NPS Form 10-900 (Oct. 1990)

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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ANTERAGENCY RESOURCES DIVISION

ANTERS SER INSTRUCTION SERVICE TO 15

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions we see instructions of the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each white marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "NA" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property	
historic name OSPREY SCHOOL	
other names/site number	
2. Location	
street & number <u>337 N. Tamiami</u>	Trail (U.S. Highway 41) N/Anot for publication
city or townOsprey	N ✓ Avicinity
state Florida code E	County Sarasota code 115 zip code 34229
3. State/Federal Agency Certification	
□ request for determination of eligibility mee Historic Places and meets the procedural and I meets □ does not meet the National Requirement □ nationally □ statewide □ locally. (□ Segnature of certifying official/Title Florida State Historic I State of Federal agency and bureau	al Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination ets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of diprofessional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property gister criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant see continuation sheet for additional comments.) Deputy SHPD 6/6/94 Date Preservation Officer, Division of Historical Resource as not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional
Signature of certifying official/Title	Date
State or Federal agency and bureau	<i></i>
4. National Park Service Certification	hore
I hereby certify that the property is: entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.	A Signature of the Keeper Referred in the Date of Action National Register, -15.94
 determined eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet. 	
determined not eligible for the National Register.	
removed from the National Register.	
other, (explain:)	

SARASOTA CO., FL.

County and State

5. Classification		
Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as a party) (Check quity one box)	Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)	
☐ private	Contributing Noncontributing	
☑ public-local ☐ district	build	dings
□ public-State CREE □ public-Federal: A A AAOI □ structure □ object	0 0 sites	-
□ object		
	obje	
		ıl
Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)	Number of contributing resources previously in the National Register	listed
N/A	0	
6. Function or Use		
Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)	Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)	
EDUCATION/ School	VACANT/ not in use	
7. Description		
Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)	Materials (Enter categories from instructions)	
Vernacular	foundation concrete	
	walls <u>stucco</u>	
	roofasphalt	
	other	
		

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Name of Property	County and State
8. Statement of Significance	
Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)	Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)
**X*A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.	Architecture Community Planning and Developmen
☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.	
Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and	
distinguishable entity whose components lack	Period of Significance
individual distinction.	1926-1944
□ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.	
Criteria Considerations (Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)	Significant Dates
Property is:	1926-1927
□ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.	
	Significant Person
☐ B removed from its original location.	(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)
☐ C a birthplace or grave.	N/A
□ D a cemetery.	Cultural Affiliation
a cemetery.	N/A
☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.	
☐ F a commemorative property.	
☐ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance	Architect/Builder
within the past 50 years.	ARCH: M. Leo Elliott
Narrative Statement of Significance	BLDER: Becchetti and Romersa
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets	5.)
9. Major Bibliographical References Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on Co	one or more continuation sheets.)
Previous documentation on file (NPS):	Primary location of additional data:
☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested	■ State Historic Preservation Office Other State agency
 □ previously listed in the National Register □ previously determined eligible by the National 	☐ Federal agency ☐ Local government
Register	☐ University ☐ Other
 ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # 	□ Other Name of repository:
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #	

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner
(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name _______

street & number _______

city or town ______ state _____ zip code ______

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

OSPREY SCHOOL, SARASOTA CO., FLORIDA

Section number	⁷ Page	1
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Summary

The Osprey School, 337 N. Tamiami Trail, is an elongated one-story building with an irregular plan. The vernacular structure has a few Spanish Colonial Revival style features, primarily the stucco treatment of the wall surface and the original entrance portico. This six-classroom elementary school was constructed in 1926 of structural clay tile walls set on a concrete slab foundation. The cross gabled roof is clad with composition roll roofing.

Setting

The Osprey School is located on the west side of Tamiami Trail (U.S. 41), at the northern boundary of the town of Osprey (photo 1). The rectangular school parcel, containing 2.41 acres, is bound on the north by a vacant strip of land, on the west by a mobile home park, and on the south by the First Baptist Church of Osprey and its related cemetery. The school occupies the eastern end of the parcel and sits back about twenty feet from the right-of-way for Tamiami Trail (U.S. 41). This close proximity is the result of several road widening projects.

A semi-circular shell drive extends west of the building, with entrances to the street both north and south of the building. Several cedar and oak trees line the front (east) portion of the site. One large oak tree shades an area southwest of the west entrance. A well and water system, completed in 1964 and enclosed by a fence, remain along the north property line. A concrete basketball court occupies the southwest corner of the lot.

Physical Appearance

The building is approximately 190 feet long and 32 feet wide. Centrally located on the main (east) facade is the gabled entrance bay featuring a semi-circular arched pediment supported by wood box columns (photo 2). The columns originally formed an open triple bay entrance, but the openings have since been enclosed with plywood, metal awning windows, and a single wood door. A set of brick steps leads up to this entrance.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

OSPREY SCHOOL, SARASOTA CO., FLORIDA

		7	_	2
Section	number	/	Page .	4
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Symmetrical wings extending north and south of the central entrance bay contain three classrooms each. Groups of five wooden windows, composed of two stacked horizontal pivot sash (6 lights each) and triple-light transoms, highlight the east, north and south facades. Gable extensions of the northern and southern most classrooms contain three individual horizontal pivot wood windows, with triple-light transoms, and a small arched louvered gable vent above. Individual air conditioning units, serving each classroom, were later added in some window openings and through the walls on the front (east) facade. All of the window air conditioning units have since been removed and the openings have been boarded up (without replacement windows).

Extending across the west facade is a porch/hallway constructed of wood columns and wood framing members, with screening in the upper two-thirds of the exterior walls (photo 3). Plywood panels conceal the lower third of the screened walls. The plywood panels and screening are obviously later modifications, although the dates of these changes are unknown. Two restrooms, extending west from the porch/hallway, are constructed of structural clay tile walls with a stuccoed exterior finish. The west elevation of each restroom ell features a central window and a small arched louvered gable vent.

The school's floor plan has remained basically unaltered since its construction in 1926. It is essentially a long rectangular one-story masonry structure (190 feet by 32 feet) with six classroom spaces and a central administrative office core. A nine-foot-wide screened wooden porch extends the length of the west side (approximately 170 feet long) serving as an exterior hallway accessing each classroom and the central office core (photo 4). The original entrance porch has been enclosed for additional office space and also serves as a secondary entrance. The west, now primary, entrance is accessed by steps and a ramp leading to a screened door located slightly north of center, opening into the long hallway. Additional screened doors access the hallway on the north and south (photo 5).

The interior partitions are constructed of structural clay tile and all interior wall surfaces have been plastered and painted. Standard wood members are used for the off-grade floor and roof framing. Original wood flooring has been covered in most of the classrooms with carpet.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

OSPREY SCHOOL, SARASOTA CO., FLORIDA

Section number7	Page3	
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Each classroom measures approximately 30 feet by 22 feet (photo 6). The northern and southern most classrooms protrude slightly from the east face of the building. Two of the rooms in the northern wing are separated by eight floor-to-ceiling wood folding doors, allowing the rooms to be opened into a large auditorium space (photo 7).

The main entrance was originally open from the east to west. It was later enclosed for use as administrative office space. Two small offices were created in the original entrance porch, also enclosed at a later date. The original central entrance hall is surrounded by four small rooms and a small hallway leading to the first classroom in the south wing. Two of these rooms are private restrooms, one is used for storage, and the other is inaccessible.

Although the Osprey School is currently vacant, plans call for its renovation and use as a visitor center for the nearby Historic Spanish Point (NR listed 1975 as the Osprey Archaeological and Historical Site).

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

OSPR	EY	SCHOOL,	SARASOTA	co.
FLOR	IDA	1		

Section number ___8 Page ___1

SUMMARY

The Osprey School is significant at the local level under National Register criteria A and C. It was one of five schools built between 1926 and 1928 along the Tamiami Trail in Sarasota County. These school buildings were constructed to meet the needs of the expected population increase due to the 1920s Florida Land Boom (Criterion A). The Osprey School remained in use as an elementary school and then teaching center until 1989. Designed by well-known Tampa architect, M. Leo Elliott, the vernacular building has minimal Spanish Colonial Revival style details. The design of the building responded to the needs of a local community elementary school in a hot and humid climate using simple, yet classical, design elements (Criterion C). Although now vacant, it remains in good condition with very few alterations.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

In February 1867, a well-educated farming family from Utica, New York began a journey to Florida, prompted by the Congressional Homestead Act of 1862. By September 1867, they had selected a homestead along the lower Sarasota Bay. John and Eliza Webb, their five children, Eliza's father, Samuel Graves, and her sister Emily planted a garden and began construction on their new home, which they named Spanish Point.

The Webb family settled fourteen miles south of the Whitaker homestead, located in what is now the city of Sarasota. They were the only residents in the general area, but quickly encouraged friends from the north to visit and set up their own homesteads. Gradually a small community formed, and in 1884 Webb applied for a post office, named Osprey at his request. He chose the name because of his admiration for this beautiful bird. By 1897, the General Directory of Manatee County described Osprey as a fine fishing point with land suitable for citrus production. Fifteen families were listed as residents of Osprey. The Webb family operated a hotel at their home. Many guests stayed at Spanish Point, and a number of them returned annually. Some eventually made the area their home.

John and Eliza Webb conveyed parcels of about 20 acres of land on the north and south ends of the 145 acre homestead to

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

	OSPREY	SCHOOL,	SARASOTA	co.,
2	FLORIDA	A		

Section number ___8 Page __2

their children Lizzie and Will. Lizzie received a deed to the northern plot; Will received the southern portion. On part of his segment, Will platted the Village of Osprey subdivision. Palmetto Avenue, named for a large palm growing there, connected Will's parcel of land and the subdivision to the original homestead road. The rest of the Webb homestead was rarely parcelled out. Ownership mostly remained with the original homesteaders, except for the repeat boarders who managed to get Webb to sell off a small parcel for a winter home.

Mrs. Potter Palmer, intrigued by a real estate advertisement in the Chicago Daily Tribune, traveled from Chicago to Sarasota early in 1910. That year Mrs. Palmer, her brother and her son began purchasing land in the Sarasota area and eventually formed the Sarasota-Venice Company. Mrs. Palmer established her winter residence in Osprey, near the coastal center of the Palmer land holdings. She remodeled a house sited north of Frank and Lizzie Webb Guptill's house and named it the Oaks. She eventually purchased additional land which was part of the Webb family homestead, renaming it Osprey Point. The future growth of the area was aided by the extension of the Seaboard Air Line Railway through Osprey on its way to Venice around 1912.

In 1922, the <u>Sarasota County Directory</u> described Osprey as a village and post office close to the shore. About 118 residents were listed in the directory, many with northern addresses as well. To the north, in Sarasota, land values had increased slowly but steadily after World War I. Between 1923 and 1925 subdivisions sprang up everywhere, including some new ones in Osprey. The Florida Land Boom had begun.

During the 1920s roads were improved throughout Sarasota County and most of Florida. The Tamiami Trail was blazed through the Everglades in April 1923. It was not officially completed and opened until April 1928, finally joining Miami and Tampa by way of Fort Myers and Sarasota. The Trail passed through the heart of the community of Osprey.

The population of Osprey had increased from 150 in 1918 to 200 by 1925. The anticipated continuing growth of population was brought to a halt by the collapse of the Land Boom. By 1926, Osprey's population had decreased to about 84 inhabitants. By 1938 it had climbed to only 120.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

		OSPREY SCHOOL,	SARASOTA	CO
Section number8_	Page3	FLORIDA		

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The increased population that resulted from the Land Boom necessitated the construction of new educational facilities. 1926, four new schools were designed by Tampa architect, M. Leo Elliott, for Sarasota County, all located along the new Tamiami Three were located within the city limits of Sarasota and the fourth was the Osprey School, located about ten miles south of downtown Sarasota. The schools in the city of Sarasota [Bay Haven Elementary (NR 4/23/84), the Sarasota High School (NR 3/22/84), and Southside Elementary School (NR 9/14/84)] were recommended by the Cambridge, Massachusetts planner, John Nolen, in a 1925 comprehensive plan for the city. These three school are still used as educational facilities by the Sarasota County School Board. In addition to the schools designed by Elliott, Sarasota County, in the 1920s, erected school facilities in Nokomis and in Laurel. The two-room Nokomis school was built in 1924 for the neighboring communities of Nokomis and Venice. was enlarged ca. 1928 and was demolished in 1970. The Laurel School, about five miles south of Osprey, on the Tamiami Trail, was built in 1928 from the designs of H. C. Schwebke. It was demolished in 1994.

Prior to construction of the Osprey School, classes were held in a frame, one-room school building located at a nearby site. The old school building served all grades in one room. When it was time for a class to work with the teacher, that class sat in the front row seats. When finished, the class moved to the back of the room and the students continued their work independently. The front seats were therefore always left open for each class to take a turn working with the teacher.

Newspaper accounts indicate that construction bids obtained before a site for the new building was acquired. The land for the school building was purchased by the Board of Public Instruction for the County of Sarasota from Ernest A. and Mabel W. Johnson on December 28, 1926. Mabel Webb Johnson was William Webb's daughter. This parcel was most likely part of Will Webb's plot deeded to him by his father, John G. Webb.

Construction bids were accepted in July 1926 for a two-story elementary school in Osprey, but were all higher than the available \$30,000 bond. New bids were requested in August, and a contract was awarded for a one-story, six-classroom building on

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number8_	Page4	FLORIDA
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August 6, 1926. A construction time of approximately six months was anticipated. The firm of Becchetti and Romersa completed the new building in early 1927 (photo 8).

The Board of Public Instruction for Sarasota County consisted of the following four members in 1926: A. L. Joiner, Chairman; Thomas L. Livermore; Claude T. Curry; and T. W. Yarbrough, Superintendent. The Osprey School Board of Trustees included: Charles W. Webb, Chairman, T. L. McAuley and A. B. Hand. These names are listed on the dedication plaque located in the original entrance porch to the school (photo 9). The chairman, Charles W. Webb, was Mabel Webb Johnson's older brother and John G. Webb's grandson.

The new Osprey School apparently opened sometime in the spring of 1927 and served grades 1 through 9 for the students in Osprey, Vamo, and the surrounding areas. Students began first grade in the southern classroom and worked their way up through the grades toward the north classrooms. After ninth grade, the children were bussed to the new 1926 Sarasota High School where they joined classmates from Venice, Nokomis, and Laurel.

The Osprey School was remodeled in 1959 by the Sarasota architectural firm of West and Waters. At this time the front entrance porch was enclosed to create two additional offices. Other minor changes were completed to improve the structure for the children's use. Individual air conditioning and heating units were added to each classroom.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Each of the school buildings designed by M. Leo Elliott in Sarasota County in 1926 is different from the others, representative of Elliott's eclectic style of work and broad range of talents. All of them, however, featured an ornamented central entrance bay flanked by symmetrical classroom wings. The Bay Haven and Southside Elementary Schools were designed in the Mediterranean Revival style with a rich application of stucco and cast stone ornamentation. The Sarasota High School displays Elliott's ability to design in the Collegiate Gothic style, popular for many university campuses.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

24 - 1				OSPREY	SCHOOL,	SARASOTA	co.
Section number	er <u>8</u>	_ Page	5	FLORIDA	A		

Because Elliot was working with a limited budget in Osprey, the school received little ornamentation. The result was a building that was strikingly modern in its appearance and that incorporated an efficient and logical floor plan. Elliott's design provided maximum cross ventilation through the classrooms, necessary to survive the hot, humid Florida climate before air conditioning was readily available. In addition, the exterior hallway reduced overall construction costs.

Elliott, a native of Woodstock, New York, moved to Tampa in 1907. He had studied architecture at the Cooper Institute and Don Barber's Atelier in New York City. Soon after arriving in Tampa, Elliott prepared competition drawings and won commissions for the Centro Asturiano clubhouse and the YMCA building. He then joined in partnership with B. C. Bonfoey, an established Tampa architect. Their firm designed the Tampa City Hall in 1915.

During World War I, Elliott served as an engineer constructing concrete oil tankers in Jacksonville. After the war, he resumed his architectural practice in Tampa under the name M. Leo Elliott Inc., Architects and Engineers. At its peak, the firm employed 46 draftsmen, six structural engineers, 17 inspectors and a secretarial staff. In addition to designing many of Tampa's important buildings, Elliott also designed Sarasota's first skyscraper, the First National Bank Building at Palm and Main Street, later known as the Orange Blossom Hotel.

Elliott's fine reputation extended to Tallahassee where he designed the expansion wings of the Florida House and Senate for the State Capitol in the 1930s. During World War II, Elliott opened an office in Atlanta to design war housing. After the war, M. Leo Elliott and Eliot C. Fletcher worked as partners. Elliott retired in 1950 and died in 1967.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

OSPREY SCHOOL, SARASOTA CO., FLORIDA

Section	number	9	Page	1

- Arnall, Betty Hauser. "Schools in the Venice * Nokomis * Laurel Area." (On file at Venice Archives and Area History Collection, Venice City Hall.) n.d.
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- Hawes, Leland. "His Buildings were Elegant Additions." Tampa Tribune, 4 October 1987, p. 8-I.
- Matthews, Janet S. Edge of Wilderness: A Settlement History of Manatee River and Sarasota Bay 1523-1885. Tulsa: Caprine Press, 1983.
- . <u>Venice: Journey from Horse and Chaise</u>. Sarasota: Pine Level Press, 1989.
- Meserve, Andrew I. <u>A Complete General Directory of Manatee</u>
 <u>County, Florida</u>. Braidentown, Florida, 1897.
- Polk, R. L. & Co. Sarasota County Directory. Jacksonville: R. L. Polk & Co., 1922, 1926, 1936 and 1938.
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- Sarasota Herald, 4 August and 6 August 1926.
- Smashey, Philip. <u>History of the Smasheys</u>. Osprey, FL: Philip C. Smashey, 1972.
- Tate, Susan. "Historic Schools of Sarasota County, Florida: the 1928 Laurel School." 1990.
- This Week in Venice. 10 July 1926 and 17 July 1926. (On file at Venice Archives and Area History Collection, Venice City Hall).
- Williams, J. Raymond. <u>An Historic Resources Survey of the Coastal Zone of Sarasota County, Florida</u>. Tampa: University of South Florida, 1990.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

OSPREY SCHOOL, SARASOTA CO., FLORIDA

Section number	10	Page -	_1
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Verbal Boundary Description:

A rectangular parcel, 419 feet east-west by 273 feet north-south (283 feet along the east property line), as described in Deed Book 83, Page 314, less a 5 foot wide strip along the west property line deeded to the Sarasota Bay Mobile Home Park, Inc. on January 20, 1976.

Boundary Justification:

The boundary, shown on the site plan map, encompasses the entire parcel that has been historically associated with the Osprey School.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

OSPREY SCHOOL, SARASOTA CO., FLORIDA

Section number Photo Page 1

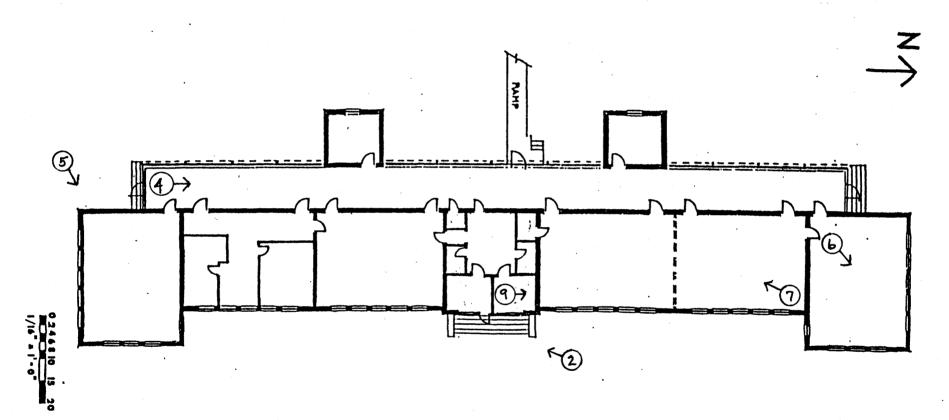
- 1. Osprey School
- 2. Osprey, Sarasota Co., Florida
- 3. Rebecca Spain Schwarz
- 4. October 16, 1992
- 5. Archaeological Consultants, Inc.
- 6. Main (east) facade, looking northwest
- 7. Photo 1 of 9

The information for items 1-5 is the same for the following photographs except as otherwise noted:

- 6. Detail, front (east) entrance, looking southwest
- 7. Photo 2 of 9
- 6. Rear (west facade), looking northeast
- 7. Photo 3 of 9
- 3. Joe Larson
- 4. 1991
- 5. Historic Spanish Point
- 6. Interior, looking north down hallway/porch
- 7. Photo 4 of 9
- 6. Southwest corner, looking northeast
- 7. Photo 5 of 9
- 6. Interior, north classroom, looking northeast
- 7. Photo 6 of 9
- 6. Interior, auditorium/classroom, looking southwest
- 7. Photo 7 of 9
- 3. Unknown
- 4. Unknown
- 5. Historic Spanish Point
- 6. Main (east) facade, looking northwest
- 7. Photo 8 of 9
- Dedication plaque, north wall of original east entrance porch
- 7. Photo 9 of 9

OSPREY SCHOOL SARASOTA CO.. FL. Photo Direction O→







OSPREY SCHOOL SITE PLAN Boundary .

A.S. Highway #41