

Milestones in San Marco

1513-1763 Spanish Colonial

1513 Florida claimed for Spain by explorer Ponce de Leon

1763-1783 British Colonial Jacksonville named Cowford for its value as a cattle crossing on the St. John's River

1783-1822 Second Spanish Colonial

1793 216 Acres granted to William Jones from the Spanish Crown

1797 William Hendricks' son Isaac granted Jones' land after Jones had involved himself in actions against the Spanish

1799 William Craig granted land south of the Hendricks grant

1822-1845 Transition into Statehood

1822 East and West Florida become territories of the United States and Duval County formed

1832 Town of Jacksonville incorporated

1845 Florida achieves statehood

1854 Albert Philips constructs Red Bank plantation house still present on Greenridge Road

1861-1876 Civil War & Reconstruction

1870's Florida Reconstruction Governor Harrison Reed purchased the eastern half of the Hendricks land grant

1872 Alexander and Martha Reed Mitchell completed "Villa Alexandria" on the St. John's River along River Road

1907 City of South Jacksonville incorporated

1918 Fletcher Park Community developed for shipworkers during WWI, designed by Henry Klutho

1921-1939 Boom & Depression

1921 Acosta Bridge completed

1925 Original San Marco subdivision platted by Telfair Stockton; Gamble & Stockton brickyard quarry converted into Lake Marco

1925 River Oaks/San Jose Park platted

1926 Completion of Saint Marks Building began commercial development of San Marco

1929 Villa Alexandria and other subdivisions developed

1932 South Jacksonville annexed to city of Jacksonville

1938 Colonial Manor subdivision platted

1950's Historic San Marco area completed to present day Greenridge Road

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History of San Marco

It's hard to imagine Florida as the wild Frontier, but when Jacksonville was first incorporated back in 1832, early settlers encountered citrus trees, Spanish moss, live oaks, swamps and alligators. One of the more prominent of these early citizens was Harrison Reed, Florida's governor in 1868 and 1873. Mr. Reed's sister, Martha Reed Mitchell and her husband built their home, named "Villa Alexandria", on 140 acres along the St. Johns River (at the current location of River Road and Arbor Lane). Their estate included orange trees, bridle paths, polo fields, a swimming pool, tennis courts and formal gardens.

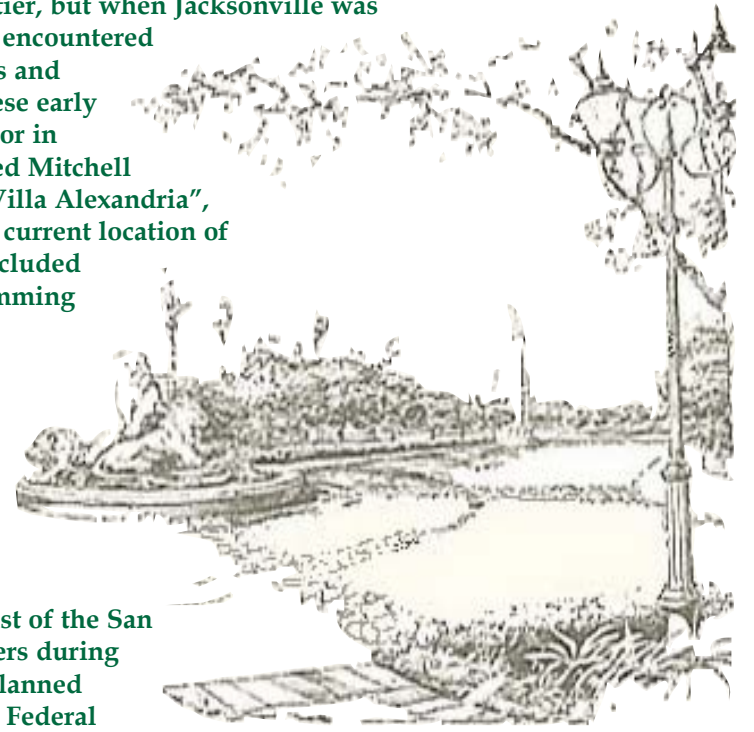
Further south, a working plantation was developed in 1854 by Albert Philips, the Sheriff of Duval County. He named his home Red Bank and it still stands on Greenridge Road, which marks the southern boundary of greater San Marco.

Fletcher Park Community was developed east of the San Marco Square for housing of shipyard workers during WWI. Fletcher Park was one of the earliest planned subdivisions in Jacksonville and set the first Federal guidelines for housing construction. Dixieland Park with its alligator and ostrich farm was located along the river bank just east of Main Street.

In the early 1920s, significant development began with the opening of the St. Johns River Bridge (Acosta). Telfair Stockton developed 80 acres of land and designed the business district after the Piazza di San Marco in Venice, Italy. The original brickyard claypit was transformed into Lake Marco. As development continued south along the river, the original Villa Alexandria estate was replatted and the first two houses in this new subdivision were built by the Swishers of the King Edward Cigar Company. The River Oaks and Colonial Manor subdivisions were developed in the late 1930s. By the mid 1950s San Marco was essentially completed to the extent that there was no longer any undeveloped land left.



The San Marco Preservation Society was formed in 1975 as a non-profit corporation to protect the integrity of San Marco's residential neighborhood and to enhance the revitalization of the business district. Its many active members have succeeded in keeping the Old-World charm and character of San Marco intact. In 1994 St. Paul's Episcopal Church was moved to Fletcher Park/Belote Green on Atlantic Boulevard and is operated by the Society as its office and as a rental facility for parties, weddings and meetings.



San Marco Preservation Society
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Why Join San Marco Preservation Society?

We are active neighbors working together to maintain San Marco as one of the best communities in Jacksonville. Some of the areas of leadership shown by San Marco Preservation Society to the community are:

- Representation of San Marco's interests before city government and active participation on zoning and government action issues.
- Restoration and maintenance of San Marco's historic charm and character.
- Enhancement of area roadways, sidewalks, medians and streetlights.
- Promotion and placement of public art throughout the community.
- Maintenance and refinement of the area's parks and recreation facilities.
- Popular holiday events such as the annual Luminaria and the biennial Home Tour, as well as other social functions.
- Annual beautification awards for residents and businesses in San Marco.
- Maintenance of archival records and photographs on the history of South Jacksonville and San Marco.
- Regular newsletters and San Marco town meetings to keep residents and business owners informed.