

# The Palm Coast Historian

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<http://community-2.webtv.net/pchistorical/TheCityofPalmCoast/>

## Palm Coast and Tapiola

By Mayor James V. Canfield, Ph.D

After World War II, there was a serious shortage of housing in many European countries. Finland was one of these countries. Finland had just paid off its war reparation to Russia (and incidentally Finland was the first country to pay it's debt to the United States) and had no resources to start a needed housing program. The government gave a Family Federation of Finland – the Vaestolito – a limited grant to explore how to solve the housing shortage. The Federation hired a young lawyer named Heikki Von Hertzen to lead the program. Prior to Hertzen's hiring, he worked as a bank branch manager. He wrote a pamphlet "Do we want our children to live in a home or in a barracks?" The pamphlet criticized the barracks type apartments in Helsinki, the capital, which had no space for children or nature.

Von Hertzen traveled to different European cities seeking a model for Finland. He visited new projects in Sweden and the English garden city programs inspired by the New Towns Act of 1946. He organized the Housing Federation of Finland, which included: The League of Child Welfare, the Finish Trade Unions, the Union of Tenants and the Civil Servant Union. This powerful organization supported Von Hertzen's goals of financing a new type of city. Thus, the city of Tapiola was created – 50 years ago last May. The name was selected because Tapiola is the ancient god of the forests and Tapiola was his domain. Sebelius's time poem of the same name reflects that concept. Tapiola was to be a model city for nature. In the 1960's the International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation established the ITT Community Development Corporation to plan a new Florida city called Palm Coast. ITT-CDC hired Dr. Norman Young to direct the effort. Dr Young visited the new garden cities in England and Scandinavia to assist in his planning. He was especially impressed by Tapiola, which he referred to as "the most acclaimed garden city in the world."

Dr. Young, in a letter to Mr. & Mrs. Walter Griffen of Casper Drive, dated July 2, 1973 explained what Tapiola and Palm Coast would share in common "we abhor and prevent neon jungles, we pay special attention to the preservation of open space; together we have special orientation to the importance of community recreation and interpersonal contact and we appall the sickening overcrowding characteristics of major cities—on this point, it is noteworthy that Palm Coast's designed density is only half that of Tapiola. "We are, of course, also proud of the fact that our new community seems to be exceptional in its emphasis on the major preliminary environmental and ecological studies performed."

It is interesting to compare how the cities of Tapiola, now 50 years old, and Palm Coast, now 30 years old have lived up to the expectations crafted in the original designs.

Tapiola, during the 1950's and 1960's hired Finland's leading architects to design parts of the whole project. Each was given entire blocks or groups of houses to design. The city was to be a diverse area open to all new residents irrespective of income or professional status. Apartment blocks, row and terrace houses and detached homes all were to be built side by side all in harmony with the forests, meadows and planted gardens. Unfortunately, the version of Tapiola succumbed to the economic realities of the late 1960's. Houses were built using prefabricated concrete elements which had little architectural merit. The city center concept developed into a huge row which destroyed the garden city version. Tapiola now has a population of 38,000 and is the commercial and shopping suburb of Espoo, one of Finland's largest facilities.

Palm Coast has surpassed Tapiola's population and we reached 50,000 residents in the spring of 2004. Many residents feel that the rapid population growth has led to a decline in our quality of life and commitment to the garden city concept. ITT made a corporate decision in the early 90's to get out of the real estate and community development business. ITT never made a profit in Palm Coast because of the heavy financial investment in establishing the infrastructure of roads, canals, water and sewer lines. ITT also subsidized the operation of world-class tennis, golf and boating facilities.

In 1999, residents voted to incorporate and the City of Palm Coast was created. I believe the voters wanted to create an entity which could fulfill the vision created for our community – a true garden city with the components of our original vision – a city for all residents irrespective of income or professional status; our environmental and ecological commitment; a preservation of open space and the importance of quality recreational and interpersonal contact.

The elected officials of our new city have a responsibility to assume the ITT version for our community and make it happen. It can happen if we pass the right ordinances which will maintain a population growth that is accompanied by economic prosperity and an enhanced quality of life, a model American garden city – Palm Coast and Tapiola can still achieve the vision.

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## PALM COAST'S FIVE YEAR BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION!

SATURDAY, JANUARY 8, 2005, FROM 10 A.M.-3 P.M. ON CITY HALL GROUNDS AT 2 COMMERCE BLVD.

Join the City of Palm Coast in celebrating their 5th Birthday! We'll have musical entertainment throughout the day including the world-famous Cornell Gunter's "Coasters", an antique car show, art show, children's activities, lots of great food, and over \$6,000 in cash giveaways throughout the day.

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### Meeting and Event Schedule

**January 8, 2005 – Palm Coast City Hall**  
10:00am -3:00pm. City's Five Year Birthday Party – **Historical Society will have a booth.**

**January 26 – Palm Coast Community Center**  
7:00 pm – 8:30 pm. Jack Kelly presents "ITT Builds Palm Coast" and Jerry Full speaks about Gary Water's contributions to Palm Coast.

**February 9 – Flagler County Library**  
1:30 pm – 3:30 pm. Membership Meeting – guests are always welcomed

**March 9 - Palm Coast Community Center**  
7:00 pm – 8:30 pm. Fire Chief Mike Beadle presents the History of Palm Coast's Fire Department.

### License Plates are for Sale Once Again! Display the City Logo

Make a \$10.00 contribution to the Historical Society and receive a license plate displaying the city's logo for the front of your car. Plates are available at all of our events and may be purchased at the Palm Coast Community Center on Club House Drive.

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The Officers and Directors Wish Everyone  
*A Very Healthy And Happy New Year!*

**Images of America: Palm Coast by local author, Art Dycke**

The book is a compilation of 238 captioned photographs from the ITT (ICDC) files that are now held by the Palm Coast Historical Society. Contributions of local residents, reporters and newspapers are also included in the book. *Images* is a concise introduction to our area's history, organizations, people and their activities. Arcadia, the publisher, describes the book as follows:

“What is paradise? Before 1969, land that would eventually become the City of Palm Coast was considered by some as nothing more than a ‘big pine-covered swamp.’ But when the corporate eyes of ITT/Levitt and Sons looked upon the virtually uninhabited land, they saw 22,000 acres of golf courses, marinas, oceanfront motels, scenic drives, and house lots awaiting the arrival of sun-seeking ‘pioneers.’ Marketing strategies targeting urban residents in the North and Midwest offered slices of land cut out of miles of forest, and soon a 500-mile infrastructure of roads, utilities, and sewer lines bound Palm Coast to a future that included becoming the largest planned unit development in Florida history.”

You may order *Images of America: Palm Coast* for mail delivery within Flagler County.

Cost: \$19.99 plus \$3.00 for S&H = **Grand Total of \$22.99 each**

Mail delivery elsewhere in the United States is \$4.00 for S&H = **Grand Total of \$23.99 each**

**Mail the order form and check to: Palm Coast Historical Society, P.O. Box 352613, Palm Coast, FL 32135**

**Make check payable to Palm Coast Historical Society**

Please cut along this line.

<b>Ship to:</b>	
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The purchase of this book from the Historical Society, only from the Society, will benefit the continuing objective of the Historical Society in accumulating, preserving and bringing the Palm Coast history to the public.



**AACHO Evening Event. 10/12/2004. They presented the history of their group and personal tidbits.**



**Evelyn Corbin and Ralph Carter. 11/10/2004 Membership Mtg. Evelyn gave us tips on grant writing.**

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## Officers - January 2004 - December 2005

Debby Geyer, President (446-9031); Bob Crocetta, Treasurer; Kay Stafford, Recording Secretary; Debra Heywood, Corresponding Secretary.

## Directors - January 2004 - December 2005

Ralph Carter, Don DeVito Webmaster, Art Dycke and Margaret Davie Co-Historians, Jack Holt, Connie Horvath Publicity Chairman.

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Visit our website for additional book and Palm Coast Historical Society information.

<http://community.webtv.net/pchistorical/TheCityofPalmCoast/>

Key in the website exactly as shown.



January, 2004 Officers/Directors Installation and Jim Miskelly who installed us.

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**The City of Palm Coast Historical Society**

**P. O. Box 352613**

**Palm Coast, FL 32135**