HOMESTEAD

Then & Now

A Tour of Historic Homestead
Homestead, Florida, located in Miami-Dade County, is known for its historic contribution to the development of South Florida as it served as a major hub for Henry Flagler’s railroad starting in 1903. Today the combination of its beautiful natural setting, lush tree lined streets and unique vernacular architecture all contribute to reminding visitors of the spirit of early South Florida communities. We think you will find that Homestead is a bustling city that still retains that charming small town feel.

Tour Historic Homestead
This booklet and map (on pages 8 & 9) were developed as a self-guided introductory tour to help visitors and residents learn more about how the city developed. Starting in 1903 with the early railroad days that opened up South Florida to commerce and to homesteading, the past unfolds on the walking tour that takes you through the heart of this early pioneer town. The map invites you to visit additional designated historic structures outside of the historic district.

So, hop on our Trolley and take a tour. Here you will see examples of various styles of architecture as well as stories of personal contributions to the growth of this community. All properties identified in this brochure have been designated “Historic” by the Homestead Historic Preservation Board, and as such are protected for future generations.

Please make sure to respect buildings noted as “not open to the public” which means they are private property and to be viewed ONLY from the right of way. Please do not trespass, knock on doors, or ring doorbells at private residences.

Homestead Then
In 1903, William J. Krome applied for work with the Florida East Coast Railway and accepted a job surveying possible routes for Flagler’s Cape Sable Extension, (Krome Avenue is named after Mr. Krome). The actual settlement of Homestead began shortly before the railroad arrived in 1904. Many versions on the naming of the town exist, the most popular claims that “since there was no name for the end of the line, the railroad cars carrying supplies and building materials were labeled in chalk “Homestead Country”. Engineers mapping the area dropped the “country” and labeled the work camp “Homestead”. The last rail of the FEC extension from Miami to Homestead was laid on July 31, 1904. That same year the town was laid out and by 1905 the population had grown substantially. In 1913 the town was incorporated and grew as men who worked on the railroad brought their families and settled in Homestead.

Homestead Now
Today with a population of approximately 70,000, the little railroad town has bloomed into a thriving city of diverse cultures and heritage. From the laborers on the railroad, to the growers who worked the fields, each generation made their mark and contributed to the evolution from pioneer town to thriving city. Where once there were barren lands, today lush groves of tropical fruit trees, acres of row crops, and miles of ornamental nurseries now flourish. In addition, Homestead is situated exactly between two national parks, (nine miles to the east Biscayne National Park and ten miles to the west, Everglades National Park), and the Florida Keys are minutes to the south. Because of this beautiful setting, tourism brings visitors from throughout the world to enjoy the unique character of this tropical paradise. Visit the City of Homestead website at www.cityofhomestead.com to learn more about us.
This structure was the original Homestead Town Hall, designed by well-known Miami architect H. Hastings Mundy who also designed the Trinity Episcopal Cathedral and Miami Edison School in Miami. The architecture is masonry vernacular with simple decorative elements. On the front façade there are two large archways on the ground floor that originally accommodated the fire engines. The building housed the City Fire Department, the Police station, and jail cells on the lower floor. Government offices were on the second floor. The building was the first municipal building in Homestead and served an integral part of the community both politically and socially. Today the former City Hall serves as the Historic Town Hall Museum where visitors are invited to tour the pictorial history of Homestead through images donated by our pioneer families. Children of all ages will enjoy inspecting our classic 1924 LaFrance fire truck, similar to those housed in the original fire department.

The Homestead Library had a variety of locations before Clarence J. Parman, a local architect, drew up plans in 1937 for the present site. The project was approved a year later by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and construction was completed in 1939 at its present site. The new building was constructed of native mistic rock and hand-hewn Dade County pine timbers. In 1939 the City Council voted to name the building the Lily Lawrence Bow Library after Homestead’s first librarian, an accomplished musician, artist, published poet, and a member of the local police force. At the dedication, Senator Claude Pepper stated: “The progress of humanity is epitomized in this beautiful structure. In it is reflected the great civic pride and the desire for better things in life that fill the hearts of Homestead’s citizens.” Today the building houses the offices of the Community Redevelopment Agency.

Although the original structure was constructed in 1912, the planning for the present building began in 1925 and was dedicated in 1944. The building with its dramatic entrance columns and sturdy structure has existed since this date. The church remained undamaged until 1992 when the infamous Hurricane Andrew leveled most areas of Homestead. As a result, the church members relocated to another church and the building was left unoccupied. It is a prime representation of neoclassical architecture in Downtown Homestead.

The Faust House is an excellent example of the adaptation of the Mission/Spanish Colonial style to Homestead. It is also associated with the “Boom Time Era” 1913-1926 that saw a rapid growth in commercial and residential construction. The house is a single story wood frame building that is covered with roughly textured stucco and a flat roof hidden behind a curved parapet. The original owner was the secretary/treasurer of Fuchs Bakery which eventually grew into one of the most innovative bakeries in the United States, the Holsum Bread Company.

On October 28, 2015 the curtain finally rose on a stage that had remained dark for nearly four decades. The reopening of the Seminole Theatre was made possible thanks to the citizens of Homestead who approved funding for its restoration during the decisive May 2014 Bond Referendum. The historic structure, originally built in 1921, was first restored in 1940 with the iconic Art Deco façade you see today. The theatre, a central part of Homestead’s social life, was mainly used as a movie house until it closed its doors in 1979. In 1992, it suffered a near total loss as a result of Hurricane Andrew. In an attempt to salvage the historic property, citizen groups embarked on a renovation effort that would span decades. The 2014 citizen-approved funding allowed for the complete restoration of this space as a cultural hub for Homestead.

This one-story Mission Revival style building was constructed in 1949, and underwent façade renovations in the 1980’s. Mission Revival is identified by its typical Hispanic design elements, such as well defined, shaped parapets, arches, generous porches, etc. The most predominant feature is a shaped parapet or dormer, capped with terra cotta tiles. Owned and operated by the Hernandez family since early 1940’s, this restaurant has gained widespread popularity for its authentic Mexican cuisine.
7 Landmark Hotel
55 South Flagler • built 1913
The Landmark Hotel (also known as the Seminole Hotel) was built in Miami in 1913 and was known as the Airdome Theater, an open air theater with no walls or roof, just a front entrance flanked with small offices and a wooden stage with a screen. In 1914 it was converted into an enclosed two story structure and renamed the Colonial Theater. In 1916 the theater was disassembled and moved via railroad to its present site in Homestead. Purchased in 1919 by James W. English it was renamed the Seminole Theater, converting the second story into bedrooms to relieve overcrowding from local boarding houses. In 1936 major renovation converted the remaining theater into bedrooms totaling twenty-six as well as a restaurant. The building played a prominent past in Homestead’s civic community. Eventually Mr. English built a second Seminole Theater on Krome Avenue owning a string of theaters throughout South Florida. In 1965 new owners changed the name to the Landmark Hotel.

8 The Hotel Redland
5 S. Flagler Avenue • built 1904
In 1904 W. D Horne opened the Homestead Inn, a supply store and rooming house and first post office. Following a devastating fire in 1913 it was rebuilt in 1914 as a hotel with 22 rooms, public rooms, dining rooms, parlors and a ten foot porch facing the streets, and renamed the Hotel Evans. Eventually purchased by J.W. English, owner of the Seminole Theatre, in 1934 and renamed the Hotel Redland. The building was remodeled with electric fixtures and concealed wiring as well as hot and cold running water. The structure withstood the destruction of Hurricane Andrew and in the 1990’s it underwent a complete renovation maintaining its historical accuracy. The building reflects the early wood frame vernacular architectural style. Its large wrap-around porch, finished with delicate gingerbread detailing all contributing to the fact that the Hotel Redland looks exactly as it did over 90 years ago.

9 The Dickenson House
5 NE 2nd Road • built 1920
This rectangular, one story building is constructed of oolitic limestone, a native rock. The Mission house is a unique example of the adaptation of native building materials. The front façade features an entrance framed by two rounded arched windows and buttresses. The building was constructed as a chapel for the Seventh-Day Adventist Church. It was sold to Mr. Herman McConnell in 1946 with the stipulation that the owner make no changes to the building. In 1969 Mr. and Mrs. Dickenson purchased the building.

10 St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church
344 SW 4th Avenue • built 1948
The first site of the church was N. Flagler in 1903. Because of the proposal to build the Florida East Coast Railway depot at that location, the church moved to property donated by Mr. Mark McClain, owner of McClain’s Acres, an early subdivision in the Southwest district of Homestead. Through the following decades the church followers and pastors worked towards the goal of building a permanent structure. Finally, in 1948 the church at its present site was completed and continued to grow as the population increased and is today the largest African American church in Homestead.

11 Trinity Faith Tabernacle Deliverance Church
512 SW 4th Street • built 1940
Originally a movie theater and cultural center, the two story structure served the African American Community of Homestead. Masonry Vernacular architecture maintains its artistic and architectural distinction.

12 Greater New Mt Zion African Methodist Episcopal Church
890 SW 4th Street • built 1936
The church itself was started in Homestead in 1915 with the present site constructed in 1955. This church is an important structure in the Southwest district, serving the African American community through an unbroken line of thirty pastors.
The Shaw House
1090 NE 18TH Ave
is located 4 miles east of Krome Avenue.

1 Historic Town Hall
41 N. Krome Avenue

2 Lily Lawrence Bow Library
212 NW 1st Avenue

3 First Baptist Church / Art South Sanctuary
240 N. Krome Avenue

4 The Faust House
69 NW 4th Street

5 Seminole Theatre
22 N. Krome Avenue

6 El Toro Taco Restaurant
1-21 S Krome Avenue

7 Landmark Hotel
55 South Flagler Avenue

Directions from Florida Turnpike
Exit the Florida Turnpike at Exit 2 and go west on Campbell Drive (NE 312 Street). Left on Krome Avenue.

8 The Redland Hotel
5 South Flagler Avenue

9 The Dickenson House
5 NE 2nd Road

10 St. Paul Mission Baptist Church
344 SW 4th Avenue

11 Trinity Faith Tabernacle Deliverance Church
512 SW 4th Street

12 Greater New Mt. Zion African Methodist Episcopal Church
890 SW 4th Street

13 Neva King Cooper School
151 NW 5th Street

14 Dr. James Archer Smith House / Nexx Motel
815 N. Krome Avenue

15 Lindeman / Johnson House
906 N. Krome Avenue

16 McMinn Horne House
25 NE 12th Street

17 Dr. Gutleber Practice
138 NE 15th Street

18 The Chipley / Doyle House
343 NW 19th Street

19 The Bird House
199 NW 19th Street

20 Provenir Garcia House
52 NW 20th Street

21 The Royal Palms on Krome Avenue

22 The Downtown Historic District on the National Registry of Historic Places
Bordered on the north by NW 4th Street, on the south by S. Railroad Avenue, on the west by the west side of Krome Avenue, and on the east by Flagler Avenue.
**13 Neva King Cooper School**  
151 NW 5th Street • built 1914

Built in 1914, it is one of the earliest Spanish Revival buildings in Miami Dade County and is one of the finest examples of the works of architect August Geiger, one of Dade County's earliest known architects. Built around a U shaped open courtyard, the architect ensured that the school provided sunlight and cross ventilation in all rooms with the entire structure on one floor. The name was changed from the Homestead School to Neva King Cooper School in 1934 to commemorate the work of a beloved local elementary school teacher.

**14 Dr. James Archer Smith House/Nexx Motel**  
815 N. Krome Avenue • built 1936

This is a two-story Masonry Vernacular building, constructed of oolitic limestone, a native coral rock. Dr. Smith owned a lime grove in the Redland from which the stone was sourced. The building has been assessed as among the most important examples of masonry vernacular limestone architecture in Homestead and few exist today.

**15 Lindeman/Johnson House**  
906 N. Krome Avenue • built 1923

Mr. F. H. “Doc” Lindeman, a Homestead pharmacist, decided to construct a concrete and stucco residence for his family in 1923. Noted Miami architect, H. George Fink, Sr. was hired to prepare the actual design. Mr. Fink, cousin of Coral Gables developer George E. Merrick, is credited with designing most of the Gables’ original buildings. The house is noteworthy for its Mediterranean details, Ludovici tiles, and is a fine example of masonry vernacular in Miami-Dade County. Mr. Howard Johnson worked for Mr. Lindemann as a pharmacist, eventually owning Dixie Drug Store in 1928 and by 1938 he and his wife moved into the house at 906 N. Krome Avenue.

**16 McInnn Horne House**  
25 NE 12th Street • built 1920

The house was built on Krome Avenue in 1920 by Charles McInnn. In 1922 the building was purchased by Mr. and Mrs. W.D. Horne. It was moved to its present location in 1924. The two story main house is in a vernacular frame style, with a central second story bay of three windows, a triple gabled roof, and fishtail gingerbread details. W.D. Horne had opened the Homestead Inn in 1904, now called Hotel Redland, as well as constructing the first commercial buildings in Homestead. *Not currently open to the public.*

**17 Dr. Gutleber Practice**  
139 NE 15th Street • built 1925

This building is a classic example of early Mediterranean Revival, an architectural style widely used in Florida in the 1920’s and 1930’s, and adapted well to Florida’s climate and Spanish heritage. Twisted columns, balustrades, and ceramic tiles are a few examples of ornamentation. The walls are usually a light colored stucco, contrasting with a low pitched terra cotta tile roof that is typical of the style. At the present time the building houses a medical practice.

**18 The Chipley/Doyle House**  
343 NW 19th Street • built 1926

Mr. Clifford C. Amos, owner of Amos Dry Goods Company, hired contractor Grayston C. Musgrave to build his home in 1926. Considered one of the finer homes of the area, it consisted of a two-story, ten room house in the California Spanish style. The structure is made of Dade County pine, cream colored stucco and red Cuban tile. Upon completion the public was invited to inspect the house and see the type of high quality construction that was being encouraged in Homestead. Claude Chipley, Sr., operator of Homestead Canning Company and later a teacher and assistant principal at South Dade High School, purchased the home in 1945. *Not open to the public.*
19 The Bird House
199 NW 19th Street • built 1937

This home was the first FHA financed home in Homestead and features state of the art hurricane protection, including reinforced steel anchors, diagonal sheathing and steel straps. The two story wood frame construction was built in Colonial Revival style with a front porch. The house was built in the Porvenir subdivision by William Bird, who came to Homestead as an insurance underwriter's inspector following the 1926 hurricane. The Bird family became active members of the community, Mrs. Bird eventually was principal of the Neva King Cooper School and Mr. Bird owned Bird Chevrolet on N. Krome Avenue and served on the Homestead City Council from 1938 to 1948. The Bird House is currently one of only two Colonial Revival structures identified in Homestead. Not open to the public.

20 Porvenir Garcia House
52 NW 20th Street • built 1925

The Porvenir Garcia house was built in late 1925 in Homestead’s most prestigious boom-time subdivision named “Porvenir”. “Porvenir” meaning “a bright future” was the grandest of the Boom time projects, the plans called for a 100 room hotel, wide streets and lush landscaping. By March, 1926, $1.6 million in sales had been recorded. As quickly as the company had risen, so rapid was its fall. The Great Hurricane of 1926 dealt a deadly blow on the Florida land boom and on the Porvenir project as well. The house was purchased in 1928 by Paul Russell, Homestead’s youngest mayor who took office at the age of 28. The masonry construction residence represents a typical example of Mission Architecture in Dade County during the 1920’s. Not open to the public.

21 The Shaw House
1090 NE 18th Avenue • built 1920’s

This residential farm house was built of Dade County pine and is typical Wood Frame Vernacular Bungalow cottage in style. Gable end roof is skirted by front and rear porch roofs. Front porch is solid concrete, with concrete columns and entrance and side carport. The house sits on a series of short cinderblock piers. This arrangement combined with large windows, creates air-flow under and around the building. Typical construction of early settlers homes in tropical climates. Not open to the public.

22 The Royal Palms on Krome Avenue

In 2001 the Homestead Historic Preservation Board studied the Homestead area and identified a corridor of Royal Palms along Krome Avenue reminiscent of a past era, and meriting recognition and preservation. The Royal Palm trees along Krome Avenue were originally planted in 1925 by the Rotary Club of Homestead. For all commuters traveling on Krome Avenue, these palm trees defined the entrance into the City of Homestead and provided a shaded course for bicycle enthusiasts during an era when Homestead was known as the “City of Bicycles”. Destroyed in 1992 by Hurricane Andrew, the Royal Palms were replanted in 1994 through an effort spearheaded once again by members of the Rotary Club.

23 The Downtown Historic District on the National Registry of Historic Places

The 11 blocks and 73 buildings that comprise the Homestead Historic District (bordered on the north by NW 4th Street, on the south by S. Railroad Avenue, on the west by the west side of Krome Avenue, and on the east by Flagler Avenue), was accepted onto the National Registry of Historic Places by the Department of the Interior, National Parks Services on November 19, 2007. Homestead is one of only four districts in South Florida to receive a National District Designation, joining Miami Beach, Coral Gables and Key West. The designation was the result of the diligence and hard work of the Homestead Historic Preservation Board, and the City appointed Landmark Officer. The board directed the Board Chair to proceed with the project in 2002 and through a series of steps including inventory, historical research, developing a map and finally photographing all structures, the long effort was eventually approved by the Florida Review Board in early 2007, with final approval coming from the Department of the Interior that November. The Homestead Historic Preservation Board members who were serving at that time include: Board Chair Yvonne Knowles, Board Vice Chair Larry Diehl, Board Members: Susie Peterson Randolph, Dr. Dennis Ross, Randall Kaufman, Clara Waterman Powell, Doug LaRue, and Landmark Officer Sofya Belaire.
The Homestead railroad depot, no longer located in Homestead but at the Pioneer Museum in Florida City, pictured as it was circa 1914 and today.

**Homestead Timeline**

1897 South Dade County opens for homesteading
1903 William J. Krome surveys South Florida to determine location of Florida East Coast Railway.
1905 The Key West Extension begins, workers from the Bahamas assist in construction.
1907 First school opens in Homestead.
1909 First Baptist and First United Methodist Church formed.
1912 Homestead's first bank opens at the corner of Krome Avenue and Mowry Street.
1913 The Town of Homestead is incorporated with a population of 121 people and 28 registered voters.
1914 Lawrence Mark McClain, a worker on the Florida East Coast Railway, purchased 2.5 acres south of Mowry Street, and turned it into “McClain’s Addition”, one of the first subdivisions in Homestead with lots 25’x75’.
1916 Homestead gets its first gas station on Krome Avenue and the Bank of Homestead is robbed.
1916 Royal Palm State Park, home of future Everglades National Park, dedicated by the Woman’s Club of Homestead.
1917 Town Hall (43 N. Krome Avenue) is built, along with first electric plant; the first fire truck is purchased.
1920 Royal Palm State Park, home of future Everglades National Park.
1923 Homestead becomes a city. The Chamber of Commerce is formed. Population grows to 3,360.
1924 Fannie Starr Turner, a Spellman Seminary graduate, develops the first formal school for African American children with an eventual student body of 100 students. Curriculum included Latin, algebra, science art, music and drama.
1925 The South Florida Real Estate Boom peaks. Homestead High School is established and Homestead Rotary Club receives its charter.
1926 Ed Leedskalnin starts constructing “Coral Castle”, (right) the Card Sound bridge opens and in September “the Great Hurricane of 1926” hits the southeast coast of Florida and destroys the real estate boom. The First Presbyterian Church is chartered.
1930 The population declines to 2,319.
1932 The First National Bank of Homestead is established.
1933 The Labor Day Hurricane destroys the railroad to Key West. Homestead Baptist Church converted into emergency hospital.
1938 A highway to Key West opens, using the railroad right of way and bridges.
1939 The Lily Lawrence Bow Library is built as a WPA project. Franklin D. Roosevelt visits Florida City.
1942 Lt. Col. William Plummer activates the former Pan Am Services Air Field into a fully operational military base, Homestead Army Air Field.
1945 Hurricane closes Homestead Army Air Field.
1947 Royal Palm State Park becomes Everglades National Park, President Truman participates in dedication.
1950 Retired military helps increase local population to 4,573.
1953 Homestead Air Force Base is reestablished.
1954 Homestead Historic Town Hall Museum, the Florida City Pioneer Museum, and the Gentner, Bow, McMichaels and Chipley families and Jack Levy for donating “Then” photography from their collections.
1962 Cuban Missile Crisis turns nation’s attention to possible missile attack, three missile sites established in farm land of the Redland.
1965 Hurricane Andrew devastates Homestead with a direct hit.
1965 A permanent Nike Missile Site is built and manned inside the Everglades National Park.
1969 Turkey Point Nuclear Power Station commissioned.
1970 Dedication of Biscayne National Park.
1973 Homestead population has increased to 25,000.
1982 Hurricane Andrew devastates Homestead with a direct hit.
1994 First race at Homestead-Miami Speedway.
2007 Downtown Historic District listed on the National Registry of Historic Places.
2013 Celebration of Homestead Centennial.
2015 Seminole Theatre reopens as a performing arts center.
2016 New Homestead City Hall opens in Downtown Homestead.

**The City of Homestead Would Like to Thank...**

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Other collaborations by Homestead Historic Preservation board, Homestead Main Street Program, and Homestead Centennial Steering Committee.
A self-guided introductory tour to help visitors and residents learn more about how the City of Homestead developed.

Visit us on the web at www.cityofhomestead.com

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