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Forgotten Florida

Haunts of the Sunshine State

Amanda Baird
with a Foreword by Ron Haase

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First Edition: May 2008

www.blackdollphotography.com

Front Cover Photograph: Linden, Sumter County
Back Cover Photograph: Trinity Church, Alachua County
Photo on page 72 by Todd Mondok.
Assistance with county history text from *The Florida Handbook 2005-2006* by Allen Morris and Joan Perry Morris.

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Special Thank You to my Mom and Dad, Jim and Nancy, and Amy and Todd for enjoying or enduring (sometimes both?) the long car rides and endless searches for that old house in the field.

Also Thanks to all my Flickr Friends for their enthusiasm and encouragement.

And for all those historians and preservationists and homeowners I have met while out taking pictures, Thank You for what you do and continue to do. I feel that here in Florida, perhaps as it is anywhere, it is an uphill battle to rescue, maintain, and preserve these structures.

This is my way of contributing to "Forgotten Florida."



1885 Clouser House, Seminole County

Foreword by Ron Haase ~ 6

Introduction ~ 7

Alachua County ~ 8

Sumter County ~ 36

Seminole County ~ 50

Marion County ~ 56

Volusia County ~ 62

Lake County ~ 68

Further Reading and Selected Bibliography ~ 78

Acknowledgments ~ 78

Foreword

20 February 2008

In her poetic photo essay, FORGOTTEN FLORIDA, Amanda Baird captures for our eye the beauty of Old Florida's wood-frame vernacular homes and farm houses.

This Cracker heritage, seen through her camera lens, appears both humble and elegant. In its simple and unadorned presence there remains a sense of integrity, honesty and pride. The craftsmen who built these structures were not educated in the nuances of style and architectural typologies. Most were constructed using skills learned by one father and passed down to his son and then to the next son. In some cases, itinerant carpenters and helpful neighbors with particular skills or experiences were involved. Ironically, in the most elegant of our Cracker architectural heritage, black slaves contributed their uniquely learned skills and craftsmanship.

As you turn these pages and, if you love Florida's history as Amanda does, you will feel a shared pride in the simplicity and elegance of these forms. They are all the more remarkable for being unadorned, unselfconscious and, unfortunately, bio-degradable. In that, perhaps Amanda Baird's best gift to us all is in bringing this cultural heritage to our eye. We need to look one more time. They will soon all be gone.

Ron Haase

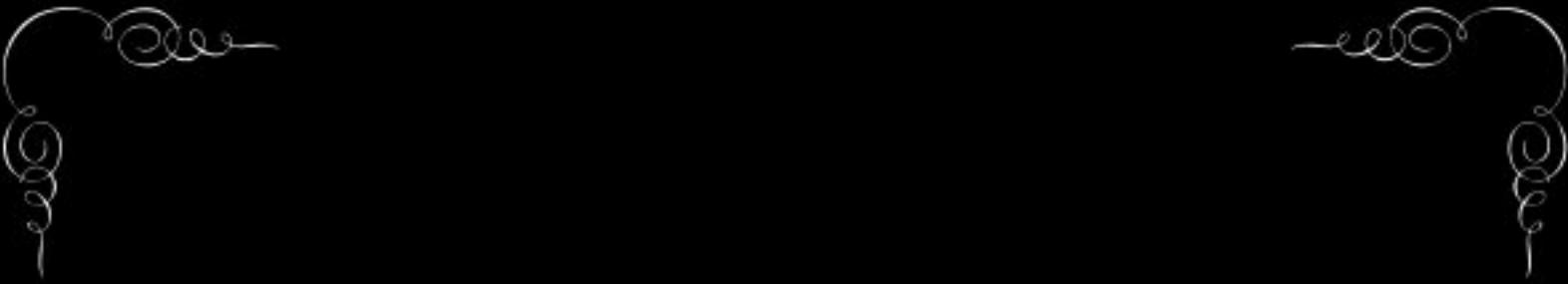
Author, CLASSIC CRACKER
Pineapple Press

Introduction

The camera doesn't lie. Who said that? Maybe it was Anonymous. Wise one, that Anonymous. The camera picks up the details of a subject in ways the eye never does. A photograph reveals the nature of a thing - its light points and dark spots, its angles and curves, its surroundings, all in a stillness that lets the eye study what it missed when it looked upon the thing itself. Especially poignant are the photographs of forgotten things, things trapped or lost in time that may one day only exist in pictures as the world around them changes.

That's the subject of this book – the places in Florida that might disappear because the eye has overlooked what the camera has pulled from the shadows. In particular, the places that people once called home. One- and two-story structures with proper names like "Frame Vernacular" and "I-house" and "single-pen." Or familiar names like "Cracker" or "dog-trot" style houses. Houses, if lucky, that have made it onto historic registers or have been refurbished by admiring owners. Or, like many of the houses in this book, they are on the brink of demolition or will fall into eventual and total decay. The photographs, of course, help document the structure, style and location of the home, or former home as the case may be, but also their character and memory and artistic possibilities as the subject for the all-seeing camera.

Forgotten **F**lorida, lost in the shadows, but forever truly seen and preserved in the eye of the camera.



Alachua County



Alachua is the oldest county included here. It was established in December of 1824, but the name "Alachua" goes all the way back to 1680 as the name of a Spanish ranch in the area. The meaning of "alachua" is either Spanish for "the sink" ("la chua") or Seminole-Creek for "jug" ("luchuwa"). Both terms referred to the same deep chasm in the earth, about 2.5 miles northwest of present-day Gainesville.





Camp-Tillman House, circa 1880

"Though the Cracker plantation house was true to the simple, unpretentious and unsophisticated social circumstance, it still remains strikingly beautiful." - Ronald Haase, *Classic Cracker*

Rear of house and porch detail





1910 Folk Victorian



Newspapers were used to insulate the floor and were placed directly on top of the wood floor boards.



Rear room



Rear of house



1850s-1860s Double-Pen



1900 Folk Victorian

"A casual ad hoc approach to planning seems to have pervaded house design in the mid-19th century as the family's need for space was attended to." - Ronald Haase, *Classic Cracker*