



JULY/AUGUST 2020

Birch Bulletin

Seaside Tunnel Mosaic New Iconic Photo Spot



From left: Friends Executive Director Gale Butler, Florida State Representative Chip LaMarca, Elaine and Jon Krupnick, Community Foundation of Broward CEO Linda Carter and Park Manager Kyle Easley

Thanks to Elaine Krupnick, who saw the beachside tunnel opening and said, "That should have some art on it...", we now have art on the tunnel entrance. The Elaine Krupnick Fund for the Arts of the Community Foundation of Broward has made possible the beautiful new tunnel mosaic. It will be a popular "selfie spot" we have no doubt. "We are so proud that this mosaic will be here to make people smile and use as a backdrop for photos for a very long time," said Elaine.

According to artist Todd Michael, "Mosaic is forever...". While Todd Michael is also the artist who painted the Aquarium Mural inside the tunnel, he is best known as a mosaic artist. Todd cut the mosaic tiles into 1/4" pieces so he could capture the detail of the seascape he had



in mind. After the Krupnicks approved the artwork, Todd began a labor of love. Due to repairs needed on the entrance, the project took longer than

expected but it was well worth the wait.

Come visit the Park and cross over either through the tunnel or on A1A to the beach. Take a photo of you and your friends or family in front of the mosaic, send it to us and we'll put it up on our website and Facebook.



Beach Tunnel Entrance Mosaic



From left: Mia Imbrigiotta, Mia Lodovico, Amanda Collins, Lexi Goyette, Isabelle Ferrando, Jordan Greene, Celia Korona, Elsa Brantmeyer

Debutantes Brighten Beach

The Lauderdale Debutantes guided by Paige Hyatt chose Hugh Taylor Birch State Park for one of their community service projects. While there was record heat that day, they were troopers and worked hard to rid the beach of trash and debris.

Thank You Girls!



Debutantes clean Fort Lauderdale Beach adjacent Birch State Park



Executive Committee

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Gale M. Butler
GButler@BirchStatePark.org
954-566-0660

DIRECTOR OF MEMBERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT

Michelle Schmitz
MSchmitz@BirchStatePark.org

We are a 501c(3) non-profit organization formed to help preserve, conserve, enhance, and promote Hugh Taylor Birch State Park through community support.

Upcoming Events Dates TBA:

A Garden Party – Sonesta Hotel
November 13, 2020

Terramar Holiday Reception
Shooter's Waterfront

An Evening by the Sea – TBA

Birdies 4 Birch Fort Lauderdale Country Club
TBA

Board President's Message

Adding to the "new normal" of our personal lives, taking over the presidency of the Friends' board of directors at this time has given "new normal" a whole different meaning for me! Thank you to everyone who has helped keep awareness of Friends up by sharing online photos and posts from our social media sites. Also, with the help of Tom Byrne and Sandra Roy, we've been able to receive PPP funds for Friends.

We know there will come a time when we might have to make hard decisions and we'll make them. We will move forward with the best interests of the Park in mind. In the meantime, Gale and Michelle have been successful in raising funds through a number of Terramar Society memberships and the generosity of the Amaturo Family Foundation. Benches are continuing to sell and memberships are on the rise, so stay tuned and stay healthy!



Christine Madsen

Executive Director's Message



Gale M. Butler and Michelle Schmitz

This has been a time of upheaval in all of our personal and work lives. We know there are needs far greater than the needs of a nature park. We are enormously grateful to those of you who have renewed your memberships, sponsored benches and bid on our recent online live auction. It all helps.

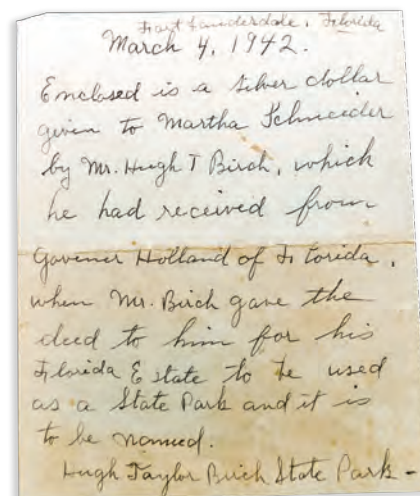
Michelle and I have been optimistically writing grants we may not receive, planning events we may not be able to hold, and generally paddling upstream. I am personally grateful to Chris Madsen, Tom Byrne, and Sandra Roy who have spent more time on Friends' than they ever thought they would.

Also, I am grateful to Michelle, our new Director of Membership and Development, for her skills, energy and good nature. We are doing our best to be the much needed support group for Birch Park and its staff as we monitor existing projects and fundraise to "Bring Birch Back!"

HISTORY OF HUGH TAYLOR BIRCH STATE PARK

The Value of a Silver Dollar

The story of how the state of Florida came to receive all 180-acres of Hugh Taylor Birch's estate for the sum of one silver dollar is true. On March 4, 1942, Birch gave Florida Governor Gardener Holland the deed to his estate to be used as a nature park and named Hugh Taylor Birch State Park. In exchange, Governor Holland paid Birch one silver dollar. Prior to Birch's passing in 1943, he gave the silver dollar to Martha Schneider, a friend. Martha wrote this note explaining the exchange – and that is how Birch Park came to be.



Retro Sign to Announce Birch Park to Visitors

For years, an iconic sign announcing Birch State Park to drivers on A1A and East Sunrise Boulevard served to let people know what all the “green space” was. Today, that corner is empty. Most people pass by the busy intersection without knowing there is a 180-acre nature park to be explored. With all the new amenities and upgrades, Fort Lauderdale should be proud to let everyone know Hugh Taylor Birch State Park exists!

Now, thanks to a donor, we have matching funds to help re-introduce the iconic sign. We are waiting for final approval from state park officials in Tallahassee.



Above: Original park sign corner A1A and Sunrise Blvd. Below: Rendering of planned Hugh Taylor Birch State Park sign

This Old House

Hugh Taylor Birch Builds Terramar 80 years ago



Hugh Taylor Birch built this residence, which he named Terramar, in 1940 at a cost of \$15,000.

The house is built of concrete block covered with stucco. Some of the features include oak parquet floors upstairs and terrazzo floors downstairs. There are two staircases — one for the family to use and the other for the help. The house has five bedrooms with five bathrooms. Birch used some construction details more typical of a northern design than a south Florida one, including the fireplaces and sash windows instead of jalousie windows which provide more ventilation.

Working with his friend and contractor J.B. Fraser, Birch spent many years preparing the remaining 180 acres of his original property. He cut paths, planted many kinds of exotic vegetation and dredged the lagoons.

In 1942 Birch deeded the property to the state and upon his death in 1943 the property became a state park. The house was renovated in 1989 to house interpretive exhibits.



Hugh Taylor Birch (left) with J.B. Fraser (right).

Courtesy of Friends of Birch State Park

Thank You! Terramar Society Members

The Terramar Society of the Friends of Birch State Park is the backbone of Friends' operations. We thank these very loyal annual supporters.

Banyan Level - \$5,000

Joe & Wini Amaturo
Jim Ellis
Steve & Jeannie Hudson
Ed & Sherry Meehan
Carlos & Lisa Rodriguez
Bill & Anne Scherer
S. Donald Sussman & Michelle Howland

Manatee Level - \$2,000

The Miniaci Family
Peggy Olin

Sea Turtle Level - \$1,000

John & Summer Barranco
Stephen & Kari Botek
Gale M. Butler
Andrew & Connie Caldwell
Tyler & Sarah Chappell
Michael & Mary Ellen Coen
Ed Cumisky & Amanda Hunt
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Mari Mennel-Bell & Joel Greenbaum
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Paul Templer
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Steve Walker & Karen Hooks

Marti's Garden Club - \$1,000

Joe & Wini Amaturo
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Rick & Rita Case
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Ted & Kathy Drum
Jim & Janet Jordan
Lisa Kitei
Michael & Monica Maroone
Ed & Sherry Meehan
Mari Mennel-Bell & Joel Greenbaum
Bill & Anne Scherer

Terramar Updates: New Roof, Hurricane Windows and Doors!



Park Manager Kyle Easley works on new Terramar roof.

Thanks to major donor and Past Friends' Board President Jim Ellis for the much-needed hurricane windows and new roof of Terramar. The 80-year-old house has withstood many storms in the past but to make sure the historic home of Hugh Taylor Birch is around for another 80 years, these repairs and enhancements had to happen.



Left to right: Rangers: Jackie Anderson, Jeanette Amadeo-Hyder and Jenni Leve

"We're grateful to Jim for the renovation of Terramar and other projects as well," said Kyle Easley, park manager. "Our visitors love all the enhancements and updates and it makes us proud."

How You Can Help

There are 175 state parks in Florida. The park service only has 1,100 full-time employees but over 30,000 volunteers. The parks rely on the volunteers who contribute their time and talent each year to make Florida State Parks some of the best parks in the United States.

- Volunteer in the Park (Ranger station has applications)
- Join Friends of Birch State Park
- Support, volunteer or donate an auction item for a fundraising events
- Sponsor a Park Bench or Picnic Area
- Sponsor a project or parts of a project

(954) 566-0660
birchstatepark.org



Elks Youth Camp Campaign Launches



Elks Youth Camp

While Covid19 cancelled our fundraiser for the renovation of the 70-year-old Elks Youth Camp the day before the event, we are moving forward with plans to renovate the Camp.

Some of the projects in the Elks Youth Camp include updating the kitchen for safety reasons, refurbishing the cabins with new air conditioners, updating the dining hall, and using a seventh cab, now used for storage, as an outdoor classroom.

Youth groups rent the Camp almost every weekend. They enjoy such outdoor experiences as canoeing and kayaking on Long Lake, roasting marshmallows at the fire pit, sleeping in bunk beds in one of the 6 cabins and chowing down on meals served in the 85-person dining hall.



Kitchen



Dining Hall

Corporate Retreats Available

Soon, we'll offer the Elks Youth Camp to corporations for weekday retreats when the camp is not being used by youth groups. Businesses would pay to use the camp which would help with maintenance of the Camp.