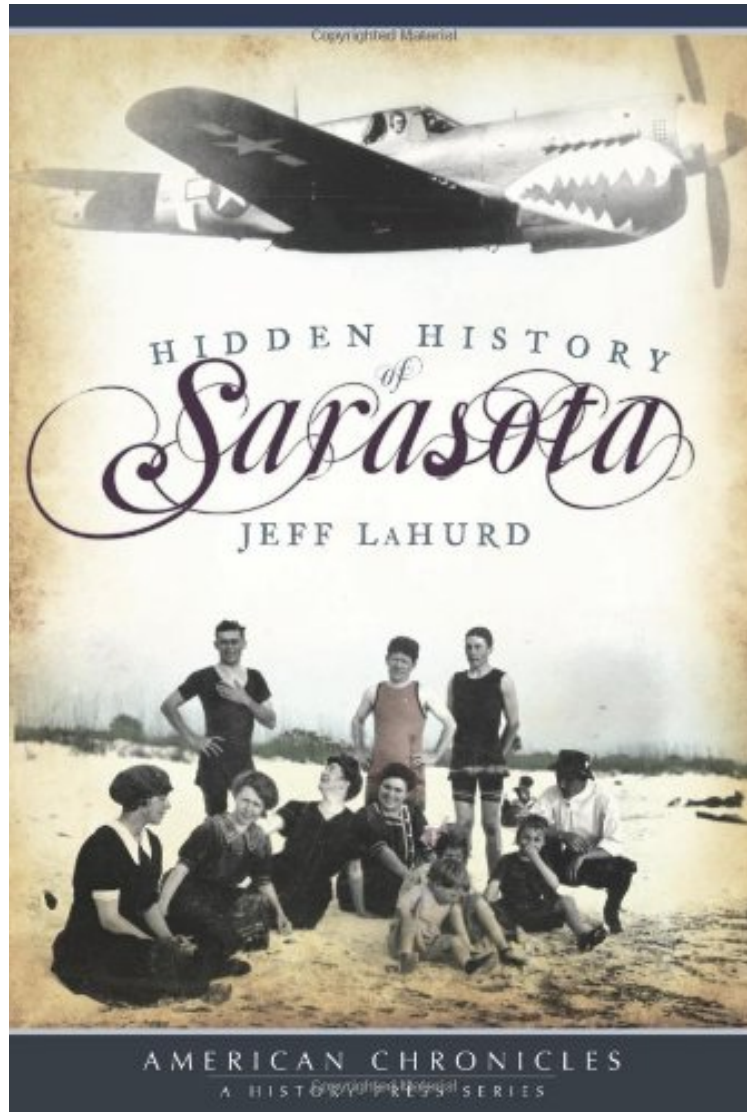


(Read free) Hidden History of Sarasota (American Chronicles)

Hidden History of Sarasota (American Chronicles)

Jeff LaHurd

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Jeff LaHurd : Hidden History of Sarasota (American Chronicles) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Hidden History of Sarasota (American Chronicles):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. She seemed happy with itBy Mall ChaneyBought it for a gift for a friend. She seemed happy with it. I did look through it and I think it was well written. I did not read it thoroughly. My friend had met the author which made her very happy.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Tour in Sarasota through time and place ...By Jane KrayeskyReading this book is like sorting through a jumbled box of very old photographs and post cards, roughly in chronological order and with a surprise in every stack of a few you lift out

of the box. It's absolutely fascinating to drive around in downtown Sarasota today and realize that "this place right here" is where ... The event described in the book took place 70-80-90 years ago. Jeff LaHurd does a great job on the vignettes. A little more chronological order would have been better for me. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Lots of tidbits about Sarasota. By JJP SarasotaJumps around a lot, but a fun read. Many short stories about how Sarasota got to be what it is today.

Sarasota, Florida, a one-horse farming town turned thriving winter residence of the Ringling Bros. Circus and flocks of snowbirds, has experienced more than its share of quirky characters and peculiar events. Learn about the illustrious John Ringling, from the details of his daily breakfast to the fifty-five year saga that determined his final resting place. Find out the real identity of A NO. 1, the King of Hobos, who spent a night in Sarasota's finest hotel. Witness the most memorable wedding in Sarasota- between two gorillas. Join longtime resident and historian Jeff LaHurd as he chronicles the fascinating, forgotten stories that made Sarasota the exceptional city it is today.

LaHurd's latest book is best yet I'm not a book critic by any stretch, but in my opinion, Jeff LaHurd's recently released book, *Hidden History of Sarasota*; (The History Press, 2009, \$19.99), is the best of his many books on local history. It has a lot of old photos, but this is not a picture book with captions telling the story of a certain period in Sarasota's past, as was *Sarasota: Roaring Through the '20s*. Instead, it's a collection of short essays that are perfect for time-constrained readers waiting for the coffee to brew or the computer to boot up. LaHurd appears to have taken advantage of his job at the Sarasota County History Center to pore over the archives and come up with stories that illustrate various decades in Sarasota's history. Such stories of obscure local events give the reader a taste of what it was like back when Sarasota was a 'one-horse farming town.' (I always thought it was a 'sleepy fishing village,' but maybe I was wrong.) There are quotations from pioneer Dan McKinlay's diary, telling of lonely, cold and humiliated Scottish colonists who came here in the 1880s, and, surrounded by prairie fires, didn't know if they could survive. (Most gave up and went back to Scotland.) ... There's the story of determined Rose Wilson, who took over publication of the *Sarasota Times* when her husband died in 1910 and never missed an issue, boosting Sarasota as a resort haven the same year Bertha Palmer arrived from Chicago. ... And LaHurd tells of the dastardly murder of Postmaster Charles Abbe, in the 1880s, by vigilantes, and the brutal, unsolved beating death of former mayor and Siesta Key developer Harry Higel, in 1921. The thread of real estate development runs throughout the city's history, and this book. The booms of the 1920s, which created the bones of a modern Sarasota, and the 1950s, which brought subdivisions and Arvida's Bird Key, have been written about often. Less well known is the 1910s real estate boom, which saw Sarasota's population grow from 846 in 1910 to 2,015 four years later. It started with Owen Burns' purchase of John Hamilton Gillespie's house and land holdings, which comprised 75 percent of the town that Gillespie himself had developed after the Scottish colony failed 25 years before. Burns paid \$35,000 for it all, becoming Sarasota's first major developer and setting himself up as John Ringling's key partner in the 1920s boom. The other big event of 1910 resulted from the running of an advertisement in the *Chicago Sunday Tribune* on Jan. 23. As LaHurd tells it, Bertha Palmer, socialite widow of a Chicago millionaire, read J.H. Lord's notice that Sarasota was ripe with fertile farmland in the 'best location in the U.S.' A month later, Bertha and her relatives, including son Honore, arrived by train and were housed at the Halton Sanitarium, which was in 'better condition to care for such august company' than the aging Belle Haven Inn. Soon, Bertha owned 80,000 acres and Sarasota became a destination for wealthy Midwesterners who made it prosper. --Harold Bubil, Herald-Tribune Columnist

About the Author Jeff LaHurd is the author of several books of local history. His articles have appeared in the *Sarasota Herald-Tribune*, *Style Magazine*, *The Sarasota Observer*, *SARASOTA Magazine*, *SRQ*, and *The Downtowner*. LaHurd is a former board member of the Sarasota Alliance for Historic Preservation and the Sarasota Historical Society.