provides a preview of the project and excerpts of podcast interviews.

Episode 1: Preview

Narrated by Dr. Robert A. Cassanello

Interviews with Dr. Alan Bliss, Dr. Richard Adicks, Dr. Lori Walters, and various unidentified speakers

0:00:00

Introduction

Cassanello I'm Robert Cassanello, Assistant Professor of History at the University of Central Florida, and you're listening to the RICHES Documentary Podcasts.

Welcome to the RICHES documentary podcast. RICHES—the Regional Initiative for Collecting the Histories, Experiences, and Stories of Central Florida—is an umbrella program, housing interdisciplinary public history projects that bring together different departments at the University of Central Florida with profit and nonprofit sectors of the community, in order to promote the collection and preservation of the region's history. By facilitating research that records and presents the stories of communities, businesses, and institutions in Central Florida, RICHES seeks to provide the region with a deeper sense of its heritage.

This series will feature a podcast every two weeks, in the middle and at the end of each month, that will explore various aspects of Central Florida history. In today's episode, we have a preview of the upcoming podcast. We hope it will peak your interest and make you return to check out this exciting podcast series.

0:01:25

Parliament House

Unidentified When it opened, it was one of only two in the country where you could go and stay, that had rooms attached to it. That was pretty much a novelty. They advertised the hell out of it in the gay publications of the day. With so few options for people to go to, almost immediately, uh, the [Parliament] House [Resort had people, you know people where coming from—from England and—and from France and Germany and other countries.

0:01:58

Harry T. Moore

Unidentified I think [Harry T.] Moore was so very far ahead of his time. This is an amazing thing—that he was 10, 20, 30 years ahead of the rest of the country. He was saying things in the beginning of the 1930s, that Martin Luther King[, Jr.] would be saying 20 years later, and drawing national

attention. He was challenging the system in an era where no one else was challenging the system.

The court cases that lead to *Brown v. Board of Education* [of Topeka], uh, the ruling in 1954, mostly are post-[World] War [II] cases. Here you had Harry T. Moore in the 1930s, making court challenges, something, uh, that no one else was doing, and certainly not an African-American...

0:02:51 Tavares and Gulf Railroad

Cross I lived about a block from the mainline for the Tavares and Gulf Railroad in Oakland. And my dad took me out to wave to the train. He loved trains, and he took me out to wave to the train each day, even before I could walk. So I've loved trains ever since.

0:03:08 Public history

Unidentified I guess you could say there are multiple paths to this job, um, but one of the biggest things is to get it into something that is going to give you some design experience, as well as the museum experience.

0:03:24 Orange Blossom Trail

Unidentified People were just driving down Orange Blossom Trail. It worked to get people's attention, but it also was so kitschy and eye-grabbing, that people wanted to take their picture in front of it.

0:03:42 Jack Kerouac

Unidentified [Jack] Kerouac was, um, one of the great, so-called "beat" writers of the 1950s and '60s. His influence, um, kinda came at a time in post-World War II America, where people were looking to break out of the normal confines of the nuclear family.

0:04:09 Cocoa post office

Bliss They welcomed[?], beginning in the 1920s, more modernist style, and I think that's what we see in the Cocoa post office design. Something that evokes the dignity of its public purpose and the security of, uh, the function that's being carried out in the building – in this case, you know, the mail, right? But that really emphasizes function over ornate adornment. You don't see a lot of adornment there – some nice touches, you know, the eagle [inaudible] the stars that are cast into the facade, but nothing really very grandiose.

0:04:52 Oviedo history

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Adicks I—I think people are fascinated in knowing the, uh, the stories that people have to tell. One thing that — that Ben Wheeler[sp] said, uh, is that — he said it to somebody. He didn't say to me. We didn't know we had a history 'til [Richard] Adicks came [*laughs*]. And I—I was greatly flattered by that. I—I felt that to give people a certain pride in their community and it — it's been gratifying to me, because...

0:05:26

Orlando Reeves

Unidentified The story that Orlando was named for a Seminole War soldier named Orlando Reeves just will not go away [*laughs*]. Uh, the City [of Orlando] has continued to sort of enshrine it. I think there — there is a — a marker at this side of Lake Eola, at the east side, that was put up in the late [19]30s with money donated by school children or middle school children, uh, in the memory of Orlando Reeves. But there's also another marker at the other end of Lake Eola, where the — the, the — put up by the city, I think, that that tells — at least mentions — uh, Orlando Reeves as the source of the name Orlando.

0:06:13

Conspiracy to blow up the Florida East Coast Railway train

Unidentified Fifteen miles from where Lyndon [B.] Johnson — then president — was pressing the button to break ground onto the new cross water barge canal. They blew up a train and you could actually hear the explosion.

And the people in Washington[, D.C.] said that this was the first and only time that a president ever threatened J. Edgar Hoover. Johnson got back to Washington, he called Hoover in, and he said, "I don't care what pictures you have of who[sic] and I don't care what you have on anybody." He said, "You either get these guys or you're out of a job." And four men were arrested and charged with conspiracy to blow up a Florida East Coast [Railway] freight train.

0:06:54

Jones High School

Unidentified Each month in 1995, alumni presented programs highlighting several careers, such as law enforcement, politics, arts and literature, medicine, and military, and so forth.

But I think one of the most dramatic changes was the integration of Jones High School in the early [19]70s.

0:07:21

Memories of Orlando

Unidentified My family and I moved here — moved to Orlando — in September 1949, uh, when I was a small child. I do remember it real well. And we moved from Pennsylvania. My mom and I rode on the train...

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But one of the things that I like to tell people about it then, was I really disliked sometimes people sort of , uh, portray Orlando at that time as a—a sort of bumpkin little town where nothing happened. Whereas, in fact, it was small, but the downtown area was very active retail center.

0:08:02 **Folk song**

0:08:42 **Segregation and Bethune-Cookman College**

Unidentified [inaudible] the program without being segregated you know. Yeah. You sit. Blacks sit over here. Whites sit over there. We didn't have that. We—you sit where you could find a seat you know, or [inaudible] so Mr. [inaudible] would have a lot of dignitaries coming in and everything...

[inaudible] playing against Florida A&M [Agricultural and Mechanical University]. I got lucky and caught the [inaudible] pass and beat them eight to seven. And so I got drafted by the Pittsburgh Steelers and [inaudible]. Then I went Pittsburgh[, Pennsylvania] and stayed six years.

And then I came to Bethune-Cookman [College] to work, because, over there, there's program. That's how I got started into the program as the employee. I came in here as the head football coach out there at the Ripton[?] [inaudible]. So they put the shoes on me, and got me squared away with them, and that helped me a great deal with the head coach, because my, uh—my coach brought me in.

0:09:38 **Virtual heritage**

Walters Alright. Well, right now, um, I work for the Institute for Simulation and Training here at UCF [University of Central Florida], and I do, uh, virtual heritage. Which is essentially, I take topics from any time period by—I specifically work from the 19—post-World War II topics—and we re-create items that are no longer there. Um, so, like the launch complexes at Cape Canaveral, we virtually recreate them. And my current endeavor is the [19]64-65 New York World's Fair.

0:10:08 **Civil rights laws**

Unidentified So it's really interesting, uh—look at history and, and also the unintended negative impact of those civil rights laws of the 1960s. Again, as wonderful and as necessary as they were, they really did have this—this unintended negative impact when, uh, some of the community leaders moved out.

0:10:30 **African-American disenfranchisement**

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Unidentified After African Americans were disenfranchised, political possibilities just kinda collapsed, and so communities really turned inward and just tried to sustain and survive as best as they could.

0:10:40 **African-American history**

Unidentified African-American history is kinda a misnomer. African-American history is everyone's history. It's, it's – it's a part of American history, uh, that we should all be aware of.

0:10:48 **Conclusion**

Cassanello Thank you for listening to the RICHES Documentary Podcast. Feel free to contact us with any questions or comments on the program that you just heard. Please join us for the next episode, *The Legacy of the Ocoee Riot*[?] of 1920, that explores the long term impact of this event on Central Florida.

End of Podcast