

4353

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" 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 Silver Springs

other names/site number MR3723

2. Location

street & number 5656 East Silver Springs Boulevard N/A not for publication

city or town Silver Springs N/A vicinity

state FLORIDA code FL county Marion code _____ zip code 34488

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Alissa Sotane 7/12/19
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Bureau of Historic Preservation, Division of Historical Resources, Florida Department of State
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

entered in the National Register See continuation sheet

determined eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain) _____

Signature of the Keeper

11.19.2019
Date of Action

Silver Springs

Name of Property

Marion County, FL

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- buildings
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include any previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
6	3	buildings
1	0	sites
12	1	structures
4	0	objects
23	4	total

Name of related multiple property listings

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Architectural Resources of the Sarasota School of Architecture
MPS

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE: outdoor recreation

COMMERCE/TRADE: restaurant

LANDSCAPE: park

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE: outdoor recreation

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Sarasota School

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation VARIOUS

walls VARIOUS

roof VARIOUS

other _____

Narrative Description

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

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.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** 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 individual distinction.
- 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.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 36) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

- ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION _____
- CONSERVATION _____
- ART _____
- ARCHITECTURE _____
- ENGINEERING _____
- ETHNIC HERITAGE - Black _____

Period of Significance

1924-1969

Significant Dates

1957

Significant Person

see continuation sheet

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Lundy, Victor, architect

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of Repository

National Natural Landmark, National Park Service

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property roughly 88.62 acres

UTM References

(Place additional references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1	7	3	9	7	5	8	2	3	2	3	2	5	9	4
	Zone		Easting					Northing							
2	1	7	3	9	7	6	7	4	3	2	3	2	5	9	2

3	1	7	3	9	7	6	7	0	3	2	3	2	4	5	4
	Zone		Easting					Northing							
4	1	7	3	9	7	7	6	6	3	2	3	2	4	5	6

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Andrew Waber, Historic Preservationist

organization Florida Division of Historical Resources date March 2019

street & number 500 South Bronough Street telephone (850) 245-6430

city or town Tallahassee state FL zip code 32399

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

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 Florida Internal Improvement Trust Fund, Florida Division of Recreation and Parks

street & number 3900 Commonwealth Boulevard, MS100 telephone (850) 245-2555

city or town Tallahassee state FL zip code 32399-3000

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 amend 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.

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Silver Springs, Marion County, FL

Summary

Silver Springs consists of buildings, structures, and objects historically associated with the Silver Springs and Paradise Park roadside attractions. The buildings are primarily concentrated along Mammoth Spring and on a partially manmade channel on the south end. The name of Silver Springs actually applies to the whole collection of individual springs that feed into the Silver River, the largest of which is Mammoth Spring. This massive circular springhead historically served as the terminus of the steamboats that flourished here in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The later roadside attraction was built around Mammoth Spring, which continues to function as the public embarkation point of glass bottom boat rides. The surviving built environment reflects this legacy, with the remnants of the contributing 1950s-era Silver Springs Tourist Center, non-contributing Boat Terminal, the 19th century and 1930s-era retention walls, and the 1930s-era Osceola Statue, which are all located around the spring. Just to the south of Mammoth Spring is the canoe rental and boat ramp area, which features rails that were historically used to lift and lower glass bottom boats into the river. On the south end of the park are the boat storage and maintenance facilities, dry dock, warehouse, and workshops, which primarily date to the 1960s.

The Silver Springs Tourist Center consists of two Sarasota School style buildings located within Silver Springs State Park: the Concession Building and the Restaurant Building. The buildings were designed in 1957 by noted Sarasota School architect Victor Lundy. Both buildings feature steel frame construction, non-structural curtain walls, and prominent low-pitched roofs with exposed wood beams. The Concession Building is a crescent-shaped, two-story building with a prominent cantilevered roof extending over an exterior walkway, serving as a shelter. The shelter is supported by square wood columns. The spaces between the shelter canopies and the roof function as skylights, with aluminum heat-resisting glass. The first and second stories of the building facing the Silver River feature a series of prominent large fixed glass windows that extend to nearly the full height and width of the facades. The Restaurant Building is also two stories in height with the prominent usage of wood and 16-light fixed windows. There is a projecting circular section on the east elevation of the building. Additionally, a detached, one-story flat roof shelter extends from the Concession Building in the direction of the Restaurant but terminates just prior to reaching it. Historically, this shelter did not connect the two buildings, as the space between them was used as a primary thoroughfare for automobile traffic. The complex was originally a three-part complex, with a prominent continuous curved boat dock shelter connected to the Concession Building. The shelter was torn down sometime after the period of significance and replaced by three non-historic hipped roof shelters that comprise the Boat Terminal and are considered non-contributing due to age.

On the south end of the district is the boat storage area. This area is primarily a legacy of the American Broadcast Company's (ABC) ownership of the park, which began in 1962 and lasted into the late 1970s; the resources here primarily date to the mid to late 1960s. This area includes the boat shelter and dock, the dry dock, and support buildings used for maintenance and storage. This area also contains the Wildlife Office, also known as the Ross Allen Building, which was relocated here sometime after the period of significance. It is the

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last remaining building directly associated with the operations of the Ross Allen Reptile Institute, which was a major attraction at Silver Springs. However, since it was relocated, it is not considered a contributing building to the district.

The district also includes six contributing glass bottom boats that date primarily from the mid- to late-1960s. They are the last resources in the park directly associated with Paradise Park. The boats feature distinctive roof vents, porthole windows, and metal ribbon windows along the port and starboard sides. Although there have been some modifications, the boats retain their integrity.

The portion of the Silver River within the boundaries which includes the springs themselves is considered a contributing historic site. The Silver River has continuously served as a historic tourist navigational route since the 1860s. Mammoth Spring itself historically served as the turnaround point for steamboats during the 19th and early 20th centuries and then as the embarkation point for glass bottom boats from at least the early 20th century to the present day. A naturally deep spring, the river has remained largely unaltered except for a manmade channel that branches south from the spring to serve the boat support buildings.

Setting

The Silver Springs district is located within Silver Springs State Park in Silver Springs, Florida. Silver Springs is an unincorporated community that has long evolved around its location along its namesake springs and the tourist attraction that opened there. It is also closely associated with nearby Ocala, Florida, and is considered part of the Ocala metropolitan area. The immediate surroundings north and west of the Silver Springs Tourist Center is commercial in nature, with hotels and restaurants next door. The south and east of the district is the state park, which is largely undeveloped or has been allowed to return to nature.

Physical Description

Tourist Center and Springhead Area

Concession Building Exterior

The Concession Building is a two-story building with a prominent low-pitched shed roof that extends past the building to form a covered walkway supported by square metal columns that have been covered over in wood (Photos 1-7). Due to the steel frame construction, the exterior walls are nonstructural. The building's main façade has a character-defining curve that correlates to the perimeter of the springhead. The building features a distinctive row of fixed light glass windows on the first and second stories of the main (southeast) facade. The portions of the exterior walls that are not glass are either exposed brick or brick sheathed with wood. The walkway shelter features exposed wood beams along its roofline. The spaces between the shelter and the

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building's roof function as skylights, with aluminum heat resistant glass (Photo 8). The covered walkway extends around the northeast elevation of the building. On the rear elevation of the building, the original exposed metal columns, exposed brick, and continuous fixed light glass windows are still visible (Photo 9). The first story roof is actually designed to be walked on, as there are multiple second story exterior doors that open out onto the roof (Photos 10-11). The roof, which is covered in gravel, serves a secondary function as an emergency fire escape.

The exterior of the second story possesses a higher degree of integrity, with the character defining fixed glass windows, overhanging roof, exposed nonstructural brick walls, and exposed steel support columns all retained and visible (Photo 12).

Concession Building Interior

The first floor of the Concession Building functioned primarily as a public area (Photos 13-22). There are three distinct areas in this public section: a large single open space historically used as the main gift shop, a central space historically used as a restaurant and public restroom facility, and a vendor space historically used as storefronts. Flanking the central space were two corridors that historically were completely open but have since been enclosed, with only the corridor between the historic gift shop and the restaurant unimpeded by walls. On the southeast elevation, an additional space adjacent to the historic storefronts was enclosed. The original terrazzo floors, although covered in some portions, are still present on the interior.

The second floor of the Concession Building is accessed from a distinctive free-floating steel beam staircase that is a textbook example of Lundy's interior designs (Photo 23). The second floor historically functioned as the administrative offices of the entire park operations. The corridors have been largely retained and the original interior walls are still mostly intact (Photo 24). Some of the offices have been subdivided and modernized with drop ceilings (Photos 25-26). The two offices fronting the springs, which are the largest offices on the floor and served as park manager offices, retain their integrity. There is also a safe located on this floor, which was historically used to handle the large amounts of cash that were being handled in the park (Photo 27).

Walkway Shelter Between Concession and Restaurant Buildings

In the space between the Concession and Restaurant buildings, there is a freestanding flat roof walkway shelter that leads partway to the Restaurant Building (Photo 28). This was part of the original Lundy design and maintains its integrity. Historically, the gap between the end of this shelter and the Restaurant Building functioned as the primary driveway for visitors coming off the highway and into the Visitor Center parking lot.

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Restaurant Building Exterior

The Restaurant Building is a two-story building with a complex layout (Photos 29-30). It features a low-pitched flat roof extending over both the first and second stories, similar in appearance to the Concession Building (Photo 31). The Restaurant Building layout is curved much like that of the Concession Building, but, unlike the Concession Building, the Restaurant is orientated towards the west, away from the spring and is closer to the highway. This was done intentionally to allow for the communities of Ocala and Silver Springs to use the building as well as patrons of the park. There is a distinctive semicircular wing on the northeast section of the building, which historically housed the kitchen operations. The exterior of the Restaurant Building has been modified more than the Concession Building. Much of the windows and exposed brick on the exterior has been covered over with wood. The space facing the exterior walkway that leads in the direction of the Concession Building has been enclosed. A ticket booth and turnstile were added under this walkway. Much like with the Concession Building, the Restaurant Building's original steel beam columns on the first story have been covered over with wood but remain intact underneath. The steel beam columns are visible on the second story. Exterior access between the two floors is via a distinctive free-floating steel beam staircase similar in appearance to the staircase in the Concession Building.

Restaurant Building Interior

There are two distinct sections of the first floor, one on the general northwest corner and generally on the southeast corner. The southeast corner of the first floor, which historically functioned as a diner, has seen some alterations (Photos 32-34). There are drop ceilings and rooms in this space that are largely cut off from the rest of the building's interior. The original interior walls and vents are still present however, and can be viewed in sections where the drop ceiling tiles are missing. On the general northeast corner, the building maintains its character-defining semicircular wing, which served as the kitchen space for the restaurant (Photos 35-36). The space on this end of the building, which consist of single open spaces, is still largely retained on both the first and second floors. These spaces were originally used as the restaurant, bar, and public gathering places. The first floor still has its original parquet floors, the character defining circular interior wall along with the space for the bar, and the kitchen with its unusual brick pattern. The second floor space, which was later turned into a daycare for employees' children, retains a high level of spatial integrity (Photo 37). Carpeting has been put in place on this floor, which can be easily reversed. The building has some condition issues. The roof has air pockets and on the interior there are sections of the ceiling that are deteriorated and have loose asbestos and electrical wiring hanging down.

Divers' Building (Non-Contributing)

To the rear of the Concession Building is the divers' building, a simple one-story wood frame building that was originally located along the river but was moved sometime after the period of significance (Photo 38). It was

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built sometime during the period of significance during the Ray and Davidson era. Although the building was moved from another spot within the boundary, its current location is out of character with its original site. As a result, it is considered non-contributing to the district.

Osceola Statue

One of the few remaining resources within the district that is associated with the pre-World War II Silver Springs attraction is the cast concrete statue of Osceola (Photo 39). It is the last remaining tourist attraction element from the pre-World War II era of the park. The statue itself dates to the 1930s and is a great example of the rough vernacular statues that were erected at many roadside attractions during the era. The statue overlooks a prominent point near where the Silver River meets the Silver Springs springhead.

Retention Walls

There are two structures along the springhead that both predate World War II (Photos 40-41). There is a stone wall that dates to the late 19th century. It currently serves as a foundation for the springhead dock facilities and is largely obscured or covered over by modern wood and concrete walls and walkways. This wall is one of the few resources in the park that predates the roadside attraction. The retention wall is visible in postcards and stereoviews in front of and underneath a hotel that was built on the property in the 1800s. The wall served as a structural element in the port facilities here going back into the 19th century. A second wall dates to the 1930s, and extends from the springhead east past the Osceola statue. This was added by Davidson and Ray for both erosion control and beautification.

I Spy Statues

Underwater within the springhead are three statues, which were used in the filming of an episode of the television series *I Spy*, starring Bill Cosby and Robert Culp. The statues are part of the glass bottom boat tours. They still possess good integrity. In addition to the three still at the bottom of the spring, there are two more that have been placed inside the Concession Building as part of a museum display (Photo 42).

Springs and Waterways

Springs

The springs that feed into the Silver River are the centerpiece of the park (Photo 43). The name Silver Springs actually applies to the full collection of springs, a total of at least 30 spring vents that sit in an area of $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile along the Silver River (Figure 1). The collection of springs was named a National Natural Landmark by the National Park Service in 1971. The largest of these springs is Mammoth/Main Spring, which consists of two

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large vents in the circular source of the river known as the springhead or main pool. This spring alone comprises roughly 45 percent of the water that is fed into the river. There is a conjoined spring pool to the south of the main spring which consists of three side springs, two of which are the Reception Hall and the Bridal Chamber, located about 1,000 feet east of the Main Spring. Another significant spring is the Blue Grotto, which is about 300 feet east of the Reception Hall spring.¹



Postcard of the various springs included in the glass bottom boat tours, circa 1940s
(Source: State Archives of Florida)

The springs have been a locally significant tourist boat route almost continuously since the 1860s. The headsprings have served as the turnaround point for the popular steamboat lines, particularly the Hart Lines, from the 1860s into the early 20th century. Starting in the early 20th century, it served as the loading point for the popular glass bottom boat rides that replaced the steamers on the river. Thanks in large part to the surrounding land being converted into a state park, the landscape around the springhead and the Silver River within the state park boundaries retains its undeveloped naturalistic appearance which made it a popular tourist attraction in the

¹ Florida Department of Environmental Protection, *Bulletin No. 66: Springs of Florida* (Tallahassee, FL: Florida Geological Survey, 2004), p. 244-245.

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late 19th century. The springs itself was a major underwater studio, in which nearly all Hollywood studios that used the Silver Springs park filmed their movies. It also served as the studio of renowned photographer Bruce Mozert, who was a noted trailblazer in the field of underwater photography. Although the natural flow of the river near the Ocklawaha River has been impacted by the Cross Florida Barge Canal which was constructed in the middle 20th century, the Silver River itself within the boundaries of the state park remains largely unaffected and in its natural state.

Fort King Waterway

There is a secondary, manmade channel known as the Fort King Waterway, which was first dug in the 1940s. It extends off the south side of the Mammoth Spring springhead and runs roughly parallel to the Silver River for roughly half of a mile. The waterway was used for extended boat tours and also to provide drainage for Ross Allen Island and the animal enclosures at the Institute. Sometime during the 1960s, the waterway was cut further in a secondary loop to the south to accommodate the boat shelter. The canal system is considered a contributing structure to the district.²

Boat Shelter and Work Space Area

On the south end of the park is the boat shelter and work space area. These facilities all either date to the 1960s or, as in the case with the Wildlife Office, were built during the period of significance but moved sometime after the period of significance.³

Boat Barn and Pier

The boat barn and pier dates to the 1960s, with a portion of the shelter extended sometime after the period of significance (Photos 44-46). The complex consists primarily of three elements: the workshop that houses the tools and equipment needed to support boat operations; the pier that houses the glass bottom boats when not in public use; and the shelter that protects the boats while in storage. Due to the unusual nature of the boats, which are all electric powered, the piers are custom fitted with charging stations.

² Florida Division of Recreation and Parks, Department of Environmental Protection, "Silver Springs State Park Approved Unit Management Plan Amendment," (Tallahassee, FL, December 17, 2014), p. 19.

³ According to the Marion County Property Appraiser's Office records, some of the buildings were constructed in 1973, but witness accounts place the buildings in the late 1960s.

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Dry Dock

Adjacent to the boat barn and shelter is a dry dock facility, which was also constructed in the 1960s (Photo 47). It is used to lift the glass bottom boats out of the water for the purposes of maintenance or repairs. It is comprised primarily of steel beams and winches supported by wood posts. The entire structure was custom fitted for the lifting of the glass bottom boats. The wood posts have likely been replaced but the steel structures within the dry dock are still present and the resource maintains good integrity.

Ross Allen Building/Wildlife Office (Non-Contributing)

On the east side of the workshop area is the Ross Allen building (Photo 48). It is a simple one-story wood frame building with a low-pitched, overhanging roof supported by wood posts. The building, which was a support building constructed in the 1950s in connection to the Ross Allen Reptile Institute, was moved to its current location sometime after the period of significance. It is the last remaining resource associated with the Institute. As with the divers' cabin, although the Ross Allen Building was moved within the boundary of the district, its present location is completely out of character with its original site. Hence, it is considered non-contributing.

Adjacent to the Wildlife Office is a simple one-story concrete block building used as a support building for the wildlife office (Photo 49). There are still wood cages on the inside of the building to hold animals along with facilities for the preparation of food for the animals.

Workshops and Warehouse

There are two large workshop buildings and a warehouse that are all considered contributing to the district (Photos 50-52). The workshops were used to make the signage for the park. The warehouse was used for the storage of materials for the park. Within the warehouse is the plaque given to Silver Springs recognizing its designation as a National Natural Landmark (Photo 53).

Boat Ramp

Located to the south of the Mammoth Spring but north of the boat shelter area is the boat ramp and canoe rental area. Historically, prior to ABC's construction of the boat barn, this area was used for the storage and maintenance of the glass bottom boats. Inset within the ground are the original rails used to pull the original glass bottom boats out of the water. It predates the park and is considered contributing to the district (Photo 54).

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Glass Bottom Boats

There are six historic glass bottom boats that are considered contributing to the district (Photos 55-58). These boats, which date to the mid-1960s, are the best surviving resources associated with Paradise Park. The boats measure roughly 31 feet in length, 11.5 feet in width, and 14 feet in height with a net tonnage of 20 tons and a passenger capacity of roughly 35 people. The boats feature distinctive roof vents, porthole windows, and metal ribbon windows along the port and starboard sides. The interiors of the boats are mostly metal with wood furnishings. The interior layouts feature a centrally-placed glass floor pane flanked by wood bench seats and encircled by a metal walkway. Access to the interiors is via the aft side of the boats. The boat captain's seats and steering wheels are centrally-placed at the forward side of the boats. To allow access and to open the view for the captains, the rear doors slide open and a portion of the roof is lifted up.

Other Non-Contributing Resources

Boat Terminal

There are three hipped roof dock structures fronting the Mammoth Spring springhead that were constructed after the period of significance (Photo 59). These structures, which comprise the Boat Terminal, function as the loading point for passengers on the glass bottom boat rides. Due to age, these structures are considered non-contributing.

Canoe Rental Facility

To the south of the main springhead is the boat ramp and canoe rental area (Photo 60). In addition to the historic rails, this area consists of a modern boat slip, storage facilities for canoes, and a canoe rental office that postdate the period of significance and are considered non-contributing to the district.

Alterations

The most significant alteration to the tourist center complex was the removal of the boat dock shelter sometime after the period of significance. It was replaced by the three wood hipped roof structures that currently function as the loading docks for the boats. The Concession Building has seen a number of changes, including the partial enclosure of the space between the building and its main (southeast) walkway; the covering of distinctive steel beams with wood; the enclosure of corridors; the infill of the south end space; and the covering of some of its windows. The Restaurant Building has likewise seen similar changes but to a greater degree.

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The glass bottom boat shelter has been extended but otherwise retains good integrity. Two of the buildings within the district, the Ross Allen Building and the Divers' Cabin, were relocated from a spot nearby the Silver River to their current respective locations.

Integrity

The Silver Springs Tourist Center, is still in its original location near the Silver River springhead. Other elements of the district, including the boat barn and dry dock, warehouses and maintenance buildings (with the exception of the Ross Allen Building), Osceola Statue, and boat ramp rails are all in their original locations as well. The two buildings within the district that have been moved, the Divers' Cabin and the Ross Allen Building, have been moved to another spot within the district boundaries. Hence the district retains its integrity of location. When constructed, the complex was set within a larger attraction that included the Ross Allen Reptile Institute, the Seminole Village, the Prince of Peace Memorial, and the Tommy Bartlett Deer Ranch. Although these elements are gone, there are several important aspects of the setting, including the springhead, the parking lot, and the unincorporated town of Silver Springs to the north, that are still there. The surroundings grounds are also still being used as a public park. Hence, the district retains its integrity of setting and association. The Tourist Center has seen a number of alterations, but despite these changes, both buildings retain their distinctive shapes, their character-defining overhanging flat roofs, their original steel frame construction, and their most important interior spaces. Many of the elements that are obscured, such as the steel columns and windows, are still present underneath. As a result, the Concession Building and Restaurant Building retains their integrity of design, materials, workmanship, and feeling to contribute to the district. With the exception of the extension of the boat shelter, there has been very little that has changed with the remaining resources in the district. Most of the original roadside attraction is gone, including the Ross Allen Reptile Institute, the Prince of Peace Memorial, and the Tommy Bartlett Deer Ranch, and the boundary has been adjusted accordingly. The remaining resources, however, are either significant in their own right (the Tourist Center and glass bottom boats) or are historically and visually linked to ongoing tourist activities taking place on the Silver River. Hence, the district retains its integrity of design, workmanship, materials, feeling, and association.

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Resource List

Contributing Resources

<u>Buildings</u>	<u>Date of Construction</u>	<u>Site File No.</u>
Concession Building	1957	MR3732
Restaurant	1957	MR3733
Boat Barn	ca. 1965	MR3735
Metal Workshop Building	ca. 1969	MR4345
Paint Shop	ca. 1969	MR3734
Warehouse	ca. 1969	MR4343

Structures

Glass Bottom Boat Shelter and Dock	ca. 1965	MR3735
Glass Bottom Boat Dry Dock	ca. 1969	MR4346
Mammoth Spring Retention Wall	ca. 1900	MR4347
Silver River Retention Wall	ca. 1930s	MR4348
Boat Ramp Rails	ca. 1900	MR4315
Fort King Waterway	ca. 1940s-1960s	

Structures (Glass Bottom Boats)

<i>Chief Emathla</i> (Hull No. 500922)	ca. 1965	MR4349
<i>Chief Micanopy</i> (Hull No. 299250)	ca. 1965	MR4350
<i>Chief Charlie Cypress</i> (Hull No. 504606)	ca. 1965	MR4351
<i>Chief Neamathla</i> (Hull No. 539882)	ca. 1965	MR4352
<i>Chief Yahalochee</i> (Hull No. 508741)	ca. 1965	MR4353
<i>Chief Yoholo</i> (Hull No. 539881)	ca. 1965	MR4354

Sites

Silver Springs/Silver River

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Objects

Osceola Statue	ca. 1930s	MR4355
<i>I Spy</i> Statues (Underwater)	ca. 1960s	MR4356

Non-Contributing Resources

Buildings

Divers' Cabin	circa 1950s	MR4344
Wildlife Office/Ross Allen Building	circa 1950s	MR3736
Canoe Rental Building		

Structures

Boat Terminal

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Significant Person

Davidson, W. M.
Mozert, Bruce
Ray, Carl

Summary

Silver Springs is being proposed for listing in the National Register at the local and state levels under Criterion A and B for Entertainment and Recreation; at the local level under Criterion A for Ethnic Heritage: Black; Criterion B for Art; and under Criterion C for Architecture and Engineering. The period of significance extends from 1925 until 1969. Although river-based tourism on the Silver River and at the springs goes back to the late 19th century, the modern park's history dates to the ownership of Carl Ray and W.M. "Shorty" Davidson, who ran the park as a renowned roadside attraction from 1927 until 1962, when it was acquired by ABC. At its height, Silver Springs was the most-visited tourist attraction in Florida, drawing an estimated 800,000 people a year by 1950. The park received international attention as a location for movie and television productions, most notably the *Tarzan* movies starring Johnny Weissmuller, several James Bond movies, and the television series *Sea Hunt* starring Lloyd Bridges among others.

The district includes the Silver Springs Concession and Restaurant buildings, elements of the Silver Springs Tourist Center which were built following a fire that destroyed much of the waterfront. The Concession Building in particular, which also served as the administrative office for the entire park, is also significant for its association with the active professional life of Davidson and Ray, who were instrumental in forming the park and turning it into a major tourist attraction. In addition to forming the Silver Springs attraction, they also founded nearby Paradise Park, which was a significant African American park that operated until 1969. They were instrumental in the tourist industry across the state. The Tourist Center is also significant for its association with the active professional life of Bruce Mozert, who was a trailblazer in the field of underwater photography and whose images showcasing Silver Springs and Paradise Park were published in the leading national publications of the period.

Also included within this district is a fleet of six historic 1960s era glass bottom boats and the distinctive boat dry docking and storage facilities which were custom-built for the boats. Silver Springs had long been one of the most well-known attractions to use glass bottom boats. Many innovations were added to the boats to allow for more efficient operation, starting with the conversion of the gas-powered wood glass bottom boats into electric-powered boats. The original wooden boats were replaced with the current metal boats in the 1960s. The boats, which date to the American Broadcast Company (ABC) era, have plied the waters of the Silver River for over 50 years and would have been used for both the historic Silver Springs attraction as well as the Paradise Park operations. They are the best surviving resources still directly associated with Paradise Park, which was a

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locally significant roadside attraction that catered to an African American clientele. Opened after World War II, it was one of the few such attractions opened to black people during the era of Jim Crow segregation. The boats themselves were operated by African American captains, who were prominent members of the community. Many of them voiced their discontent with not being allowed to bring their families along on the boat tours, which played a role in the decision to open Paradise Park. One of the boat captains, Eddie Vereen, was placed in charge of Paradise Park.

The Concession Building and the Restaurant are locally significant examples of Sarasota School architecture. They also represent a major local work of the noted architect Victor Lundy. The buildings display features that are textbook examples of the personalized touches Lundy often displayed on his buildings. This includes the prominent overhanging roof that served a dual purpose as a covered walkway; the prominent exposed beams; the free-floating staircases built along a single steel beam; and the usage of non-structural, partial-height brick walls. Lundy was also known for emphasizing forms with the landscape, which is best expressed through the curved forms of the buildings conforming to the springhead.

Silver Springs contributes to the Architectural Resources of the Sarasota School of Architecture MPS under Associated Historic Contexts B. III The Influence of New Architects, 1953-1959, and Associated Property Type F.5: Miscellaneous Buildings.

Historical Context

Silver Springs during Age of Steamboats (1860s-1910s)

One of the earliest forms of tourism in Florida was health tourism. People often came south on doctors' orders to escape the cold climate. By the mid-19th century, a small number of health spa resorts were established primarily near springheads. At this time, springs were being sold to the public for their reputed healing qualities. Among the earliest of these health spa resorts was Orange Springs, which is located near Silver Springs on another tributary of the Ocklawaha River. The property on which the resort stood was largely owned by Senator David Levy Yulee. After the Civil War, a resort spa opened in Green Cove Springs that centered around the sulfur springs there. At its height, there were as many as ten hotels operating in Green Cove Springs, which is located along the St. Johns River.⁴

Hubbard L. Hart is generally credited with introducing steamboat tourism along the Ocklawaha and Silver rivers. Hart was a Vermont native who first arrived in Palatka in the 1850s, operating mail and stage coach lines between Tampa and Palatka. He saw the potential of opening the Ocklawaha and Silver rivers to steamboat

⁴ Thomas R. Berson, "Silver Springs: The Florida Interior in the American Imagination," (Phd. diss., University of Florida, 2011), p. 99-102, 128.

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tourism, and in an effort to capitalize off this he started the Ocklawaha River Navigation Company in 1860. The biggest hindrance to navigation along the Ocklawaha River was clearing the river of fallen trees. After the interruption brought on by the Civil War, Hart received a contract from the state government to commence with clearing the river. By 1867, the passage from the Ocklawaha River to Silver Springs was cleared for steamboat traffic. Hart commissioned custom-built steamboats that allowed for easier navigation of the twisting, turning rivers.⁵

Following the Civil War, there was an influx of northerners who settled in the area, many of whom brought with them northern sensibilities of exploring natural wonders. Among them was Harriet Beecher Stowe, the writer of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, who lived near St. Johns River in what is now the Mandarin area of Jacksonville. By 1870, the main east coast rail line was extended between Jacksonville and Savannah, Georgia, making trips along the St. Johns and Ocklawaha rivers more accessible. By the 1870s, Silver Springs and the Ocklawaha River began to attract the attention of northern travel writers such as Edward King. Descriptions of the springs were seen in national publications such as *Scribner's* and *Appleton's*. Stowe herself wrote a glowing review of the springs in the *Christian Union*, a national publication to which she regularly contributed. In 1875, the author Sidney Lanier profiled Silver Springs and the Ocklawaha River in a book he wrote titled *Florida: Its Scenery, Climate, and History*, which saw wide circulation throughout the 19th century.⁶

Thanks to this advertising, the steamboat lines extending along the Ocklawaha and Silver rivers became major tourist attractions in the late 19th century. Among the famous visitors were President Ulysses S. Grant and General William T. Sherman. Although the settlement of Silver Springs, which shot up around the springhead, possessed a post office, warehouse, tavern, store, and small boarding house, the majority of visitors were day trippers who either returned to Ocala or departed via steamboat back to Palatka. Ultimately, the penetration of railroads into the interior of Florida doomed the steamboat lines. Although a small rail connection between Silver Springs and Ocala was completed, it did not match the scenic routes along the rivers. By the early 20th century, Silver Springs was mostly a local gathering spot for the nearby city of Ocala.⁷

Introduction of Glass Bottom Boats (circa 1900-1927)

The early 20th century also saw a marked shift in the watercraft that plied the Silver River. By this time, glass bottom boats began to replace the steamers in popularity. Initially, the glass bottom boats were improvised rowboats powered by oars. Who exactly was the first to use glass bottomed boats on the Silver River and when

⁵ Berson, 113-117.

⁶ Berson, 117-121, 128-133.

⁷ Berson, 128-129, 137, 140-141.

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exactly it took place remains unknown. Although some local sources contend that these boats were invented here, this claim remains unsubstantiated. The river was certainly among the earliest interior waterways in the United States to see sustained commercial glass bottom boat activity. By the early 20th century, H.L. Anderson, who bought the springhead property, and Phillip Morrell were operating competing glass bottomed boat operations. In 1908, Ed Carmichael acquired Anderson's interests, including 80 acres of springhead property and operated the glass bottom boats for himself. Carmichael is credited with introducing canopies and cushioned seats to the boats along the Silver River. At first, as the glass bottom boats were small, they coexisted with the ship lines, which often advertised the glass bottom boats to help draw passengers. By 1920, however, most visitors boarded from points along the Silver River, particularly Mammoth Spring, as opposed to a St. Johns River port such as Palatka. This change was brought on by an increase in automobile travel and the improvement in the size and quality of glass bottom boats plying the Silver River, which by now completely replaced the steamers.⁸



One of the first glass bottom boats on the Silver River, circa 1910 (source: State Archives of Florida)

An account of a first-time trip on one of the glass bottom boat rides on the Silver River made during a congressional hearing in 1917 demonstrates the impression left on early visitors:

I was on [Silver Springs] last fall... I would like to say for the benefit of the committee that, although I have lived in Florida for about 33 years now and I have been to Silver Springs, I never really realized what it was until that trip. There is nothing in the United States any more wonderful than Silver Springs... you go out on a glass-bottom boat they have there, and the water is so clear and crystal you can see a 10-cent piece on the bottom of the lake, sometimes 60 or 70 feet deep.⁹

Although there were some attempts at developing the area around the springs, it would not be until Carmichael leased the springhead property to Davidson and Ray in 1924 that any serious attempts were made at turning the springhead itself into a major tourist attraction. The following year, Davidson and Ray subleased the property to New Yorker Charles K. Frankhauser, who presented an ambitious plan of developing the springs. This plan fell through, however, and by 1927, Davidson and Ray took back the sublease.

⁸ Gary Monroe, *Silver Springs: The Underwater Photography of Bruce Mozert* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2008), p. 18-20; Berson, p. 179, 191-194.

⁹ US House Committee on Rivers and Harbors, Hearings on the Subject of the Improvement of Oklawaha and Kissimmee Rivers, Fla. 64th Congress (USGPO, 1917), p. 7.

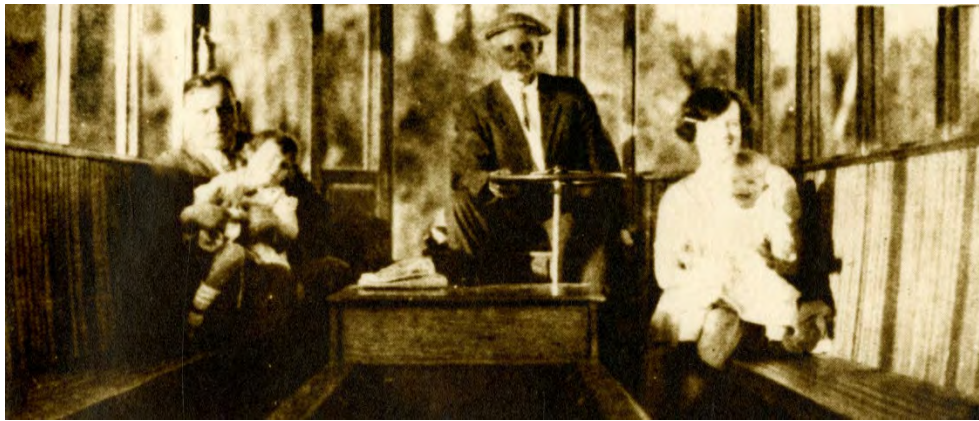
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Historic Significance: Criterion A Entertainment/Recreation

Silver Springs Roadside Attraction (1927-1962)



W.C. "Shorty" Ray and his family on one of the first gas-powered glass bottom boat rides at Silver Springs, circa 1920s (Source: Powers, n.p.)

When local entrepreneurs Carl Ray and Shorty Davidson started the Silver Springs tourist attraction, there was a fundamental change in tourism patterns nationally. More and more people were taking to the road in automobiles, and as automobiles improved in performance, durability, and efficiency, they began traveling farther distances. By 1937, an estimated 70% of tourists arrived via automobile. The central Florida route of the Dixie Highway passed through nearby Ocala, providing a direct connection to the beaches of south Florida and major cities such as Atlanta, Chicago, and Detroit. Later, US Highways 27, 301, and 441 passed through Ocala.¹⁰

Davidson and Ray, who formed the Silver Springs Amusement Company to manage the site, quickly determined that their best opportunity to capitalize on Silver Springs was to not compete directly with the major tourist destinations such as Miami or with hotels. Rather, they aimed to draw people passing through along the highways, having them spend a few hours at the attraction before moving along on their way to their destination. This approach proved critical to their marketing, as hotels were far more receptive to helping them promote their attraction. Shortly after taking over, they set out building a new pavilion, dance hall, bathhouse, and boardwalk. To lure more people, they offered free admission to the spring itself, relying on revenue from glass bottom boat tours, souvenir sales, and concession rentals.¹¹

¹⁰ Berson, 202.

¹¹ Berson, p. 196-200.

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Tourists boarding glass bottom boats, 1929
(source: State Archives of Florida)



President Calvin Coolidge visiting Silver Springs, circa 1929
(source: State Archives of Florida)

The centerpiece of Silver Springs was the fleet of glass bottom boats that provided tours on the rivers. Realizing this, Davidson and Ray began working on ways to improve the visitors' experiences rather early on. The noisy outboard motors were replaced first by gasoline-powered engines before being refitted with the electric power in 1932. These boats were operated exclusively by uniformed African American boat captains, who also served as tour guides for the passengers. These captains were highly respected members of the local African American community who proved instrumental to the operation of Silver Springs. They were pivotal to the marketing of the park, as images of the black boat captains and the all-white passengers were disseminated in promotional materials throughout the country. Despite their prominent roles in the operation of the park, the boat captains were unable to bring their families along on the tours, a glaring example of segregation not lost on them.¹²

In addition to the glass bottom boats, the park also offered extended Jungle Cruises and what were known as "photo subs." Unlike the glass bottom boats, the Jungle Cruise boat was an open-air boat with forward-facing seats and a canopy that could be pulled down to shelter passengers. Looking to expand visitors' experiences at the springs, Ray and Davidson also introduced a number of what were called scenic photo subs. These were larger draft vessels that allowed for passengers to go completely below the waterline and view the springs from portholes. Later, there was an aquatorium added to the park, which was a fixed structure underwater that gave visitors a view

similar to that found at Weeki Wachee Springs. Although these were part of the everyday visitor experiences at Silver Springs, it was the glass bottom boats that were most associated with the park.¹³

In 1938, Silver Springs hosted the first ever meeting of what is now known as the Florida Public Relations Association (FPRA). This group, founded by John W. Dillin, is the oldest professional public relations organization in the United States. The FPRA became a major force in the marketing of the state and in professionalizing the public relations industry, establishing a code of ethics and accreditation courses.¹⁴

¹² Lu Vickers, "Tourism and Segregation at Silver Springs," *Gainesville Sun*, February 5, 2017.

¹³ Berson, p. 205-206; Monroe, p. 31.

¹⁴ Florida Public Relations Association, "Our History," <https://www.fpra.org/about-us/our-history/>; Florida Public Relations Association, "History of FPRA," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bVe36wnby_M.

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The proprietors of Silver Springs were particularly skillful at creating innovative ways to advertise the attraction. Early on, they invested heavily in roadside advertising, particularly nailing signs to trees along the road. They also posted Silver Springs-branded safety reminders at traffic intersections and sent out trucks with Silver Springs dioramas across the country. Realizing that promotion of routes was key to bringing in visitors, they were quick to help advertise other attractions. This was perhaps best exemplified by an advertising campaign that began in 1952 in which Silver Springs erected flashy billboards that committed half of its space to other attractions. Garnet Carter, who would later gain fame for his “See Rock City” painted roadside barn campaign, was inspired by Davidson and Ray. It was the work of photographer Bruce Mozert, however, that perhaps best personified the efforts of promotion that took place at Silver Springs.¹⁵

Bruce Mozert

Mozert, who is often cited as a trailblazer in the field of underwater photography, was a mainstay at Silver Springs for many years, starting in the 1930s. Although technically a freelance photographer who ran his own business, Mozert was the official photographer of Silver Springs. It was Mozert’s innovative photographs of attractive young women posing underwater, often engaging in mundane daily tasks, that saw wide circulation across the country. Mozert was the brother of renowned pinup artist Zoe Mozert, who played a pivotal role in helping him establish his photography career. He first arrived in Silver Springs during the filming of one of the *Tarzan* movies taking place at the time and he was enraptured by the underwater filming taking place. He began fabricating watertight enclosures for his cameras and experimenting with various methods of underwater photography. His innovations and techniques employed in underwater photography proved of immeasurable value to Hollywood productions and promotional films that were shot at Silver Springs. As a tourist attraction photographer, Bruce Mozert was one of the first to photograph visitors and provide them with photographs of their experience, a side business that is now almost universally employed across the theme park and amusement park industry. Mozert would



Underwater photograph by Mozert, circa 1950s
(source: Monroe, p. 105)

¹⁵ Berson, p. 196-200; Harris Powers, “Two Young Men Gazed Into a Crystal Pool, They Dreamed, Worked Hard. And Now... It Attracts Millions,” *Suntime* June 27, 1953 [n.p.].

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photograph visitors as they boarded the glass bottomed boats, taking the film back to be developed so that visitors could have a photographic print ready for purchase when they came back from the end of the ride.¹⁶

Davidson and Ray were innovative in the manner in which they dealt with vendors. They collected no rent from them and only took a 10% commission on sales. Mozert was one of their most successful vendors, selling his photographs as well as photographic equipment to visitors. At the height of the Silver Springs operations, Mozert's operations alone generated more than \$100,000 a year in revenues. Silver Springs also featured an antique store, gift shop, woodcraft novelty shop, and citrus stand. There was also a resident potter, Henry Graack. A native of Denmark, Graack made Silver Springs branded pottery in front of tourists, using orange perfume to give the ceramics a scent reminiscent of Florida. Graack remained a fixture at Silver Springs from 1935 until 1966.¹⁷



Silver Springs branded pottery made by Henry Graack (Courtesy of the Museum of Florida History)

Ross Allen Reptile Institute

One of the most significant attractions on the Silver Springs property was the Ross Allen Reptile Institute (Figure 2). Herpetologist Ross Allen was the founder of the institute, arriving here in 1927. The park developed just to the south of the present-day Tourist Center along the Mammoth springhead. Thanks in large part to Allen's public shows, which featured him "milking" venomous snakes and giving educational lectures, and the reptile exhibit, the Institute quickly became a staple of Silver Springs and one of its most popular attractions. It would be profiled in the popular *Ripley's Believe It or Not* syndicated newspaper article. The Institute also established itself as a major center of herpetological research. Allen and his assistants collected snake venom from a large number of poisonous snakes, which were used to create antivenin by laboratories around the country. It was one of the earliest in the US involved in such endeavors. During World War II, over 72,000 snakes from 27 different species were milked by the Institute, which provided 90 percent of all venom used for antivenin for U.S. servicemen. According to Allen, he personally milked more poisonous snakes than anyone else in the United States. The preparation of venom for usage as antivenin actually required much processing and a large number of snakes. Each snake could only be milked once a day and



Postcard of Ross Allen Giving Snake Milking Demonstration, circa 1940s (Courtesy of the Museum of Florida History)

¹⁶ Monroe, p. 26-29.

¹⁷ Monroe, 20-21, 28-29.

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the venom had to be purified and dehydrated into crystalline form. The facilities at the Institute not only required accommodations for these snakes, but also required areas for venom processing. The venom laboratory established at the Institute was, according to Allen, the only of its kind in the United States when it opened. The fact that Allen was able to convert the milking process into part of a stage show to help self-fund the entire operation allowed for the Institute to become a major national player in what was a crucial step in the development and manufacture of life-saving antivenin.¹⁸

In the mid-1940s, Ross Allen acquired the business interests of George K. End, who is credited with establishing the first commercial rattlesnake cannery in the United States. End started his business, Floridian Products Corporation, in Arcadia, Florida, in 1931 before moving near Tampa shortly afterwards. He ran the Rattlesnake Headquarters, which was both a tourist attraction and canning factory. He successfully petitioned for the creation of a new post office, named Rattlesnake, Florida. The products were sold both as a novelty and as a delicacy in high-end restaurants around the country. End died in 1944 from a snakebite and his widow sold the snakes, patents, and canning operations to Allen. The Ross Allen Institute harvested about 500 rattlesnakes each year for the canning operations, known as the Ross Allen Cannery. The business later expanded into selling canned alligator meat. The business continued into the 1960s and provided an additional source of revenue for the operations.¹⁹



Canned rattlesnake produced at the Ross Allen Cannery (source: *Guide to Ross Allen's Reptile Institute* (Ocala, FL: Ocala Star-Banner, 1948), p. 26.)

The Institute also played a major role in the study and conservation of the American alligator and American crocodile. Allen, who often went out on expeditions to acquire alligators and crocodiles, was very much aware of the effects of development and overhunting on the populations of both species. Allen himself was often tasked with securing specimens of Florida reptiles for universities, museums, and zoos across the country. Although the Institute displayed other animals as well, especially later on, the reptiles remained the centerpiece of its display. The Institute would remain a fixture at Silver Springs until the 1960s, when Allen was bought out by ABC, who wished more direct control over the attractions at the springs.

¹⁸ C.J. Hylander, *Adventures with Reptiles: The Story of Ross Allen* (New York: Julian Messner, Inc., 1951), p. 3-21, 166.

¹⁹ State Library and Archives of Florida, "Please Pass the Rattlesnake," written by Josh, Florida Memory Blog, July 7, 2014, <https://www.floridamemory.com/blog/2014/07/07/please-pass-the-rattlesnake/>; Andreas Bothe, *Guide to Ross Allen's Reptile Institute* (Ocala, FL: Ocala Star-Banner, 1948), p. 26.

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Seminole Village

Another major element of the Silver Springs attraction that predated the Second World War was the Seminole Village. Constructed in 1934, it was a replica Seminole village that employed members of the Seminole Tribe of Florida. It was originally situated on a three-acre site just east of the swimming beach. Four members of the Seminole Tribe of Florida, including Sam Tommy, brother of the chief of the tribe, were involved in the initial planning and construction of the village. Roughly 50 to 60 members of the tribe from the Big Cypress area moved into the village. In addition to entertaining visitors by giving demonstrations of traditional Seminole living and wrestling alligators, the members of the tribe also generated money by selling wares they were making in front of visitors. Originally managed by Charles Metzger, the Indian Village attraction eventually came under the management of Ross Allen, who ran the site concurrently with his adjacent Reptile Institute.²⁰



Seminole family at the Seminole Village in Silver Springs, circa 1950s (Source: State Archives of Florida)

²⁰ David Cook, "Seminole Village Popular at Silver Springs," *Ocala-Star-Banner*, February 9, 2014.

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Silver Springs and Hollywood



Johnny Weissmuller during the filming of *Tarzan Finds a Son!* Circa 1938
(source: State Archives of Florida)



Scene from *The Creature from the Black Lagoon* filmed at Silver Springs ca. 1950s
(source: State Archives of Florida)

The clear waters and jungle-like surroundings made Silver Springs a popular on-site filming location for a number of Hollywood films and television shows, especially for underwater scenes. The first movie shot at the springs was a silent film, *Seven Swans*, in 1916. However, it was a 1929 short film produced by legendary sportswriter Grantland Rice titled *Crystal Champions* that brought Silver Springs to the attention of Hollywood. The film profiled the leading competitive swimmers of the day, including Johnny Weissmuller. It not only demonstrated the suitability of Silver Springs for shooting underwater scenes, but also profiled Weissmuller in one of his first talking film roles.²¹ This attention from Hollywood was crucial to the growth of Silver Springs. As Davidson himself stated, it was “not until the movies discovered the possibilities that lay under our crystal clear waters did Silver Springs mean much outside Florida. Until then, Silver Springs was a sort of glorified picnic park and swim beach.”²²

Silver Springs gained international attention in the 1930s as a filming location for the *Tarzan* movie franchise starring Johnny Weissmuller, starting with the initial movie *Tarzan the Ape-Man*.²³ The springs and the grounds around the springs served as a principal shooting location for the 1939 movie *Tarzan Finds a Son!* Weissmuller, who was already renowned as a champion competitive swimmer and Olympic gold medalist, became one of the most famous actors in Hollywood as a result of his role as Tarzan. Silver Springs exploited its connection to

²¹ Berson, 209.

²² Berson, p. 209.

²³ There is some debate as to precisely how many *Tarzan* movies were shot at Silver Springs. Some sources note the first six of the franchise. The movie site imdb.com mentions Silver Springs being used in at least four of the first six movies from 1932 to 1941.

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Tarzan as well, introducing the new Jungle cruises. In an effort to make the area look more tropical, macaque monkeys were introduced onto an island in the middle of the Silver River by a boat operator named Colonel Tooley. Unknown to Tooley, however, was that the monkeys were good swimmers. They quickly escaped from the island and today there are a number of non-native macaque colonies living along the Silver and Ocklawaha rivers.²⁴



Promotional image of Lloyd Bridges, star of *Sea Hunt*, taken at Silver Springs
(source: State Archives of Florida)

In addition to the *Tarzan* movies, a number of other movies were also filmed at Silver Springs, many of them utilizing the springs for underwater shots: *Creature from the Black Lagoon*; *The Yearling* starring Gregory Peck; *The Barefoot Mailman*; the James Bond movies *Thunderball*, *Moonraker*, and *Never Say Goodbye Again*; *Jupiter's Darling* starring Esther Williams; and *Don't Give up the Ship* starring Jerry Lewis among others. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, Silver Springs served as a principal shooting location for over 100 episodes of the popular television series *Sea Hunt* starring Lloyd Bridges. The proprietors of Silver Springs recognized the value of such exposure and went to great lengths to accommodate film crews on the property. They often provided equipment and loaned out their workers to assist with productions. Mozart's photographs were often used to cross-promote the productions and the attraction itself. A good example of this was the promotional photograph seen on the left, which shows *Sea Hunt* star Lloyd Bridges in front of the Silver Springs boat shelter with the glass bottomed boats in the background.²⁵

²⁴ Berson, p. 205-206; Monroe, p. 34.

²⁵ Monroe, p. 33-35; Unit Management Plan, p. 53.

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In 1955, Howard Hughes staged an elaborate underwater premiere for the movie he produced, *Underwater!* starring Jane Russell. The movie was screened underwater on a plastic screen, with the stars of the movie accompanying a number of reporters in scuba gear to watch the movie on benches set up underwater specifically for the occasion. Those who did not wish to see it in scuba gear watched the movie from the portholes of a submarine brought in. It was the first such premiere ever held and garnished a significant amount of attention. The premiere marked a major milestone in the career of actress Jayne Mansfield. A little-known actress at this time, she crashed the premiere, showing up two days before the event in a red bathing suit.²⁶ Photographs of her circulated around the world, and as a result of the press, she signed her first movie contract with Warner Brothers.²⁷



Photograph of the premiere of *Underwater!*
(source: *Life Magazine*, January 10, 1955, p. 67)

When Hollywood arrived in Silver Springs, they often used the reptiles from the Reptile Institute. One particular alligator that was popular was a large alligator known as Old Cannibal, which was used in a number of film sequences. Allen's involvement with the filming often led to some injuries, including a bite from a cottonmouth snake and a bite from an alligator that nearly resulted in the loss of his hand.²⁸

Folklore of the Springs

The springs have long been a source of legends, which were often either invented or exploited by or for tourist interests. The most popular stories were the ones involving tragic lovers. As early as 1891, there was the story of Wenonah, the daughter of Chief Okahumkee who fell in love with a rival chief of her father by the name of Chuleotah. Upon finding out his daughter was in love with this chief, Okahumkee waged a war against Chuleotah's tribe and in the ensuing battle Okahumkee personally killed Chuleotah. In her despair, Wenonah ran to a spot on the river known as the Crystal Fountain, where the ghost of Chuleotah beckoned her, and she jumped into the river and drowned. According to local legend, the green moss and algae on the river bottom were the loosened braids of Wenonah's hair. It was a story that was told to tourists by the steamboat captains.²⁹

²⁶ According to some sources, she had a bathing suit "malfunction," while others mention that her bathing suit was see-through. In an interview for a mass market publication, however, Mansfield only mentioned she wore a red bathing suit.

²⁷ Monroe, p. 35; John Maynard, *The Jayne Mansfield Pin-Up Book* ([New York]: Standard Magazines, Inc., 1957), p. 51-52, 57.

²⁸ Hylander, p. 159-164.

²⁹ J.O.D. Clarke, *Ocala, Fla.: A Sketch of Its History, Residences, Business Interests, Etc.*, (New York: The Republic Press, 1891), p. 48.

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Image of Priscilla Scott ("Aunt Silla") used in Silver Springs promotional material (source: "The Legend of the Bridal Chamber")

The most popular legend of the springs was that of the Bridal Chamber, which was told by an elderly African American woman by the name of "Aunt Silla." Her real name was Priscilla Scott and she was actually the ancestor of several generations of glass bottom boat captains. The Bridal Chamber story was similar in nature to the story of Wenonah. It told the story of two star-crossed lovers by the name of Claire Douglass and Bernice Mayo. Claire was the only son of a wealthy cotton planter while Bernice was a poor girl who was nursed by "Aunt Silla" as an infant and spent a great deal of time at her cabin. Claire and Bernice fell in love and promised to marry, but Claire's father objected to the match, sending him away to Europe and intercepting any letters received from Bernice. Distraught, Bernice grew sick and died in "Aunt Silla's" cabin. On her deathbed, Bernice requested "Aunt Silla" to dispose of her body in what was then known as the Boiling Spring, which she did. Returning a year later, Claire, assuming Bernice moved on with her life, came to Boiling Spring one more time to reminisce. To his horror, he recognized the Bernice at the bottom of spring by the bracelet he gave her and dove in to pull her out of the water. Unable to dislodge her, he embraced her instead and drowned. The rocks at the bottom of the spring then opened up, engulfing both of them.³⁰

Exactly when Priscilla Scott started telling the Bridal Chamber story is unknown but she was certainly doing it well before the 1920s roadside attraction. The story came to be so closely associated with the spring that the name was changed Boiling Spring to Bridal Chamber Spring. Scott was photographed in front of her house in a stereograph image of Silver Springs in 1874, an indicator she was possibly telling this story at this time due to the connections in the story between her home and the fictional Bernice Mayo. She was making a living selling the story when steamboats were still plying the Silver River. In the early years of the roadside attraction, Scott was a mainstay. Other African American employees at the springs, most notably the boat captains, were also entrusted with spinning folk stories for the tourists and it became a big part of the visitor experience at Silver Springs. The Bridal Chamber story is perhaps the best known example of this.³¹

Silver Springs During World War II (1941-1945)

During the war, gas rationing made it difficult for civilian visitors to see Silver Springs. This forced the proprietors to make some adjustments to keep the attraction open. During the war, Silver Springs became the

³⁰ Vickers and Wilson-Graham, p. 64-66; Paradise Park, "The Legend of the Bridal Chamber," in "See Florida's Silver Springs from Paradise Park for Colored People," [pamphlet], n.d.

³¹ Vickers and Wilson-Graham, p. 64-66.

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first private attraction in Florida to drop prices for service members. Thanks in large part to this strategy, Silver Springs still managed to draw over 200,000 visitors during the war.³²

Silver Springs After World War II (1945-1957)



This advertising for Tommy Bartlett's Deer Ranch is a good example of the innovative methods used by Silver Springs to promote their attraction. This was printed on a paper placemats used in restaurants
(source: Tim Hollis, *Lost Attractions of Silver Springs*, p. 60)

Following World War II, Bok Tower and Cypress Gardens overtook Silver Springs as the most popular Florida attractions. In 1947, Newt Perry, a protege of Ray and Davidson who was an active presence at Silver Springs, founded Weeki Wachee Springs. Despite this, the attraction remained popular throughout the 1950s and early 1960s. The Prince of Peace Memorial and Tommy Bartlett's Deer Ranch was added around this time. Bartlett was best known for his popular water ski shows based out of Wisconsin. He began his career as a radio personality, hosting the show *Welcome Travelers*, which would later be broadcast on CBS television. He later hosted *The Tommy Bartlett Show*, which appeared on ABC television. The Deer Ranch was a zoo with 150 species of deer among other animals. It often featured sets designed by artist Val Valentine, who worked with

³² Berson, p. 214.

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the Max Fleisher Studios as an animator for cartoons such as *Betty Boop* and *Popeye*. The zoo remained under the ownership of Bartlett until 1965, when he sold out his interest to Silver Springs.³³

Prince of Peace Memorial

At around the same time that the Deer Ranch was built, a religiously themed attraction known as the Prince of Peace Memorial was constructed. The religious attraction featured a series of small Carpenter Gothic chapels. Each chapel contained elaborate hand-carved wood dioramas depicting scenes from the Bible. These dioramas were carved by Paul Cunningham. The memorial remained a ubiquitous part of the Silver Springs attraction until the 1960s, when parent company ABC began removing concessioners. Afterwards, Cunningham took his dioramas on the road.³⁴



An example of the elaborate wood dioramas found in the Prince of Peace Memorial chapels
(source: Tim Hollis, *Lost Attractions of Silver Springs* p. 68, 70)

³³ Berson, p. 227; Tim Hollis, *Lost Attractions of Silver Springs* (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2018), p. 56-63

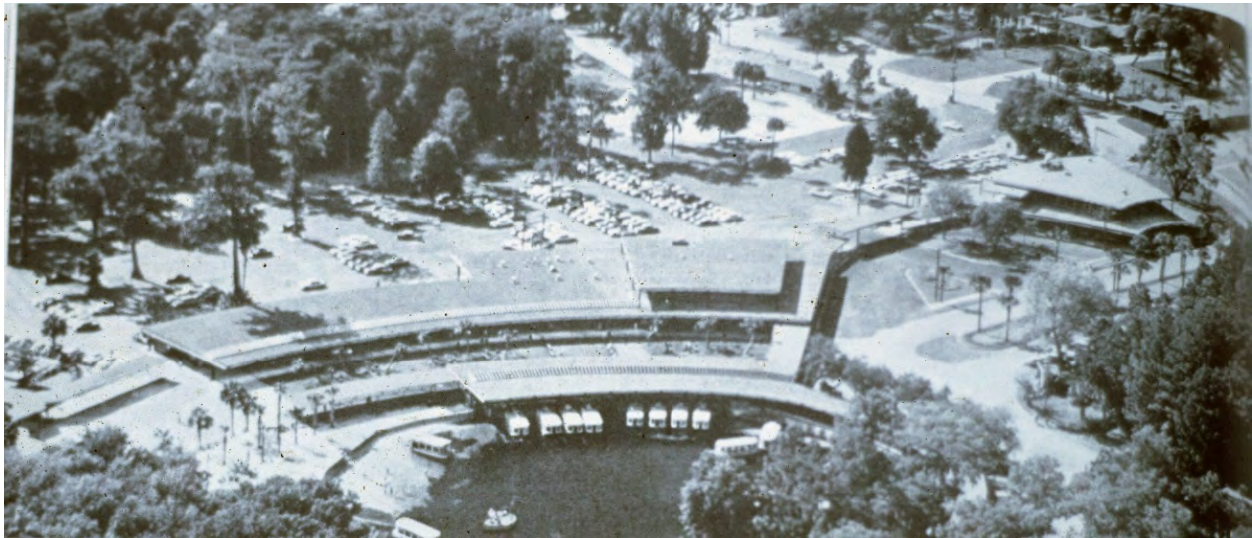
³⁴ Hollis, p. 66, 69, 71.

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Construction of New Tourist Center



Aerial photograph of the Silver Springs Tourist Center shortly after its completion
(source: University of Florida Archives)

In 1955, a disastrous fire swept through the Silver Springs attraction, destroying the ticket, business, and publicity offices as well as a number of shops and restaurants. As the docks remained relatively unscathed, the park remained open as rebuilding efforts began. Ray and Davidson hired the architect Victor Lundy to rebuild a radically new complex, which became as the Silver Springs Tourist Center.

Finished in 1957, Lundy's design featured three primary components: a covered boat dock that swept across the springhead; a pavilion/concession building that housed the shops, bathrooms, and administrative offices; and a restaurant and coffee shop building. The concession building and the boat dock shelter were connected via a covered walkway, which extend part way to the restaurant. The design won almost universal praise in architectural circles when completed. For the owners of Silver Springs, this complex was a statement piece that gave the park a more modern look in keeping with the times.

End of Ray and Davidson Ownership (1957-1962)

By the late 1950s and early 1960s, parks began shifting away from more natural attractions to artificial ones, complete with their own fantasy worlds. A big catalyst for this was the opening of Disneyland in California in the mid-1950s. In 1959, Busch Gardens opened in Tampa. In Silver Springs, the Deer Ranch complete with its

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south pole theme and the usage of “sleighs” and the development of the Prince of Peace Memorial were good examples of the artificiality being employed by parks to keep pace with the changing tastes of visitors. A good local example of this fantasy park was the Six Gun Territory, a Wild West themed attraction that opened near Silver Springs. By the 1960s, the tourist attractions in Florida were becoming more corporate and consolidated. Between 1960 and 1972, 33 of 76 roadside attractions closed while another 22 opened.³⁵

There were three major developments that spelled the end of roadside tourism: the construction of the interstate, the increase of air travel, and the development of major corporate theme parks. By the early 1960s, Silver Springs’ and tourism’s importance to the nearby city of Ocala declined as the local citrus, cattle, and meat industry expanded. The arrival of a Libby’s packing plant in Ocala reduced the influence of Silver Springs on the city’s economy and infrastructure decision making. The tourist and hospitality industries no longer dominated the chamber of commerce as they once did. As a result, when the decision was made as to the placement of Interstate 75 in the early 1960s, the location of the interstate was placed through the city limits as opposed to a location more beneficial to both the city and Silver Springs.³⁶

The effects of interstate travel would prove disastrous for many small towns and for the roadside attractions built along the older highways. As early as 1965, business leaders were starting to see the effects of rerouting main traffic away from downtowns and the subsequent construction of corporate chain hotels, stores, and restaurants. The faster rate of traffic provided fewer opportunities for people to stop over along many of the old roadside attractions, and attendance dwindled there through the 1960s. The construction of Interstates 4 and 75 along with the Florida Turnpike proved instrumental in the selection of Orlando to serve as the new location for what became Disney World in the early 1970s. By the 1970s, more people were also flying, with the total number of tourists arriving by plane jumping from around 12% in 1962 to 30% in 1977. The arrival of Disney had a profound impact upon the tourism industry in the state, as there became more of an emphasis on destination tourism dominated by massive, corporately-owned theme parks. The expansion of Disney World and the arrival of Universal Studios and Sea World all but sealed the fate of roadside attractions across the state.³⁷

Perhaps seeing the beginning of the end, Ray and Davidson decided to sell out the attraction to the American Broadcast Company (ABC) in 1962, which ran the park through its subsidiary Silver Springs, Inc. The nature of the operation changed upon the ABC acquisition. The company set out cancelling numerous contracts and buying out Tommy Bartlett’s Deer Ranch and Ross Allen’s Reptile Institute. The company also broke with tradition by charging for access to the springs. They even closed the springs to swimming in the late 1960s. In

³⁵ Berson, p. 240-242, 254.

³⁶ Berson, p. 248-250.

³⁷ Berson, p. 239-243, 250-253, 260.

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1969, they closed Paradise Park. The glass bottom boat rides remained a fixture, however. The ABC company owned Silver Springs until 1984, when they sold it to a group of Ocala residents.³⁸

In 1978, ABC opened the adjacent Wild Waters water park. This large park was intended as a complement to Silver Springs and would often be marketed together with the older park. It would remain in operation until 2016, when it was permanently closed and taken over by the state of Florida for repurposing into part of the Silver Springs State Park. The structures in the park were demolished in 2018.³⁹

Silver Springs After 1984

The park changed ownership a number of times after ABC first relinquished it in 1984. The various owners of Silver Springs tried desperately to keep the park running in competition with the larger parks in Orlando. The Prince of Peace Memorial, the Reptile Institute, the Deer Ranch, the remnants of Paradise Park, and even the original Lundy-designed boat dock were demolished.

The beginnings of what is now Silver Springs State Park started in 1986, when the state began making a series of purchases along the Silver River to open Silver River State Park. In 1996, Ogden Entertainment of Florida, Inc., undertook a massive expansion of Silver Springs, which included adding a bear and alligator exhibits and a steamboat attraction. The last owner of the Silver Springs attraction was Palace Entertainment, which took over the attraction in 2002. The private park continued in business until 2013, when it was permanently closed and the state formally took over the property, which was merged with Silver River State Park to create Silver Springs State Park. Since taking over the property, the state began the process of converting the grounds into a conventional nature park. The two surviving Lundy buildings have been retained. Most of the modern zoological and theme park attractions added into the park after the mid-1970s, including Wild Waters, were removed and replaced by nature trails and campgrounds.⁴⁰

³⁸ Berson, p. 250-255, 286.

³⁹ Berson, p. 286; Dave Schlenker, "Crews Now Demolishing Wild Waters," *Ocala Star-Banner*, December 21, 2018.

⁴⁰ Berson, p. 284-288; Florida Adventurer, "Silver Springs to Join the State Park System in October," <https://floridaadventurer.wordpress.com/2013/01/26/silver-springs-to-join-the-state-park-system-in-october/>.

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Criterion B – Carl Ray and Shorty Davidson (Entertainment/Recreation)

The Tourist Center is the best surviving resource associated with the active professional life of Walter “Carl” Ray and W.M. “Shorty” Davidson. As the creators of the Silver Springs and Paradise Park roadside attractions, the two men had a profound impact upon the history of tourism in the Ocala area. Ray was a native of Georgia who moved to the unincorporated community of Martel, Florida, with his family in 1895. After serving in World War I, he returned to the Ocala area. It was at this time that he began discussions with the Silver Springs property owner Ed Carmichael to turn the springs into a tourist destination. Ray reached out to Davidson, who at this time was the owner of a popular café in Ocala, and the two men reached an agreement in 1924 to lease the land from Carmichael for 50 years. This being the height of the Florida Land Boom, Ray and Davidson initially subleased the property out to a New York businessman with the goal of converting the springhead land into a massive development. As the Land Boom collapsed, however, the plans fell through and Ray and Davidson took back the lease in 1926. It was at this time that the development really began for the roadside attraction.

The two men made several key decisions that proved critical to the growth of Silver Springs. Wishing to exploit the newly developed highway system and to take advantage of the growing number of tourists arriving in Florida via automobile, they marketed the attraction as a stopover as opposed to a destination. They also provided free access to the spring itself, only charging a fee for the boat rides and the sideshows and also relying on souvenir revenue. They were also rather generous to their vendors, only taking a 10% cut of the revenues. The method they used of direct vendor ownership played a key role in the creation and development of attractions such as the Ross Allen Reptile Institute, the Tommy Bartlett Deer Ranch, and the photo studio of Bruce Mozert. Paradise Park, which was opened after World War II, became a major local African American tourist destination during the era of segregation and brought many black visitors into the area.

The second floor of the Concession Building, which was built to replace an earlier complex that burned down, served as the administrative offices for the entire park operations. Both Ray and Davidson ran the Silver Springs and Paradise Park from this building between 1957 and 1962, when they sold both parks to ABC.

Under Davidson and Ray, Silver Springs was among the founding institutions of the Florida Attractions Association (FAA), which was started in 1949. Peter Schaal, who was the advertising director at Silver Springs, served as the first president of the FAA. Up until this time, there was a significant problem in the plethora of substandard tourist attractions throughout the state that resulted in many complaints and threatened business. To solve this problem, owners of Silver Springs, Cypress Gardens, Monkey Jungle, and Parrot Jungle started the FAA. They opened membership to other attractions across the state, provided that they uphold a certain standard of quality, pricing, and cleanliness. Membership in the FAA connoted a level of prestige that benefitted attractions throughout the state. The FAA quickly became an important promoter of the tourism industry in Florida, serving as one of the chief political lobbying groups in the state. The FAA also played an

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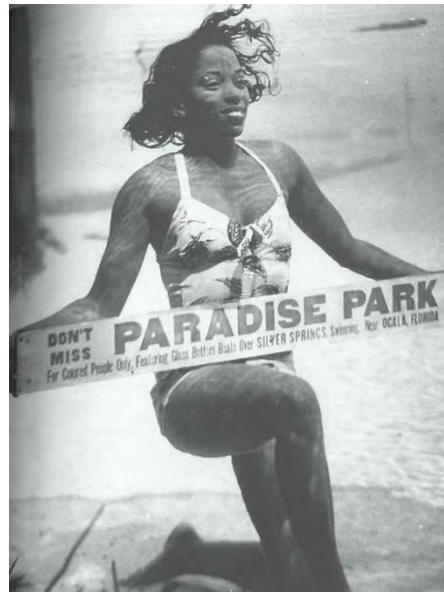
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important role in networking, allowing attraction owners to share ideas, pool resources, and band together in times of natural disasters. The association is still in existence, and today has over 120 members.⁴¹

Criterion B – Bruce Mozert (Art)



Mozert often captured underwater poses of people in everyday activities, circa 1950s (source: Monroe, p. 135)



Mozert also served as chief promotional photographer of Paradise Park (source: Vickers and Wilson-Graham, p. 149)

Bruce Mozert (1916-2015) was the longtime resident photographer of Silver Springs. He became renowned for his work in underwater photography and his promotional films and photographs of Silver Springs were circulated around the country. Mozert, who is considered a pioneer in the field of underwater photography, developed a much improved underwater camera casing that greatly enhanced the film quality of both still photographs and films. He caught the attention of Hollywood when he first arrived at Silver Springs during the filming of one of the *Tarzan* movies. He would later serve as a set photographer for a number of Hollywood movies and television shows filmed at the springs, including *Creature from the Black Lagoon* and *Sea Hunt*.

⁴¹ Dorothy Mays, "Gatorland: Survival of the Fittest Among Florida's Mid-Tier Tourist Attractions," *Florida Historical Quarterly* vol. 87, no. 4 (Spring 2009), p. 522-523; Florida Attractions Association, "About Us," https://www.floridaattractions.org/Public/About/Public/About_FAA/About_Us.

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Mozert was among the first photographers to sell photographs of visitors' rides to them after they got off, now considered a staple in the theme park industry, circa 1950s
(source: Stetson University Archives)

Mozert's promotional images not only played a critical role in generating attention for Silver Springs, but it also helped popularize the field of underwater photography. His images were featured in a number of prominent national publications, including *Life*, *Look*, and *National Geographic*. His still images of movies and television shows being filmed at Silver Springs was often widely distributed to cross-promote both the productions and the park. An image Mozert published in *Life* magazine was one of the earliest underwater color photographs printed in a national publication. Within the Ocala area, Mozert was well-known and highly respected. In recognition for his achievements, the Ocala Film Foundation made him the first ever honoree on the Ocala Walk of Fame.⁴²

Mozert operated his photography studio as a vendor of Silver Springs. He sold his images directly to customers, and also sold camera equipment and supplies direct from a shop he ran out of the Concession Building. As a tourist attraction photographer, Bruce Mozert was one of the first to photograph visitors and provide them with photographs of their experience, a side business that is now almost universally employed across the theme park and amusement park industry. Mozert would photograph visitors as they boarded the glass bottomed boats, taking the film back to be developed so that visitors could have a photographic print ready for purchase when they came back from the end of the ride. While Mozert's "studio" was usually the spring itself, his entire

⁴² Kate Pohlman, "Bruce Mozert First Inductee to Ocala Walk of Fame," *Ocala Star-Banner*, May 3, 2018, <https://www.ocala.com/news/20180503/bruce-mozert-first-inductee-to-ocala-walk-of-fame>.

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business was run from the Concession Building. Hence, the Tourist Center represents the best surviving resource associated with the active professional life of Mozart.

Criterion C: Architectural Context

Victor Lundy

Victory Lundy, who was born in New York in 1923, was a prominent architect whose career spanned most of the 20th century and into the early 21st century. A son of Russian immigrants, Lundy first trained at New York University's School of Architecture, studying under Georges Gromort, who was a graduate of the École des Beaux-Arts. During World War II, Lundy, who was serving in the US infantry, struck up a conversation with a captured German prisoner of war who was a professional architect. This German officer informed Lundy that two of the leading masters of European architecture, Walter Gropius and Mies van der Rohe, were now working in the United States. He then decided after he returned to the US to attend Harvard, where he studied under Gropius. While here, Lundy was classmates with a number of architectural students who would go on to become major forces in the field of architecture, including Paul Rudolph and Harry Seidler. Lundy received his bachelor of architecture degree from Harvard in 1947 and his masters the following year. After he won the prestigious Rotch Travelling Scholarship, he spent a little under two years traveling Europe, Africa, and the Middle East between 1948 and 1950.

After a brief period back in New York, Lundy relocated to Sarasota in the early 1950s, where he became a fixture in the emerging Sarasota School of architecture thriving there. His first major commission in Sarasota was the Sarasota County Chamber of Commerce Building. The hallmark of Lundy's early works in Sarasota were the personal touches he put into a number of these buildings, particularly the churches, which often featured prominent laminated wood beams and prominent steep-sloped roofs inspired by hands in prayer. There were a number of ecclesiastical buildings designed by Lundy in Florida during this period, including St. Andrews's Presbyterian Church in Dunedin; St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Melbourne; Bee Ridge Presbyterian Church in Sarasota; and Gloria Dei Lutheran Church on Anna Maria Island among others. Lundy also became noted for his public buildings during this period. In addition to Silver Springs and the Chamber of Commerce Building, Lundy also designed the Galloway Furniture Showroom in Sarasota; the Alta Vista Elementary School Addition in Sarasota; and the Southgate Community Center in Sarasota.⁴³

By the 1960s, Lundy relocated his offices to New York City. By this time, he had achieved a national reputation and utilized this to secure several key federal government commissions. His two most notable examples were

⁴³ Donna Kacmar, "The Life and Work of Victor Lundy," in *Victor Lundy: Artist Architect*, Donna Kacmar, ed. (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2019), p. 17-23; Christopher S. Wilson, "The Sarasota Years," in *Victor Lundy: Artist Architect*, p. 53-85; Kacmar, ed. *Victor Lundy: Artist Architect*, p. 228-229.

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the United States Tax Court in Washington, DC, and the United States Embassy in Sri Lanka, which were commissioned in the early 1960s but not finished until the 1970s and 1980s. Among his other notable commissions while in New York City was the IBM Garden State Office Building in Cranford, New Jersey; the Space Flowers for the New York World's Fair Refreshment Stands; and the Traveling Air Supported Exhibition Building for the US Atomic Energy Commission. He eventually moved his practice to Texas before retiring.⁴⁴

He received numerous architectural design and achievement awards throughout his career and was nationally recognized as an architect. In 1965, he was one of five architects chosen by the US Department of State Cultural Exchange Program to serve as a Specialist Architect for a traveling architectural exhibit that toured the Soviet Union, India, Egypt, and Greece. The other four chosen were Louis Kahn, Robert Venturi, Paul Rudolph, and Charles Eames. For his work with the United States Tax Court, Lundy received the General Services Administration's (GSA) Honor Award. For his work with the embassy in Sri Lanka, he received the 1988 Federal Design Achievement Award, the highest award given by the National Endowment for the Arts in design. In 2014, in recognition for the importance of his contributions to federal government architecture the GSA produced a documentary on Lundy titled *Victor Lundy: Sculptor of Space*. Lundy has long been considered one of the most important architects of the Sarasota School as well. The actual term "Sarasota School" as applied to the style was popularized by architect Gene Leedy during a Florida Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) convention in 1982. The convention's main topic was the architecture of Sarasota and Lundy was one of the keynote speakers there. In 2016, the Sarasota Architecture Foundation presented Lundy with the Lifetime Achievement Award.⁴⁵

Architectural Significance

The Silver Springs Concession and Restaurant buildings are locally significant examples of Sarasota School architecture. This is best expressed through the prominent usage of flat roofs; extensive usage of glass in the exterior walls; and the construction to the environment best embodied by the curvature of the buildings around the springhead. The Tourist Center was one of the most significant and highest profile commissions of Victor Lundy during his time in Florida. Lundy achieved recognition for his design of the Silver Springs Tourist Center, winning an Award of Merit from the Southeast Region of the AIA. The buildings display features that are textbook examples of the personalized touches Lundy often displayed on his buildings. This includes the prominent overhanging roof that served a dual purpose as a covered walkway; the prominent exposed beams; the free-floating staircases built along a single steel beam; and the usage of non-structural, partial-height brick walls. Lundy was also known for emphasizing forms with the landscape, which is best expressed through the curved forms of the buildings conforming to the springhead. The buildings are also of steel frame construction, which are demonstrated through the use of glass walls and non-structural brick.

⁴⁴ Kacmar, "The Life and Work of Victor Lundy," p. 23-25; Kacmar, ed., *Victor Lundy: Artist Architect*, p. 227.

⁴⁵ Kacmar, ed., *Victor Lundy: Artist Architect*, p. 227.

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Engineering Context

Development of Glass Bottom Boats

The exact origins of glass bottom boats remain largely clouded in mystery. According to a story long advertised by Silver Springs, a local man by the name of Hullam Jones began offering glass bottom boat tours on the Silver River in 1878. Another local man by the name of Phillip Morrell was also an early operator of these boats. There is still some debate as to when exactly the boats were first introduced to Silver Springs. It is clear, however, that by the early 20th century, the boats were an established presence on the river.⁴⁶

In the early 20th century, Charles F. Holder was writing in *Scientific American* and *National Geographic Magazine* specifically about glass bottom boats in the Catalina Islands in California. Holder mentioned the fishing boats off the coast of Florida in the 1880s as the inspiration for the development of glass bottom boats. These boats, which were known as welled smacks, had wells in them made of perforated wood that were used to hold live fish. These contraptions, which were built into the boats, had openings known as auger holes which were set below the waterline, allowing for oxygenation of the water. The openings to the wells were typically found in the center of the boats. An avid collector of rare corals, Holder needed a clearer view of the ocean floor to help guide his diving, so he replaced the bottom of the well in his boat with glass.

He almost immediately saw the tourist potential of this contraption, which he brought with him to California. While it is unclear whether Holder was the true inventor of the glass bottom boats, he certainly played a role in popularizing the boats in the leading national publications of the day. He is also widely credited with introducing the boats to the Catalina Islands, which became famous for its usage of the vessels. As early as 1903, there are patents filed for glass bottom boats that clearly show the influence of welled smack boats,

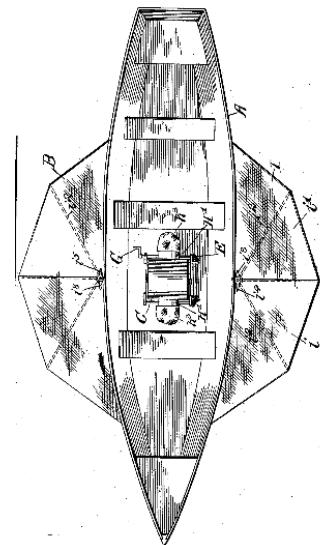


Diagram of an early glass bottom boat dated circa 1903. Note the single viewing pane in the center of the boat.



Postcard of passengers feeding fish at Silver Springs in glass bottom boat, circa 1940s (source: State Archives of Florida)

⁴⁶ Tim Hollis, *Glass Bottom Boats and Mermaid Tails: Florida's Tourist Springs* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 2006), P. 9-10.

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particularly in the replacement of the well opening with a glass contraption. These boats were originally repurposed fishing boats that were often powered by oars. As there was a growing awareness of the financial potential of these boat types, however, the designs changed. The drafts of the boats became much shallower, the boats were built to accommodate more people, and the bottoms of the boats came to comprise a larger surface area of glass.⁴⁷

The first glass bottom boats used at Silver Springs were simple rowboats with a single viewing plane in the center of the boats very similar to the prevailing glass bottom boat designs of the time. The boat operators started to improvise on the design early, with canopies and cushioned seats introduced sometime after 1908 by Ed Carmichael. By the 1920s, as the boats became a centerpiece of the Silver Springs attraction, the proprietors continued to improve their design. They started to take on a form closer in appearance to the current boats. These wood boats were fully enclosed, with the glass panes for viewing the bottom of the springs lengthened. The windows also opened to allow passengers to view the natural surroundings without any barriers and to feed the fish. The first powered boats relied on gasoline-powered outboard motors, which were replaced with gas engines in the mid-1920s. Deemed too noisy for the serene environment of

Silver Springs, and so in 1932, the boats were refitted with electric engines. As the boats became powered, the oarsmen were replaced by African American boat captains who navigated the boats with a centrally placed steering wheel on the forward side of the craft. These captains were a ubiquitous presence at Silver Springs, and were not only tasked with piloting the boats, but were also responsible for providing guided tours of the river.⁴⁸



Postcard of glass bottom boats at Silver Springs, circa 1910 (source: State Archives of Florida).



Postcard image of metal glass bottom boat, circa 1967 (source: State Archives of Florida).

⁴⁷ Charles F. Holder, "The Windows of the Sea," *Scientific American* January 30, 1904, p. 94; Charles Frederick Holder, "The Glass-Bottom Boat," *National Geographic Magazine* vol. 20, no. 9 (September 1909), p. 761-765.

⁴⁸ Hollis, p. 10.

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Silver Springs
Silver Springs, Marion County, FL

The wooden glass bottom boats remained in operation largely without much modifications for the remainder of Ray and Davidson's tenures as the owners of Silver Springs, which lasted until 1962. In the mid-1960s, at the height of the ABC ownership of Silver Springs, the wood glass bottom boats were replaced by the current fleet of metal boats. The boats are rounder in appearance than the older wood boats, measuring roughly 31 feet in length, 11.5 feet in width, and 14 feet in height with a net tonnage of 20 tons and a passenger capacity of roughly 35 people. The boats feature distinctive roof vents, porthole windows and metal ribbon windows along the port and starboard sides. The interiors of the boats are mostly metal with wood furnishings. The interior layouts feature a centrally-placed glass floor pane flanked by wood bench seats and encircled by a metal walkway. Access to the interiors is via the aft side of the boats. The boat captain's seats and steering wheels are centrally-placed at the forward side of the boats. To allow access and to open the view for the captains, the rear doors slide open and a portion of the roof is lifted up.



Passengers in glass bottom boat circa late 1960s (source: State Archives of Florida)

Engineering Significance – Glass Bottom Boats

Glass bottom boats have long been an important vessel type on the Silver River. In particular, it was the glass bottom boats linked with the Silver Springs and Paradise Park roadside attractions that assumed local significance in their own right. The evolution of the boat design both for practicality and for visual appeal resulted in an iconic vessel that is perhaps more closely associated with the local community than any other resource in the park. The surviving vessels found within the district are the best surviving examples of these boat designs. They still ply the same routes that glass bottom boats have been taking for over 100 years and are still housed in a boat shelter and dry dock facility that was custom built for them.

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Silver Springs, Marion County, FL

Criterion A – Ethnic Heritage: Black

Paradise Park (1949-1969)

Silver Springs had long used African Americans to operate the boat tours along the Silver River. Despite this, African Americans were not allowed on the boat rides or in the reptile shows. They were somewhat tolerated at the springs but were not given full use of the facilities. Many of the African Americans working at the park were unhappy with being unable to take their families there.

Seeing a demand and hoping to take full advantage of African American tourism, Ray and Davidson established Paradise Park in 1949, with its grand opening held on Emancipation Day. The park was built around a white sand beach along the Silver River downstream from the springhead (Figure 3). The land on which Paradise Park stood was at one time owned by M.R. Porter, who in the late 1920s opened a park known as Silver Springs Paradise. By 1935, Ray and Davidson acquired the former Silver Springs Paradise. After opening Paradise Park, Ray and Davidson hired Eddie Vereen, a local African American who was a glass bottom boat captain at Silver Springs, to operate it.

The park quickly became an important gathering place for local African Americans, and featured a gift shop, soda fountain, pavilion with a jukebox, as well as picnic tables. Visitors could partake in the swimming beach and Ross Allen conducted reptile shows there. The boats were available upon request but only if they were not already being used by Silver Springs. Despite this limitation, Silver Springs was the only major private Florida attraction with an entirely new section for African Americans. Bruce Mozert handled the advertising for the park.⁴⁹



Promotional image of Paradise Park circa 1950s
(source: State Archives of Florida)



Visitors of Paradise Park on glass bottom boat ride
(Source: Vickers and Wilson-Graham p. 6)

⁴⁹ Lu Vickers and Cynthia Wilson-Graham, *Remembering Paradise Park: Tourism and Segregation at Silver Springs* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2015), p. 2-15; Berson, 195-196, 221-223.

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Silver Springs, Marion County, FL



Scene at Paradise Park, c. 1950 (source: State Archives of Florida)

By the late 1960s, as integration started to take hold across the south, ABC made the decision to consolidate its operations. Full integration at Silver Springs began in 1967. In 1969, the company permanently closed Paradise Park and immediately began the process of dismantling it. There are no extant structures left from Paradise Park (Figure 3-4).

The six contributing glass bottom boats are the best surviving resources directly associated with Paradise Park. There may be archaeological resources associated with the site of Paradise Park, but there has been no investigation at this time to identify or evaluate these potential resources. Silver Springs' glass bottom boats were operated exclusively by uniformed African American boat captains, who also served as tour guides for the passengers. These captains were highly respected members of the local African American community who proved instrumental to the operation of Silver Springs. They were also pivotal to the marketing of both Silver Springs and Paradise Park, as images of the black boat captains and the all-white passengers were disseminated in promotional materials throughout the country. One of the boat captains, Eddie Vereen, was particularly instrumental in the operation of Paradise Park.

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Additional Historic Context

Ross Allen

Ross Allen (1908-1981) was a noted herpetologist who was a recognized authority on poisonous snakes, alligators, and crocodiles. A native of Pennsylvania, he first moved to Florida as a child with his family during the Land Boom era of the 1920s. While still in his early 20s, Allen began avidly collecting and exhibiting both live and deceased snakes and alligators in Winter Haven. He also started collecting reptile specimens for the University of Florida. Initially expressing interest primarily in taxidermy, he began charging a fee to visitors with the hope that they would leave without bothering him. He soon discovered that they were more than happy to pay admission and he was in fact making far more money from visitors' fees than through the selling of stuffed reptiles. After his live alligator collection grew to over 60 and a number of them escaped their enclosure, the authorities in Winter Haven forced him to either shut down his operation or relocate. Hoping to salvage his attraction, Allen got in his automobile and travelled across the state looking for a suitable place to move the reptiles. Thanks in large part to the help of Newt Perry, whom Allen knew as a competitive swimmer in Winter Haven, Allen received a favorable hearing from Ray and Davidson, who allowed him to set up his institute in Silver Springs in 1929.⁵⁰



Ross Allen (right) giving demonstration during live radio broadcast, circa 1930s (source: Stetson University Archives)

Through the Institute, Allen became a prominent figure in the public education of reptiles, particularly poisonous snakes, and was very involved in the public health aspects of snake bites. Allen was particularly appalled by the widespread slaughter of poisonous snakes and snakes mistaken as venomous due in large part to public misunderstanding of the risks of specific snake populations. Starting in 1934, Allen and his assistants were very active in conducting a statewide survey of poisonous snake populations, particularly gathering information on snakebites. They found that of the 509 venomous snakebite cases recorded between 1934-1948, 76 resulted in deaths, of which 71 were attributed to the eastern diamondback. None of the deaths were attributed to the other rattlesnake species in Florida, the pygmy and canebrake rattlesnakes. They also determined that the eastern diamondback had a fatality rate of 40% while the coral snake had a 20% fatality rate despite its more lethal reputation. Allen was also mindful of the deaths of captured reptiles resulting from a lack

⁵⁰ C.J. Hylander, *Adventures with Reptiles: The Story of Ross Allen* (New York: Julian Messner, Inc., 1951), p. 33-39.

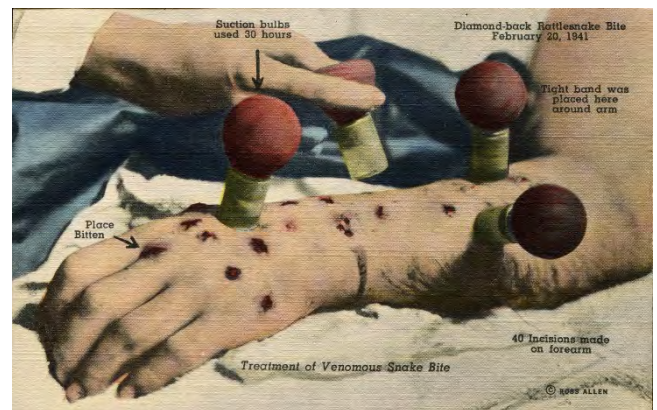
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Silver Springs, Marion County, FL

of knowledge of how to properly handle and care for them. To combat this, he published a book with Neill titled *Keep Them Alive*.⁵¹

Although not formally trained in a university, Allen's unique line of work gave him a level of expertise that was highly sought out by professional publications. He was published in a variety of publications, including *Florida Conservator*, *Modern Taxidermy*, *Journal of the Florida Academy of Sciences*, *Herpetologica* and *Copeia* among others. He was tasked by the United States Air Force with writing an article on snake bite first aid and treatment, which received wide circulation. He even published an article on applying snake bite first aid for dogs in *Field and Stream* hoping to prevent the unnecessary deaths of hunting dogs. In 1948, he published one of the earliest full accounts of the habits of the cottonmouth snake, an important first step amongst other herpetologists looking to gain a better understanding of the snake. Working with Neill, Allen identified at least two new species of snake, the Everglades rat snake and the Eastern Apalachicola Lowlands king snake. The Everglades rat snake was given the scientific name *Elaphe obsoleta rossalleni* in his honor. To further the study of alligators and crocodiles, Allen founded the International Crocodylian Society.⁵²



Allen made public education a major priority of the institute. This 1941 postcard gives a demonstration on proper snakebite treatment

Unfortunately, all traces of the original Ross Allen Reptile Institute are gone from their original location. At the time, the institute was inextricably linked to the operations of Silver Springs and Paradise Park, and Allen often collaborated closely with both of these parks. There is still one surviving resource directly associated with the Institute that is still standing, the Ross Allen Building, but this structure has been relocated to the workshop area of the park and has lost its integrity of location and setting. The land on which the Institute stood was officially leased and later owned and managed by the Silver Springs. The Institute was officially a vendor of Silver Springs until 1965. After the departure of Ross Allen, the attraction was under the direct control of the ABC affiliate Silver Springs, Inc. The current entrance and central fountain plaza for Silver Springs are currently located on the site of the former Institute.

⁵¹ Hylander, p. 62-85, 149.

⁵² Hylander, p. 168-172.

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Section number 9 Page 1 Silver Springs
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Silver Springs, Marion County, FL

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Section number 10 Page 1 Silver Springs
Silver Springs, Marion County, FL

UTM References

	<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>
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6)	17R	397993	3232409
7)	17R	398119	3232410
8)	17R	398150	3232360
9)	17R	398294	3232405
10)	17R	398407	3232346
11)	17R	398498	3232365
12)	17R	398598	3232327
13)	17R	398596	3232173
14)	17R	398416	3232163
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18)	17R	397841	3232135
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20)	17R	397640	3232011
21)	17R	397737	3232008
22)	17R	397735	3231958
23)	17R	397663	3231923
24)	17R	397558	3231925
25)	17R	397487	3231963
26)	17R	397418	3232056
27)	17R	397640	3232326
28)	17R	397545	3232340

Verbal Boundary Description

The district boundary falls within the property of Silver Springs State Park and includes the Victor Lundy-designed buildings, Mammoth Spring springhead, and the Silver River for a distance of approximately .70 miles. The property also includes associated with the tourist activities at Silver Springs. The boundary encompasses portions of parcel number 3175700100 and parcel number 3175700000 of the Marion County, Florida, Property Appraisers Office records. Please see boundary map for more details.

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Silver Springs, Marion County, FL

Boundary Justification

The boundary encompasses the surviving resources associated with the historic operations of the historic Silver Springs roadside attraction as well as the portions of the Silver River historically used for glass bottom boat and steamboat tourism.

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Section number Photos Page 1 Silver Springs
Silver Springs, Marion County, FL

Name of Property: Silver Springs

City of Vicinity: Silver Springs County: Marion State: Florida

Photographers: Vincent Birdsong and Andrew Waber Dates Photographed: January 2019 and April 2019

Description of Photographs and number, including description of view indicating direction of camera

1. View of Concession Building main (southeast) facade, facing southwest
2. View of Concession Building main façade walkway, facing north
3. View of Concession Building main façade walkway, facing southwest
4. View of Concession Building south elevation walkway, facing north
5. View of Concession Building northeast elevation, facing southwest
6. View of Concession Building rear (northwest) elevation, facing northeast
7. View of Concession Building northeast elevation, facing southwest
8. Detail view of Concession Building main façade walkway skylight
9. View of Concession Building rear (northwest) elevation walkway, facing southwest
10. View of Concession Building first story roof, facing southwest
11. View of Concession Building second story fire escape, facing northwest
12. View of Concession Building second story, facing north
13. Interior view of Concession Building gift shop, facing northeast
14. Interior view of Concession Building museum space, facing northwest
15. Interior view of historic Concession Building store space, facing northwest
16. Interior view of additional Concession Building enclosed space, facing west
17. Interior view of Concession Building restaurant, facing northeast
18. Interior view of historic Concession Building gift shop space, facing east
19. Interior view of enclosed Concession Building corridor, facing southeast
20. Detail view of honorary plaque awarded to Davidson and Ray
21. Detail view of historic Silver Springs diorama
22. Interior view of historic employees' cafeteria
23. Interior view of Concession Building staircase, facing
24. Interior view of Concession Building second floor corridor, facing
25. Interior view of Concession Building second floor office, facing
26. Interior view of Concession Building second floor office, facing
27. Interior view of Concession Building second floor safe, facing
28. View of detached shelter between Concession and Restaurant buildings
29. View of east elevation of Restaurant Building, facing west
30. View of west elevation of Restaurant Building, facing east

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Section number Photos Page 2 Silver Springs
Silver Springs, Marion County, FL

31. View of Restaurant Building first story roof, facing northeast
32. Interior view of Restaurant Building corridor, facing north
33. Interior view of Restaurant Building space, facing east
34. Detail view of historic wall vent in Restaurant Building
35. Interior view of Restaurant Building, facing
36. Interior view of Restaurant Building kitchen, facing
37. Interior view of Restaurant Building second floor day care space, facing
38. View of Divers' Cabin, facing northeast
39. View of Osceola Statue, facing southeast
40. View of retention wall and walkway (notice historic stone wall underneath concrete slab), facing east
41. View of 1930s era retention wall, facing southeast
42. Detail view of *I Spy* statue
43. View of Mammoth Spring, facing southeast
44. Interior view of glass bottom boat shelter and dock, facing northeast
45. Interior view of glass bottom boat shelter and dock, facing northeast
46. View of Boat Barn and glass bottom boat shelter, facing northeast
47. View of glass bottom boat *Chief Emathla* in dry dock, facing northwest
48. View of Ross Allen Building/Wildlife Office, facing east
49. View of building adjacent to Ross Allen Building, facing southeast
50. View of metal workshop building, facing west
51. View of metal workshop building, facing northwest
52. View of warehouse, facing southwest
53. Detail view of Silver Springs National Natural Landmark plaque
54. View of historic boat ramp rails, facing east
55. View of glass bottom boat *Charlie Cypress* in dock, facing north
56. View of glass bottom boat *Chief Micanopy* in Mammoth Spring, facing northwest
57. Interior view of *Charlie Cypress*, facing north
58. Interior view of *Charlie Cypress*, facing south
59. View of Boat Terminal, facing north
60. View of canoe rental facility, facing west

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Silver Springs
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Figure 1: Selected Spring Map of Silver Springs

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Silver Springs
Silver Springs, Marion County, FL

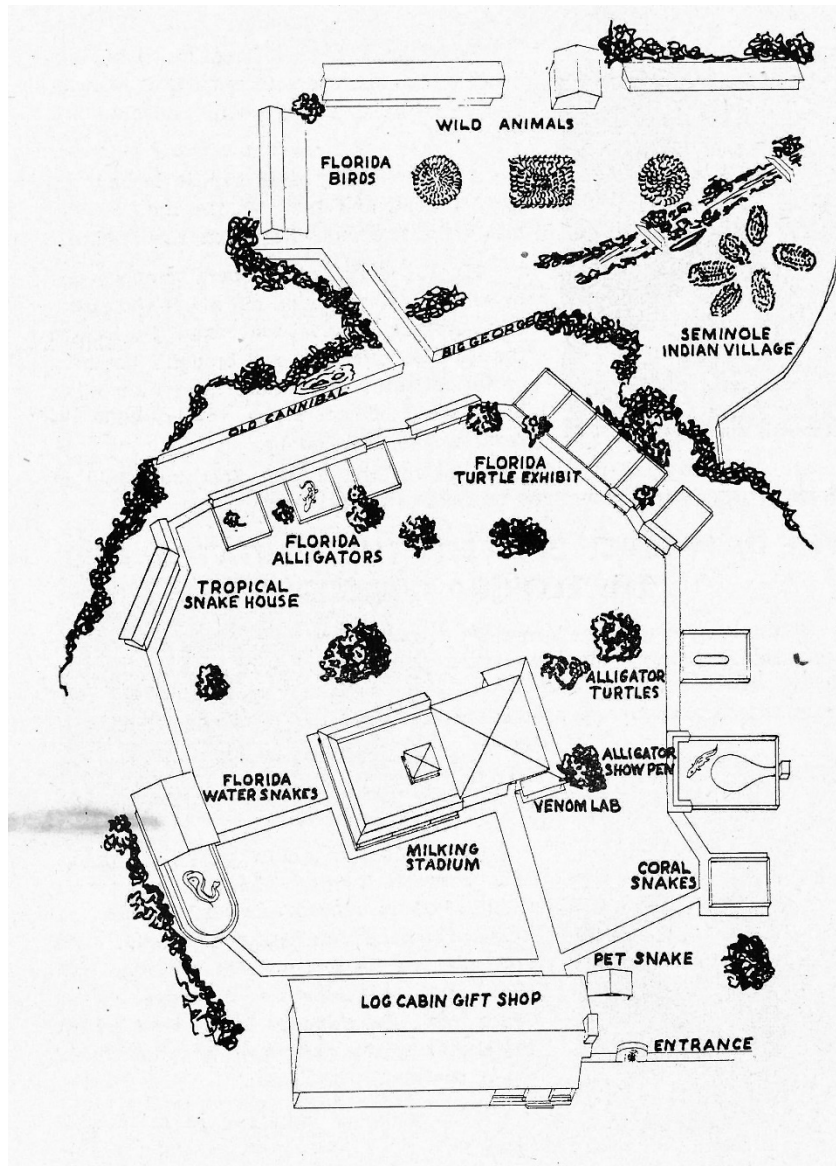


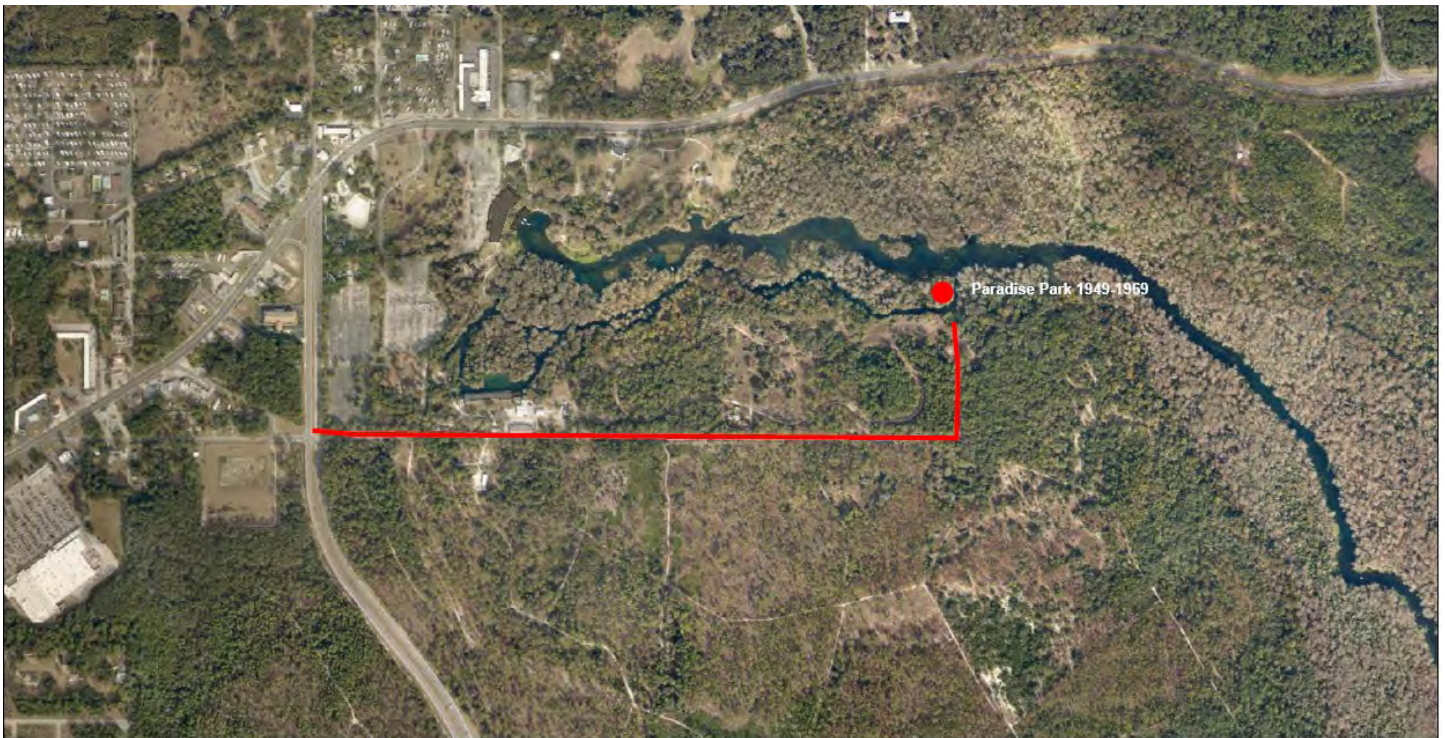
Figure 2: Layout map of the Ross Allen Reptile Institute, circa 1948
Source: Andreas Bothe, *Guide to Ross Allen's Reptile Institute*
(Ocala, FL: Ocala Star-Banner, 1948), p. 14

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Section number Figures Page 3

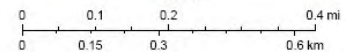
Silver Springs
Silver Springs, Marion County, FL



January 9, 2019

■ Florida State Park Structures

1:9,028



FDEP/DRP. Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar
Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and
the GIS User Community

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Figure 3: Map showing general location of Paradise Park
Source: Florida State Parks

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Section number Figures Page 4

Silver Springs
Silver Springs, Marion County, FL



Figure 4: Aerial Image of former Paradise Park Site. The entrance road to the park is at the bottom. Some building foundations appear to remain, but the site has not been investigated for archaeological resources.
(source: Google Maps Aerial View)

Silver Springs

5656 East Silver Springs Road
Silver Springs, Marion Co., FL

District Map and UTM Coordinates

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|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1) 17R 397582 3232594 | 15) 17R 398267 3232253 |
| 2) 17R 397674 3232592 | 16) 17R 398173 3232207 |
| 3) 17R 397670 3232454 | 17) 17R 398046 3232285 |
| 4) 17R 397766 3232456 | 18) 17R 397841 3232135 |
| 5) 17R 397859 3232346 | 19) 17R 397744 3232144 |
| 6) 17R 397993 3232409 | 20) 17R 397640 3232011 |
| 7) 17R 398119 3232410 | 21) 17R 397737 3232008 |
| 8) 17R 398150 3232360 | 22) 17R 397735 3231958 |
| 9) 17R 398294 3232405 | 23) 17R 397663 3231923 |
| 10) 17R 398407 3232346 | 24) 17R 397558 3231925 |
| 11) 17R 398498 3232365 | 25) 17R 397487 3231963 |
| 12) 17R 398598 3232327 | 26) 17R 397418 3232056 |
| 13) 17R 398596 3232173 | 27) 17R 397640 3232326 |
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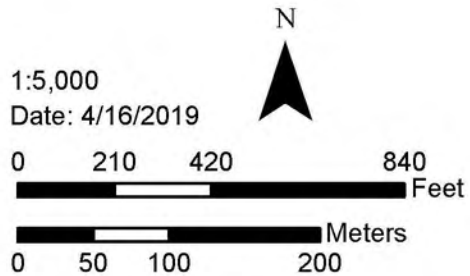
Basemap Source: Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community



Silver Springs

5656 East Silver Springs Road
Silver Springs, Marion Co., FL

Contributing and Non-Contributing
Resources



Basemap Source: Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community

Silver Springs

5656 East Silver Springs Boulevard
Silver Springs, Marion Co, FL

Exterior Photo Key

Boat Storage, Maintenance,
and Canoe Rental Areas



1:1,000

Date: 4/19/2019

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0 10 20 40 Meters

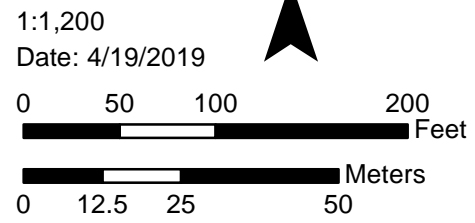
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DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar
Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS,
USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping,
Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo,
and the GIS User Community

Silver Springs

5656 East Silver Springs Boulevard
Silver Springs, Marion Co, FL

Exterior Photo Key

Silver Springs Tourist Center
and Mammoth Spring areas



Basemap Source: Source: Esri,
DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar
Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS,
USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping,
Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo,
and the GIS User Community





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Paradise Treats
ICE CREAM COOKIES FUDGE



REST ROOMS

SPRINGSIDE
RESTAURANT























Colorscopes
Personalized Necklaces
from Wayne Carver







FRIENDS OF SILVER SPRINGS STATE PARK CSD









IN GRATEFUL APPRECIATION

RAY
DAVIDSON
AND RAY



OPERATORS OF
FLORIDA'S SILVER SPRINGS
— FOR —

THE SKILL WITH WHICH THEY FASHIONED
A FLORIDA PHENOMENON INTO ONE OF THE
NATION'S MOST VISITED ATTRACTIONS ...

THE HIGH PROMOTIONAL STANDARDS THEY
EARLY ADOPTED AND WHICH ARE MAINTAINED
TODAY, A HALLMARK OF THEIR OPERATIONS ...

THEIR FLAWLESS INGENUITY AND IMAGINATION
IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS UNIQUELY
MAGNETIC AND PICTURESQUE LOCALE INTO
OUR AREA'S GREATEST ECONOMIC ASSET.

PRESENTED MAY 26, 1957
BY GRATEFUL FRIENDS OF COALA AND MARION COUNTIES

SILVER SPRINGS DISPLAY CASE

This display case was built by Silver Springs, Florida, and contains a model of the park's main attraction, the Silver Springs Railroad. The model is a miniature of the real thing, and is a fine example of the craftsmanship of the Silver Springs Railroad. It is a fine example of the craftsmanship of the Silver Springs Railroad. It is a fine example of the craftsmanship of the Silver Springs Railroad.









200-B





Wild Waters

Sexual
Offenders
And
Predators

204-1

Available Now!
Your
Passport
to
Florida State Parks



























CELESTIA
The name of the woman depicted in this statue is Celestia, a member of the Seminole tribe. She is shown in traditional dress, holding a small object in her hands. The statue is a tribute to the Seminole people and their rich cultural heritage.

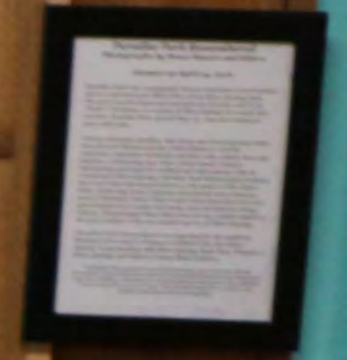






a River Aquatic Preserve

THE HISTORIC CONNECTION
CANADA'S
WATER FISHES







Hand Dipped
ICE CREAM
18 FLAVORS
DIP N DOTS
SUNDRES
FLORTS

FL
NX
21





NO
PARKING
LOADING
ZONE

BOAT BARN

HOBAS

NO
PARKING
LOADING
ZONE

SILVER SPRINGS, FL

3 TON





A person wearing a light-colored shirt and dark pants is standing on the left side of the building, partially obscured by the railing.

A brown door with three small rectangular windows is located on the left side of the building's front facade.

A large, multi-paned window with a brown frame is centered on the front facade of the building.

A white wire mesh cage or enclosure is situated on the wooden deck in the foreground, partially covered by a blue tarp.

A tall, thin utility pole stands on the right side of the building, with white rope or tape wrapped around its base.











SILVER SPRINGS

HAS BEEN DESIGNATED A
REGISTERED
NATURAL LANDMARK

UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE
HISTORIC SITES ACT OF AUGUST 21, 1935
THIS SITE POSSESSES EXCEPTIONAL VALUE
IN ILLUSTRATING THE NATURAL
HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

1972





LAUNCH CLOSES AT
6:00 P.M. TODAY

NO SWIMMING
NO SCUBA
NO SNORKELING
PLEASE YIELD TO THE
GLASS BOTTOM BOATS
FOR YOUR ENJOYMENT AND PROTECTION
F.A.C. 62D-2 IS ENFORCED

51
51

CHIEF
CHARLIE CYPRES

6

SI





SILVER SPRINGS, FL









National Register of Historic Places
Memo to File

Correspondence

The Correspondence consists of communications from (and possibly to) the nominating authority, notes from the staff of the National Register of Historic Places, and/or other material the National Register of Historic Places received associated with the property.

Correspondence may also include information from other sources, drafts of the nomination, letters of support or objection, memorandums, and ephemera which document the efforts to recognize the property.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Resubmission

Property Name: Silver Springs

Multiple Name: Sarasota School of Architecture MPS

State & County: FLORIDA, Marion

Date Received: 10/31/2019 Date of Pending List: Date of 16th Day: Date of 45th Day: 12/16/2019 Date of Weekly List:

Reference number: RS100004353

Nominator: SHPO

Reason For Review:

X Accept Return Reject 11/19/2019 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments: Resubmitted nomination addressed return comments.

One of Florida's early and more famous tourist attractions, the property has multiple areas of significance based on its use, the social factors inherent (Jim Crow), and the persons and personalities involved. Included as contributing resources are the glass-bottom boats designed specifically for the springs.

Recommendation/ Criteria: Accept / A, B, and C

Reviewer Jim Gabbert Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2275 Date _____

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



Marion County Board of County Commissioners

601 SE 25th Ave
Ocala, FL 34471
Phone: 352-438-2300
Fax: 352-438-2324

District 1 – David Moore, Vice Chairman
District 2 – Kathy Bryant, Commissioner
District 3 – Jeff Gold, Commissioner
District 4 – Carl Zalak III, Commissioner
District 5 – Michelle Stone, Chairman

May 17, 2019

Mr. Ruben Acosta
Survey & Registration Section
Bureau of Historic Preservation
R.A. Gray Building
500 South Bronough Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Re: Nomination of Silver Springs to the National Register of Historic Places

Dear Mr. Acosta:

The Marion County Board of County Commissioners is providing you with our opposition to the nomination for Silver Springs to be added to the National Register of Historic Places at this time. Marion County supports the efforts to revitalize the state park and has recently worked with our state legislative delegation to secure funding for capital improvements associated with the park's approved Unit Management Plan. There is an appropriation in the amount of \$1.5 million to bring swimming back to the headsprings of the Silver River along with the required support amenities, such as restrooms and lockers, which match the goals included in the management plan and we are concerned that a historic designation may prevent those goals from being achieved.

Marion County participated in the public process used to create the management plan in 2013 and we agreed that swimming in the headsprings was a desirable activity that should be brought back to the park. Swimming has occurred in Silver Springs well before the time it was sold to the State in the early 1990s. Today, nearly six years after the approval of the management plan, Silver Springs is one of the only springs in the state parks inventory that does not allow swimming in the headsprings. Our local community remembers the days of when swimming in the spring was allowed and it conjures those nostalgic memories of a local favorite pastime. By including swimming in the management plan, Marion County felt confident our community would soon be able to enjoy this activity once again.

Finally, it should be recognized that the Marion County Board of County Commissioners appreciates what the State Parks system does for our community. We share a common goal of providing opportunities for resource-based recreation in the pursuit of a robust ecotourism sector. We appreciate your understanding of our concerns regarding this nomination and would prefer that it be denied until the capital improvements included in the management plan are completed.

Thank you for your consideration pertaining to this matter.

Sincerely,

Michelle Stone, Chairman

C: Mounir Bouyounes, P.E. – County Administrator
Jeannie Rickman – Assistant County Administrator – Public Services
Angel Roussel, PE – Assistant County Administrator – Public Works
Jim Couillard, PLA – Parks & Recreation Director

Empowering Marion for Success

www.marioncountyfl.org



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT *of* STATE

RON DESANTIS
Governor

LAUREL M. LEE
Secretary of State



July 19, 2019

Dr. Julie Ernstein, Deputy Keeper and Chief,
National Register of Historic Places
Mail Stop 7228
1849 C St, NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Dr. Ernstein:

The enclosed disks contain the true and correct copy of the nomination for **Silver Springs (FMSF#: 8MR03723) in Marion County**, to the National Register of Historic Places. The related materials (digital images, maps, and site plan) are included.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at (850) 245-6364 if you have any questions or require any additional information.

Sincerely,

Ruben A. Acosta
Supervisor, Survey & Registration
Bureau of Historic Preservation

RAA/raa

Enclosures

4353

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" 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 Silver Springs

other names/site number MR3723

2. Location

street & number 5656 East Silver Springs Boulevard N/A not for publication

city or town Silver Springs N/A vicinity

state FLORIDA code FL county Marion code _____ zip code 34488

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Alissa Lotane 7/12/19
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Bureau of Historic Preservation, Division of Historical Resources, Florida Department of State
State or Federal agency and bureau

Returned

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain) _____	_____	_____

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- buildings
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include any previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
8	1	buildings
1	0	sites
12	3	structures
4	0	objects
25	3	total

Name of related multiple property listings

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Architectural Resources of the Sarasota School of Architecture
MPS

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE: outdoor recreation

COMMERCE/TRADE: restaurant

LANDSCAPE: park

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE: outdoor recreation

Returned

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Sarasota School

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation VARIOUS
walls VARIOUS
roof VARIOUS
other

Narrative Description

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

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.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** 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 individual distinction.
- 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.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION

CONSERVATION

ART

ARCHITECTURE

ENGINEERING

Period of Significance

1924-1969

Significant Dates

1957

Significant Person

see continuation sheet

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Lundy, Victor, architect

Returned

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 36) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of Repository

Silver Springs
Name of Property

Marion County, FL
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property roughly 88.62 acres

UTM References

(Place additional references on a continuation sheet.)

1 1 7 3 9 7 5 8 2 3 2 3 2 5 9 4
Zone Easting Northing
2 1 7 3 9 7 6 7 4 3 2 3 2 5 9 2

3 1 7 3 9 7 6 7 0 3 2 3 2 4 5 4
Zone Easting Northing
4 1 7 3 9 7 7 6 6 3 2 3 2 4 5 6

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Andrew Waber, Historic Preservationist

organization Florida Division of Historical Resources date March 2019

street & number 500 South Bronough Street telephone (850) 245-6430

city or town Tallahassee state FL zip code 32399

Returned

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

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 Florida Internal Improvement Trust Fund, Florida Division of Recreation and Parks

street & number 3900 Commonwealth Boulevard, MS100 telephone (850) 245-2555

city or town Tallahassee state FL zip code 32399-3000

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 amend 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.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 1 Silver Springs
Silver Springs, Marion County, FL

Summary

Silver Springs consists of buildings, structures, and objects historically associated with the Silver Springs and Paradise Park roadside attractions. The buildings are primarily concentrated along Mammoth Spring and on a partially manmade channel on the south end. The name of Silver Springs actually applies to the whole collection of individual springs that feed into the Silver River, the largest of which is Mammoth Spring. This massive circular springhead historically served as the terminus of the steamboats that flourished here in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The later roadside attraction was built around Mammoth Spring, which continues to function as the public embarkation point of glass bottom boat rides. The surviving built environment reflects this legacy, with the remnants of the contributing 1950s-era Silver Springs Tourist Center, non-contributing Boat Terminal, the 19th century and 1930s-era retention walls, and the 1930s-era Osceola Statue, which are all located around the spring. Just to the south of Mammoth Spring is the canoe rental and boat ramp area, which features rails that were historically used to lift and lower glass bottom boats into the river. On the south end of the park are the boat storage and maintenance facilities, dry dock, warehouse, and workshops, which primarily date to the 1960s.

The Silver Springs Tourist Center consists of two Sarasota School style buildings located within Silver Springs State Park: the Concession Building and the Restaurant Building. The buildings were designed in 1957 by noted Sarasota School architect Victor Lundy. Both buildings feature steel frame construction, non-structural curtain walls, and prominent low-pitched roofs with exposed wood beams. The Concession Building is a crescent-shaped, two-story building with a prominent cantilevered roof extending over an exterior walkway, serving as a shelter. The shelter is supported by square wood columns. The spaces between the shelter canopies and the roof function as skylights, with aluminum heat-resisting glass. The first and second stories of the building facing the Silver River feature a series of prominent large fixed glass windows that extend to nearly the full height and width of the facades. The Restaurant Building is also two stories in height with the prominent usage of wood and 16-light fixed windows. There is a projecting circular section on the east elevation of the building. Additionally, a detached, one-story flat roof shelter extends from the Concession Building in the direction of the Restaurant but terminates just prior to reaching it. Historically, this shelter did not connect the two buildings, as the space between them was used as a primary thoroughfare for automobile traffic. The complex was originally a three-part complex, with a prominent continuous curved boat dock shelter connected to the Concession Building. The shelter was torn down sometime after the period of significance and replaced by three non-historic hipped roof shelters that comprise the Boat Terminal and are considered non-contributing due to age.

On the south end of the district is the boat storage area. This area is primarily a legacy of the American Broadcast Company's (ABC) ownership of the park, which began in 1962 and lasted into the late 1970s; the resources here primarily date to the mid to late 1960s. This area includes the boat shelter and dock, the dry dock, and support buildings used for maintenance and storage. This area also contains the Wildlife Office, also known as the Ross Allen Building, which was relocated here sometime after the period of significance. It is the

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 2 Silver Springs
Silver Springs, Marion County, FL

last remaining building directly associated with the operations of the Ross Allen Reptile Institute, which was a major attraction at Silver Springs.

The portion of the Silver River within the boundaries which includes the springs themselves is considered a contributing historic site. The Silver River has continuously served as a historic tourist navigational route since the 1860s. Mammoth Spring itself historically served as the turnaround point for steamboats during the 19th and early 20th centuries and then as the embarkation point for glass bottom boats from at least the early 20th century to the present day. A naturally deep spring, the river has remained largely unaltered except for a manmade channel that branches south from the spring to serve the boat support buildings.

Setting

The Silver Springs district is located within Silver Springs State Park in Silver Springs, Florida. Silver Springs is an unincorporated community that has long evolved around its location along its namesake springs and the tourist attraction that opened there. It is also closely associated with nearby Ocala, Florida, and is considered part of the Ocala metropolitan area. The immediate surroundings north and west of the Silver Springs Tourist Center is commercial in nature, with hotels and restaurants next door. The south and east of the district is the state park, which is largely undeveloped or has been allowed to return to nature.

Physical Description

Tourist Center and Springhead Area

Concession Building Exterior

The Concession Building is a two-story building with a prominent low-pitched shed roof that extends past the building to form a covered walkway supported by square metal columns that have been covered over in wood (Photos 1-7). Due to the steel frame construction, the exterior walls are nonstructural. The building's main façade has a character-defining curve that correlates to the perimeter of the springhead. The building features a distinctive row of fixed light glass windows on the first and second stories of the main (southeast) facade. The portions of the exterior walls that are not glass are either exposed brick or brick sheathed with wood. The walkway shelter features exposed wood beams along its roofline. The spaces between the shelter and the building's roof function as skylights, with aluminum heat resistant glass (Photo 8). The covered walkway extends around the northeast elevation of the building. On the rear elevation of the building, the original exposed metal columns, exposed brick, and continuous fixed light glass windows are still visible (Photo 9). The first story roof is actually designed to be walked on, as there are multiple second story exterior doors that open out onto the roof (Photos 10-11). The roof, which is covered in gravel, serves a secondary function as an emergency fire escape.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 3 Silver Springs
Silver Springs, Marion County, FL

The exterior of the second story possesses a higher degree of integrity, with the character defining fixed glass windows, overhanging roof, exposed nonstructural brick walls, and exposed steel support columns all retained and visible (Photo 12).

Concession Building Interior

The first floor of the Concession Building functioned primarily as a public area (Photos 13-22). There are three distinct areas in this public section: a large single open space historically used as the main gift shop, a central space historically used as a restaurant and public restroom facility, and a vendor space historically used as storefronts. Flanking the central space were two corridors that historically were completely open but have since been enclosed, with only the corridor between the historic gift shop and the restaurant unimpeded by walls. On the southeast elevation, an additional space adjacent to the historic storefronts was enclosed. The original terrazzo floors, although covered in some portions, are still present on the interior.

The second floor of the Concession Building is accessed from a distinctive free-floating steel beam staircase that is a textbook example of Lundy's interior designs (Photo 23). The second floor historically functioned as the administrative offices of the entire park operations. The corridors have been largely retained and the original interior walls are still mostly intact (Photo 24). Some of the offices have been subdivided and modernized with drop ceilings (Photos 25-26). The two offices fronting the springs, which are the largest offices on the floor and served as park manager offices, retain their integrity. There is also a safe located on this floor, which was historically used to handle the large amounts of cash that were being handled in the park (Photo 27).

Walkway Shelter Between Concession and Restaurant Buildings

In the space between the Concession and Restaurant buildings, there is a freestanding flat roof walkway shelter that leads partway to the Restaurant Building (Photo 28). This was part of the original Lundy design and maintains its integrity. Historically, the gap between the end of this shelter and the Restaurant Building functioned as the primary driveway for visitors coming off the highway and into the Visitor Center parking lot.

Restaurant Building Exterior

The Restaurant Building is a two-story building with a complex layout (Photos 29-30). It features a low-pitched flat roof extending over both the first and second stories, similar in appearance to the Concession Building (Photo 31). The Restaurant Building layout is curved much like that of the Concession Building, but, unlike the Concession Building, the Restaurant is orientated towards the west, away from the spring and is closer to the highway. This was done intentionally to allow for the communities of Ocala and Silver Springs to use the building as well as patrons of the park. There is a distinctive semicircular wing on the northeast section of the

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 4 Silver Springs
Silver Springs, Marion County, FL

building, which historically housed the kitchen operations. The exterior of the Restaurant Building has been modified more than the Concession Building. Much of the windows and exposed brick on the exterior has been covered over with wood. The space facing the exterior walkway that leads in the direction of the Concession Building has been enclosed. A ticket booth and turnstile were added under this walkway. Much like with the Concession Building, the Restaurant Building's original steel beam columns on the first story have been covered over with wood but remain intact underneath. The steel beam columns are visible on the second story. Exterior access between the two floors is via a distinctive free-floating steel beam staircase similar in appearance to the staircase in the Concession Building.

Restaurant Building Interior

There are two distinct sections of the first floor, one on the general northwest corner and generally on the southeast corner. The southeast corner of the first floor, which historically functioned as a diner, has seen some alterations (Photos 32-34). There are drop ceilings and rooms in this space that are largely cut off from the rest of the building's interior. The original interior walls and vents are still present however, and can be viewed in sections where the drop ceiling tiles are missing. On the general northeast corner, the building maintains its character-defining semicircular wing, which served as the kitchen space for the restaurant (Photos 35-36). The space on this end of the building, which consist of single open spaces, is still largely retained on both the first and second floors. These spaces were originally used as the restaurant, bar, and public gathering places. The first floor still has its original parquet floors, the character defining circular interior wall along with the space for the bar, and the kitchen with its unusual brick pattern. The second floor space, which was later turned into a daycare for employees' children, retains a high level of spatial integrity (Photo 37). Carpeting has been put in place on this floor, which can be easily reversed. The building has some condition issues. The roof has air pockets and on the interior there are sections of the ceiling that are deteriorated and have loose asbestos and electrical wiring hanging down.

Divers' Building

To the rear of the Concession Building is the divers' building, a simple one-story wood frame building that was originally located along the river but was moved sometime after the period of significance (Photo 38). It was built sometime during the period of significance during the Ray and Davidson era. Although the relocation affects its integrity, the building was moved from one spot within the district to another.

Osceola Statue

One of the few remaining resources within the district that is associated with the pre-World War II Silver Springs attraction is the cast concrete statue of Osceola (Photo 39). It is the last remaining tourist attraction element from the pre-World War II era of the park. The statue itself dates to the 1930s and is a great example of

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National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 5 Silver Springs
Silver Springs, Marion County, FL

the rough vernacular statues that were erected at many roadside attractions during the era. The statue overlooks a prominent point near where the Silver River meets the Silver Springs springhead.

Retention Walls

There are two structures along the springhead that both predate World War II (Photos 40-41). There is a stone wall that dates to the late 19th century. It currently serves as a foundation for the springhead dock facilities and is largely obscured or covered over by modern wood and concrete walls and walkways. This wall is one of the few resources in the park that predates the roadside attraction. The retention wall is visible in postcards and stereoviews in front of and underneath a hotel that was built on the property in the 1800s. The wall served as a structural element in the port facilities here going back into the 19th century. A second wall dates to the 1930s, and extends from the springhead east past the Osceola statue. This was added by Davidson and Ray for both erosion control and beautification.

I Spy Statues

Underwater within the springhead are three statues, which were used in the filming of an episode of the television series *I Spy*, starring Bill Cosby and Robert Culp. The statues are part of the glass bottom boat tours. They still possess good integrity. In addition to the three still at the bottom of the spring, there are two more that have been placed inside the Concession Building as part of a museum display (Photo 42).

Springs and Waterways

Springs

The springs that feed into the Silver River are the centerpiece of the park (Photo 43). The name Silver Springs actually applies to the full collection of springs, a total of at least 30 spring vents that sit in an area of $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile along the Silver River (Figure 1). The collection of springs was named a National Natural Landmark by the National Park Service in 1971. The largest of these springs is Mammoth/Main Spring, which consists of two large vents in the circular source of the river known as the springhead or main pool. This spring alone comprises roughly 45 percent of the water that is fed into the river. There is a conjoined spring pool to the south of the main spring which consists of three side springs, two of which are the Reception Hall and the Bridal Chamber, located about 1,000 feet east of the Main Spring. Another significant spring is the Blue Grotto, which is about 300 feet east of the Reception Hall spring.¹

¹ Florida Department of Environmental Protection, *Bulletin No. 66: Springs of Florida* (Tallahassee, FL: Florida Geological Survey, 2004), p. 244-245.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 6 Silver Springs
Silver Springs, Marion County, FL



Postcard of the various springs included in the glass bottom boat tours, circa 1940s
(Source: State Archives of Florida)

The springs have been a locally significant tourist boat route almost continuously since the 1860s. The headsprings have served as the turnaround point for the popular steamboat lines, particularly the Hart Lines, from the 1860s into the early 20th century. Starting in the early 20th century, it served as the loading point for the popular glass bottom boat rides that replaced the steamers on the river. Thanks in large part to the surrounding land being converted into a state park, the landscape around the springhead and the Silver River within the state park boundaries retains its undeveloped naturalistic appearance which made it a popular tourist attraction in the late 19th century. The springs itself was a major underwater studio, in which nearly all Hollywood studios that used the Silver Springs park filmed their movies. It also served as the studio of renowned photographer Bruce Mozert, who was a noted trailblazer in the field of underwater photography. Although the natural flow of the river near the Ocklawaha River has been impacted by the Cross Florida Barge Canal which was constructed in the middle 20th century, the Silver River itself within the boundaries of the state park remains largely unaffected and in its natural state.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 7 Silver Springs
Silver Springs, Marion County, FL

Fort King Waterway

There is a secondary, manmade channel known as the Fort King Waterway, which was first dug in the 1940s. It extends off the south side of the Mammoth Spring springhead and runs roughly parallel to the Silver River for roughly half of a mile. The waterway was used for extended boat tours and also to provide drainage for Ross Allen Island and the animal enclosures at the Institute. Sometime during the 1960s, the waterway was cut further in a secondary loop to the south to accommodate the boat shelter. The canal system is considered a contributing structure to the district.²

Boat Shelter and Work Space Area

On the south end of the park is the boat shelter and work space area. These facilities all either date to the 1960s or, as in the case with the Wildlife Office, were built during the period of significance but moved sometime after the period of significance.³

Boat Barn and Pier

The boat barn and pier dates to the 1960s, with a portion of the shelter extended sometime after the period of significance (Photos 44-46). The complex consists primarily of three elements: the workshop that houses the tools and equipment needed to support boat operations; the pier that houses the glass bottom boats when not in public use; and the shelter that protects the boats while in storage. Due to the unusual nature of the boats, which are all electric powered, the piers are custom fitted with charging stations.

Dry Dock

Adjacent to the boat barn and shelter is a dry dock facility, which was also constructed in the 1960s (Photo 47). It is used to lift the glass bottom boats out of the water for the purposes of maintenance or repairs. It is comprised primarily of steel beams and winches supported by wood posts. The entire structure was custom fitted for the lifting of the glass bottom boats. The wood posts have likely been replaced but the steel structures within the dry dock are still present and the resource maintains good integrity.

² Florida Division of Recreation and Parks, Department of Environmental Protection, "Silver Springs State Park Approved Unit Management Plan Amendment," (Tallahassee, FL, December 17, 2014), p. 19.

³ According to the Marion County Property Appraiser's Office records, some of the buildings were constructed in 1973, but witness accounts place the buildings in the late 1960s.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 8 Silver Springs
Silver Springs, Marion County, FL

Ross Allen Building/Wildlife Office

On the east side of the workshop area is the Ross Allen building (Photo 48). The building, which was a support building constructed in the 1950s in connection to the Ross Allen Reptile Institute, was moved to its current location sometime after the period of significance. It is the last remaining resource associated with the Institute. As with the divers' cabin, the relocation has altered the integrity of this building but it was moved from one place in the district to another. It is a simple one-story wood frame building with a low-pitched, overhanging roof supported by wood posts.

Adjacent to the Wildlife Office is a simple one-story concrete block building used as a support building for the wildlife office (Photo 49). There are still wood cages on the inside of the building to hold animals along with facilities for the preparation of food for the animals.

Workshops and Warehouse

There are two large workshop buildings and a warehouse that are all considered contributing to the district (Photos 50-52). The workshops were used to make the signage for the park. The warehouse was used for the storage of materials for the park. Within the warehouse is the plaque given to Silver Springs recognizing its designation as a National Natural Landmark (Photo 53).

Boat Ramp

Located to the south of the Mammoth Spring but north of the boat shelter area is the boat ramp and canoe rental area. Historically, prior to ABC's construction of the boat barn, this area was used for the storage and maintenance of the glass bottom boats. Inset within the ground are the original rails used to pull the original glass bottom boats out of the water. It predates the park and is considered contributing to the district (Photo 54).

Glass Bottom Boats

There are six historic glass bottom boats that are considered contributing to the district (Photos 55-58). These boats, which date to the mid-1960s, are the best surviving resources associated with Paradise Park. The boats measure roughly 31 feet in length, 11.5 feet in width, and 14 feet in height with a net tonnage of 20 tons and a passenger capacity of roughly 35 people. The boats feature distinctive roof vents, porthole windows, and metal ribbon windows along the port and starboard sides. The interiors of the boats are mostly metal with wood furnishings. The interior layouts feature a centrally-placed glass floor pane flanked by wood bench seats and encircled by a metal walkway. Access to the interiors is via the aft side of the boats. The boat captain's seats and steering wheels are centrally-placed at the forward side of the boats. To allow access and to open the view for the captains, the rear doors slide open and a portion of the roof is lifted up.

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Non-Contributing Resources

Boat Terminal

There are three hipped roof dock structures fronting the Mammoth Spring springhead that were constructed after the period of significance (Photo 59). These structures, which comprise the Boat Terminal, function as the loading point for passengers on the glass bottom boat rides. Due to age, these structures are considered non-contributing.

Canoe Rental Facility

To the south of the main springhead is the boat ramp and canoe rental area (Photo 60). In addition to the historic rails, this area consists of a modern boat slip, storage facilities for canoes, and a canoe rental office that postdate the period of significance and are considered non-contributing to the district.

Alterations

The most significant alteration to the tourist center complex was the removal of the boat dock shelter sometime after the period of significance. It was replaced by the three wood hipped roof structures that currently function as the loading docks for the boats. The Concession Building has seen a number of changes, including the partial enclosure of the space between the building and its main (southeast) walkway; the covering of distinctive steel beams with wood; the enclosure of corridors; the infill of the south end space; and the covering of some of its windows. The Restaurant Building has likewise seen similar changes but to a greater degree.

The glass bottom boat shelter has been extended but otherwise retains good integrity. Two of the buildings within the district, the Ross Allen Building and the Divers' Cabin, were relocated from a spot nearby the Silver River to their current respective locations.

Integrity

The Silver Springs Tourist Center, is still in its original location near the Silver River springhead. Other elements of the district, including the boat barn and dry dock, warehouses and maintenance buildings (with the exception of the Ross Allen Building), Osceola Statue, and boat ramp rails are all in their original locations as well. The two buildings within the district that have been moved, the Divers' Cabin and the Ross Allen Building, have been moved to another spot within the district boundaries. Hence the district retains its integrity of location. When constructed, the complex was set within a larger attraction that included the Ross Allen Reptile Institute, the Seminole Village, the Prince of Peace Memorial, and the Tommy Bartlett Deer Ranch. Although these elements are gone, there are several important aspects of the setting, including the springhead,

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the parking lot, and the unincorporated town of Silver Springs to the north, that are still there. The surroundings grounds are also still being used as a public park. Hence, the district retains its integrity of setting and association. The Tourist Center has seen a number of alterations, but despite these changes, both buildings retain their distinctive shapes, their character-defining overhanging flat roofs, their original steel frame construction, and their most important interior spaces. Many of the elements that are obscured, such as the steel columns and windows, are still present underneath. As a result, the Concession Building and Restaurant Building retains their integrity of design, materials, workmanship, and feeling to contribute to the district. With the exception of the extension of the boat shelter, there has been very little that has changed with the remaining resources in the district. Most of the original roadside attraction is gone, including the Ross Allen Reptile Institute, the Prince of Peace Memorial, and the Tommy Bartlett Deer Ranch, and the boundary has been adjusted accordingly. The remaining resources, however, are either significant in their own right (the Tourist Center and glass bottom boats) or are historically and visually linked to ongoing tourist activities taking place on the Silver River. Hence, the district retains its integrity of design, workmanship, materials, feeling, and association.

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Resource List

Contributing Resources

<u>Buildings</u>	<u>Date of Construction</u>	<u>Site File No.</u>
Concession Building	1957	MR3732
Restaurant	1957	MR3733
Divers' Cabin	circa 1950s	MR4344
Wildlife Office/Ross Allen Building	circa 1950s	MR3736
Boat Barn	ca. 1965	MR3735
Metal Workshop Building	ca. 1969	MR4345
Paint Shop	ca. 1969	MR3734
Warehouse	ca. 1969	MR4343

Structures

Glass Bottom Boat Shelter and Dock	ca. 1965	MR3735
Glass Bottom Boat Dry Dock	ca. 1969	MR4346
Mammoth Spring Retention Wall	ca. 1900	MR4347
Silver River Retention Wall	ca. 1930s	MR4348
Boat Ramp Rails	ca. 1900	MR4315
Fort King Waterway	ca. 1940s-1960s	

Structures (Glass Bottom Boats)

<i>Chief Emathla</i> (Hull No. 500922)	ca. 1965	MR4349
<i>Chief Micanopy</i> (Hull No. 299250)	ca. 1965	MR4350
<i>Chief Charlie Cypress</i> (Hull No. 504606)	ca. 1965	MR4351
<i>Chief Neamathla</i> (Hull No. 539882)	ca. 1965	MR4352
<i>Chief Yahalochee</i> (Hull No. 508741)	ca. 1965	MR4353
<i>Chief Yoholo</i> (Hull No. 539881)	ca. 1965	MR4354

Sites

Silver Springs/Silver River

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Objects

Osceola Statue	ca. 1930s	MR4355
<i>I Spy</i> Statues (Underwater)	ca. 1960s	MR4356

Non-Contributing Resources

Buildings

Canoe Rental Building

Structures

Boat Terminal

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Significant Person

Allen, Ross
Davidson, W. M.
Mozert, Bruce
Ray, Carl

Summary

Silver Springs is being proposed for listing in the National Register at the local and state levels under Criterion A and B for Entertainment and Recreation; at the local level under Criterion A for Ethnic Heritage: Black; Criterion B for Conservation and Art; and under Criterion C for Architecture and Engineering. The period of significance extends from 1925 until 1969. Although river-based tourism on the Silver River and at the springs goes back to the late 19th century, the modern park's history dates to the ownership of Carl Ray and W.M. "Shorty" Davidson, who ran the park as a renowned roadside attraction from 1927 until 1962, when it was acquired by ABC. At its height, Silver Springs was the most-visited tourist attraction in Florida, drawing an estimated 800,000 people a year by 1950. The park received international attention as a location for movie and television productions, most notably the *Tarzan* movies starring Johnny Weissmuller, several James Bond movies, and the television series *Sea Hunt* starring Lloyd Bridges.

The district includes the Silver Springs Concession and Restaurant buildings, elements of the Silver Springs Tourist Center which were built following a fire that destroyed much of the waterfront. The Concession Building in particular, which also served as the administrative office for the entire park, is also significant for its association with the active professional life of Davidson and Ray, who were instrumental in forming the park and turning it into a major tourist attraction. In addition to forming the Silver Springs attraction, they also founded nearby Paradise Park, which was a significant African American park that operated until 1969. They were instrumental in the tourist industry across the state. The Tourist Center is also significant for its association with the active professional life of Bruce Mozert, who was a trailblazer in the field of underwater photography and whose images showcasing Silver Springs and Paradise Park were published in the leading national publications of the period. The district is significant for its association with herpetologist E. Ross Allen, who ran the Ross Allen Reptile Institute from Silver Springs from 1929 until 1964. Through his careful study of poisonous snakes, Allen developed a number of antivenin treatments that have been credited with saving numerous lives. During World War II, over 72,000 poisonous snakes were "milked" at the Institute, which supplied roughly 90 percent of the venom used for antivenin for servicemen and women. The last remnant of the Institute is a small wooden building which had been relocated to the workshop area.

Also included within this district is a fleet of six historic 1960s era glass bottom boats and the distinctive boat dry docking and storage facilities which were custom-built for the boats. Silver Springs had long been one of

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the most renowned attractions to use glass bottom boats. Many innovations were added to the boats to allow for more efficient operation, starting with the conversion of the gas-powered wood glass bottom boats into electric-powered boats. The original wooden boats were replaced with the current metal boats in the 1950s and 1960s. The boats, which date to the American Broadcast Company (ABC) era, have plied the waters of the Silver River for over 50 years and would have been used for both the historic Silver Springs attraction as well as the Paradise Park operations. They are the best surviving resources still directly associated with Paradise Park, which was a locally significant roadside attraction that catered to an African American clientele. Opened after World War II, it was one of the few such attractions opened to black people during the era of Jim Crow segregation. The boats themselves were operated by African American captains, who were prominent members of the community. Many of them voiced their discontent with not being allowed to bring their families along on the boat tours, which played a role in the decision to open Paradise Park. One of the boat captains, Eddie Vereen, was placed in charge of Paradise Park.

The Concession Building and the Restaurant are locally significant examples of Sarasota School architecture. They also represent a major local work of the noted architect Victor Lundy.

Silver Springs contributes to the Architectural Resources of the Sarasota School of Architecture MPS under Associated Historic Contexts B. III The Influence of New Architects, 1953-1959, and Associated Property Type F.5: Miscellaneous Buildings.

Historical Context

Silver Springs during Age of Steamboats (1860s-1910s)

One of the earliest forms of tourism in Florida was health tourism. People often came south on doctors' orders to escape the cold climate. By the mid-19th century, a small number of health spa resorts were established primarily near springheads. At this time, springs were being sold to the public for their reputed healing qualities. Among the earliest of these health spa resorts was Orange Springs, which is located near Silver Springs on another tributary of the Ocklawaha River. The property on which the resort stood was largely owned by Senator David Levy Yulee. After the Civil War, a resort spa opened in Green Cove Springs that centered around the sulfur springs there. At its height, there were as many as ten hotels operating in Green Cove Springs, which is located along the St. Johns River.⁴

Hubbard L. Hart is generally credited with introducing steamboat tourism along the Ocklawaha and Silver rivers. Hart was a Vermont native who first arrived in Palatka in the 1850s, operating mail and stage coach lines

⁴ Thomas R. Berson, "Silver Springs: The Florida Interior in the American Imagination," (Phd. diss., University of Florida, 2011), p. 99-102, 128.

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between Tampa and Palatka. He saw the potential of opening the Ocklawaha and Silver rivers to steamboat tourism, and in an effort to capitalize off this he started the Ocklawaha River Navigation Company in 1860. The biggest hindrance to navigation along the Ocklawaha River was clearing the river of fallen trees. After the interruption brought on by the Civil War, Hart received a contract from the state government to commence with clearing the river. By 1867, the passage from the Ocklawaha River to Silver Springs was cleared for steamboat traffic. Hart commissioned custom-built steamboats that allowed for easier navigation of the twisting, turning rivers.⁵

Following the Civil War, there was an influx of northerners who settled in the area, many of whom brought with them northern sensibilities of exploring natural wonders. Among them was Harriet Beecher Stowe, the writer of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, who lived near St. Johns River in what is now the Mandarin area of Jacksonville. By 1870, the main east coast rail line was extended between Jacksonville and Savannah, Georgia, making trips along the St. Johns and Ocklawaha rivers more accessible. By the 1870s, Silver Springs and the Ocklawaha River began to attract the attention of northern travel writers such as Edward King. Descriptions of the springs were seen in national publications such as *Scribner's* and *Appleton's*. Stowe herself wrote a glowing review of the springs in the *Christian Union*, a national publication to which she regularly contributed. In 1875, the author Sidney Lanier profiled Silver Springs and the Ocklawaha River in a book he wrote titled *Florida: Its Scenery, Climate, and History*, which saw wide circulation throughout the 19th century.⁶

Thanks to this advertising, the steamboat lines extending along the Ocklawaha and Silver rivers became major tourist attractions in the late 19th century. Among the famous visitors were President Ulysses S. Grant and General William T. Sherman. Although the settlement of Silver Springs, which shot up around the springhead, possessed a post office, warehouse, tavern, store, and small boarding house, the majority of visitors were day trippers who either returned to Ocala or departed via steamboat back to Palatka. Ultimately, the penetration of railroads into the interior of Florida doomed the steamboat lines. Although a small rail connection between Silver Springs and Ocala was completed, it did not match the scenic routes along the rivers. By the early 20th century, Silver Springs was mostly a local gathering spot for the nearby city of Ocala.⁷

Introduction of Glass Bottom Boats (circa 1900-1927)

The early 20th century also saw a marked shift in the watercraft that plied the Silver River. By this time, glass bottom boats began to replace the steamers in popularity. Initially, the glass bottom boats were improvised rowboats powered by oars. Who exactly was the first to use glass bottomed boats on the Silver River and when

⁵ Berson, 113-117.

⁶ Berson, 117-121, 128-133.

⁷ Berson, 128-129, 137, 140-141.

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One of the first glass bottom boats on the Silver River, circa 1910 (source: State Archives of Florida)

exactly it took place remains unknown. Although some local sources contend that these boats were invented here, this claim remains unsubstantiated. The river was certainly among the earliest interior waterways in the United States to see sustained commercial glass bottom boat activity. By the early 20th century, H.L. Anderson, who bought the springhead property, and Phillip Morrell were operating competing glass bottomed boat operations. In 1908, Ed Carmichael acquired Anderson's interests, including 80 acres of springhead property and operated the glass bottom boats for himself. Carmichael is credited with introducing canopies and cushioned seats to the boats along the Silver River. At first, as the glass bottom boats were small, they coexisted with the ship lines, which often advertised the glass bottom boats to help draw passengers. By 1920, however, most visitors boarded from points along the Silver River, particularly Mammoth Spring, as opposed to a St. Johns River port such as Palatka. This change was brought on by an increase in automobile travel and the improvement in the size and quality of glass bottom boats plying the Silver River, which by now completely replaced the steamers.⁸

An account of a first time trip on one of the glass bottom boat rides on the Silver River made during a congressional hearing in 1917 demonstrates the impression left on early visitors:

I was on [Silver Springs] last fall... I would like to say for the benefit of the committee that, although I have lived in Florida for about 33 years now and I have been to Silver Springs, I never really realized what it was until that trip. There is nothing in the United States any more wonderful than Silver Springs... you go out on a glass-bottom boat they have there, and the water is so clear and crystal you can see a 10-cent piece on the bottom of the lake, sometimes 60 or 70 feet deep.⁹

Although there were some attempts at developing the area around the springs, it would not be until Carmichael leased the springhead property to Davidson and Ray in 1924 that any serious attempts were made at turning the springhead itself into a major tourist attraction. The following year, Davidson and Ray subleased the property to New Yorker Charles K. Frankhauser, who presented an ambitious plan of developing the springs. This plan fell through, however, and by 1927, Davidson and Ray took back the sublease.

⁸ Gary Monroe, *Silver Springs: The Underwater Photography of Bruce Mozert* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2008), p. 18-20; Berson, p. 179, 191-194.

⁹ US House Committee on Rivers and Harbors, Hearings on the Subject of the Improvement of Oklawaha and Kissimmee Rivers, Fla. 64th Congress (USGPO, 1917), p. 7.

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Historic Significance: Criterion A Entertainment/Recreation

Silver Springs Roadside Attraction (1927-1962)

When local entrepreneurs Carl Ray and Shorty Davidson started the Silver Springs tourist attraction, there was a fundamental change in tourism patterns nationally. More and more people were taking to the road in automobiles, and as automobiles improved in performance, durability, and efficiency, they began



traveling farther distances. By 1937, an estimated 70% of tourists arrived via automobile. The central Florida route of the Dixie Highway passed through nearby Ocala, providing a direct connection to the beaches of south Florida and major cities such as Atlanta, Chicago, and Detroit. Later, US Highways 27, 301, and 441 passed through Ocala.¹⁰

W.C. "Shorty" Ray and his family on one of the first gas-powered glass bottom boat rides at Silver Springs, circa 1920s (Source: Powers, n.p.)



President Calvin Coolidge visiting Silver Springs, circa 1929 (source: State Archives of Florida)

Davidson and Ray, who formed the Silver Springs Amusement Company to manage the site, quickly determined that their best opportunity to capitalize on Silver Springs was to not compete directly with the major tourist destinations such as Miami or with hotels. Rather, they aimed to draw people passing through along the highways, having them spend a few hours at the attraction before moving along on their way to their destination. This approach proved critical to their marketing, as hotels were far more receptive to helping them promote their attraction. Shortly after taking over, they set out building a new pavilion, dance hall, bathhouse, and boardwalk. To lure more people, they offered free admission to the spring itself, relying on revenue from glass bottom boat tours, souvenir sales, and concession rentals.¹¹

¹⁰ Berson, 202.

¹¹ Berson, p. 196-200.

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The centerpiece of Silver Springs was the fleet of glass bottom boats that provided tours on the rivers. Realizing this, Davidson and Ray began working on ways to improve the visitors' experiences rather early on. The noisy outboard motors were replaced first by gasoline-powered engines before being refitted with the electric power in 1932. These boats were operated exclusively by uniformed African American boat captains, who also served as tour guides for the passengers. These captains were highly respected members of the local African American community who proved instrumental to the operation of Silver

Springs. They were pivotal to the marketing of the park, as images of the black boat captains and the all-white passengers were disseminated in promotional materials throughout the country. Despite their prominent roles in the operation of the park, the boat captains were unable to bring their families along on the tours, a glaring example of segregation not lost on them.¹²



Tourists boarding glass bottom boats, 1929
(source: State Archives of Florida)

In addition to the glass bottom boats, the park also offered extended Jungle Cruises and what were known as "photo subs." Unlike the glass bottom boats, the Jungle Cruise boat was an open-air boat with forward-facing seats and a canopy that could be pulled down to shelter passengers. Looking to expand visitors' experiences at the springs, Ray and Davidson also introduced a number of what were called scenic photo subs. These were larger draft vessels that allowed for passengers to go completely below the waterline and view the springs from portholes. Later, there was an aquatorium added to the park, which was a fixed structure underwater that gave visitors a view similar to that found at Weeki Wachee Springs. Although these were part of the everyday visitor experiences at Silver Springs, it was the glass bottom boats that were most associated with the park.¹³

In 1938, Silver Springs hosted the first ever meeting of what is now known as the Florida Public Relations Association (FPRA). This group, founded by John W. Dillin, is the oldest professional public relations organization in the United States. The FPRA became a major force in the marketing of the state and in professionalizing the public relations industry, establishing a code of ethics and accreditation courses.¹⁴

The proprietors of Silver Springs were particularly skillful at creating innovative ways to advertise the attraction. Early on, they invested heavily in roadside advertising, particularly nailing signs to trees along the road. They also posted Silver Springs-branded safety reminders at traffic intersections and sent out trucks with

¹² Lu Vickers, "Tourism and Segregation at Silver Springs," *Gainesville Sun*, February 5, 2017.

¹³ Berson, p. 205-206; Monroe, p. 31.

¹⁴ Florida Public Relations Association, "Our History," <https://www.fpra.org/about-us/our-history/>; Florida Public Relations Association, "History of FPRA," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bVe36wnby_M.

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Silver Springs dioramas across the country. Realizing that promotion of routes was key to bringing in visitors, they were quick to help advertise other attractions. This was perhaps best exemplified by an advertising campaign that began in 1952 in which Silver Springs erected flashy billboards that committed half of its space to other attractions. Garnet Carter, who would later gain fame for his “See Rock City” painted roadside barn campaign, was inspired by Davidson and Ray. It was the work of photographer Bruce Mozert, however, that perhaps best personified the efforts of promotion that took place at Silver Springs.¹⁵

Bruce Mozert



Underwater photograph by Mozert, circa 1950s (source: Monroe, p. 105)

Mozert, who is often cited as a trailblazer in the field of underwater photography, was a mainstay at Silver Springs for many years, starting in the 1930s. Although technically a freelance photographer who ran his own business, Mozert was the official photographer of Silver Springs. It was Mozert's innovative photographs of attractive young women posing underwater, often engaging in mundane daily tasks, that saw wide circulation across the country. Mozert was the brother of renowned pinup artist Zoe Mozert, who played a pivotal role in helping him establish his photography career. He first arrived in Silver Springs during the filming of one of the *Tarzan* movies taking place at the time and he was enraptured by the underwater filming taking place. He began fabricating watertight enclosures for his cameras and experimenting with various methods of underwater photography. His innovations and techniques employed in underwater photography proved of immeasurable value to Hollywood productions and promotional films that were shot at Silver Springs. As a tourist attraction photographer, Bruce Mozert was one of the first to photograph visitors and provide them with photographs of their experience, a side business that is now

almost universally employed across the theme park and amusement park industry. Mozert would photograph visitors as they boarded the glass bottomed boats, taking the film back to be developed so that visitors could have a photographic print ready for purchase when they came back from the end of the ride.¹⁶

Davidson and Ray were innovative in the manner in which they dealt with vendors. They collected no rent from them and only took a 10% commission on sales. Mozert was one of their most successful vendors, selling his photographs as well as photographic equipment to visitors. At the height of the Silver Springs operations,

¹⁵ Berson, p. 196-200; Harris Powers, “Two Young Men Gazed Into a Crystal Pool, They Dreamed, Worked Hard. And Now... It Attracts Millions,” *Suntime* June 27, 1953 [n.p.].

¹⁶ Monroe, p. 26-29.

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Mozert's operations alone generated more than \$100,000 a year in revenues. Silver Springs also featured an antique store, gift shop, woodcraft novelty shop, and citrus stand. There was also a resident potter, Henry Graack. A native of Denmark, Graack made Silver Springs branded pottery in front of tourists, using orange perfume to give the ceramics a scent reminiscent of Florida. Graack remained a fixture at Silver Springs from 1935 until 1966.¹⁷



Silver Springs branded pottery made by Henry Graack (Courtesy of the Museum of Florida History)

Ross Allen Reptile Institute



Postcard of Ross Allen Giving Snake Milking Demonstration, circa 1940s (Courtesy of the Museum of Florida History)

One of the most significant attractions on the Silver

Springs property was the Ross Allen Reptile Institute (Figure 2). Herpetologist Ross Allen was the founder of the institute, arriving here in 1927. Thanks in large part to Allen's public shows, which featured him "milking" venomous snakes and giving educational lectures, and the reptile exhibit, the Institute quickly became a staple of Silver Springs and one of its most popular attractions. It would be profiled in the popular *Ripley's Believe It or Not* syndicated newspaper article. The Institute also established itself as a major center of herpetological research. Allen and his assistants collected snake venom from a large number of poisonous snakes, which were used to create antivenin by laboratories around the country. It was one of the earliest in the US involved in such endeavors. During World War II, over 72,000 snakes from 27 different species were milked by the Institute, which provided 90 percent of all venom used for antivenin for U.S. servicemen. According to Allen, he personally milked more poisonous snakes than anyone else in the United States. The preparation of venom for usage as antivenin actually required much processing and a large number of snakes. Each snake could only be milked once a day and the venom had to be purified and dehydrated into crystalline form. The facilities at the Institute not only required accommodations for these snakes, but also required areas for venom processing. The venom laboratory established at the Institute was, according to Allen, the only of its kind in the United States when it opened. The fact that Allen was able to convert the milking process into part of a stage show to help self-fund the entire operation allowed for the Institute to become a major national player in what was a crucial step in the development and manufacture of life-saving antivenin.¹⁸

¹⁷ Monroe, 20-21, 28-29.

¹⁸ C.J. Hylander, *Adventures with Reptiles: The Story of Ross Allen* (New York: Julian Messner, Inc., 1951), p. 3-21, 166.

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Canned rattlesnake produced at the Ross Allen Cannery (source: *Guide to Ross Allen's Reptile Institute* (Ocala, FL: Ocala Star-Banner, 1948), p. 26.)

In the mid-1940s, Ross Allen acquired the business interests of George K. End, who is credited with establishing the first commercial rattlesnake cannery in the United States. End actually started his business, Floridian Products Corporation, in Arcadia, Florida, in 1931 before moving near Tampa shortly afterwards. He ran the Rattlesnake Headquarters, which was both a tourist attraction and canning factory. He successfully petitioned for the creation of a new post office, named Rattlesnake, Florida. The products were sold both as a novelty and as a delicacy in high-end restaurants around the country. End died in 1944 from a snakebite and his widow sold the snakes, patents, and canning operations to Allen. The Ross Allen Institute harvested about 500 rattlesnakes each year for the canning operations, known as the Ross Allen Cannery. The business later expanded into selling canned alligator meat.

The business continued into the 1960s and provided an additional source of revenue for the operations.¹⁹

The Institute also played a major role in the study and conservation of the American alligator and American crocodile. Allen, who often went out on expeditions to acquire alligators and crocodiles, was very much aware of the effects of development and overhunting on the populations of both species. Allen himself was often tasked with securing specimens of Florida reptiles for universities, museums, and zoos across the country. Although the Institute displayed other animals as well, especially later on, the reptiles remained the centerpiece of its display. The Institute would remain a fixture at Silver Springs until the 1960s, when Allen was bought out by ABC, who wished more direct control over the attractions at the springs.

Seminole Village

Another major element of the Silver Springs attraction that predated the Second World War was the Seminole Village. Constructed in 1934, it was a replica Seminole village that employed members of the Seminole Tribe of Florida. It was originally situated on a three-acre site just east of the swimming beach. Four members of the Seminole Tribe of Florida, including Sam Tommy, brother of the chief of the tribe, were involved in the initial planning and construction of the village. Roughly 50 to 60 members of the tribe from the Big Cypress area moved into the village. In addition to



Seminole family at the Seminole Village in Silver Springs, circa 1950s (Source: State Archives of Florida)

¹⁹ State Library and Archives of Florida, "Please Pass the Rattlesnake," written by Josh, Florida Memory Blog, July 7, 2014, <https://www.floridamemory.com/blog/2014/07/07/please-pass-the-rattlesnake/>; Andreas Bothe, *Guide to Ross Allen's Reptile Institute* (Ocala, FL: Ocala Star-Banner, 1948), p. 26.

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entertaining visitors by giving demonstrations of traditional Seminole living and wrestling alligators, the members of the tribe also generated money by selling wares they were making in front of visitors. Originally managed by Charles Metzger, the Indian Village attraction eventually came under the management of Ross Allen, who ran the site concurrently with his adjacent Reptile Institute.²⁰

Silver Springs and Hollywood



Johnny Weissmuller during the filming of *Tarzan Finds a Son!* Circa 1938 (source: State Archives of Florida)



Scene from *The Creature from the Black Lagoon* filmed at Silver Springs ca. 1950s (source: State Archives of Florida)

The clear waters and jungle-like surroundings made Silver Springs a popular on-site filming location for a number of Hollywood films and television shows, especially for underwater scenes. The first movie shot at the springs was a silent film, *Seven Swans*, in 1916. However, it was a 1929 short film produced by legendary sportswriter Grantland Rice titled *Crystal Champions* that brought Silver Springs to the attention of Hollywood. The film profiled the leading competitive swimmers of the day, including Johnny Weissmuller. It not only demonstrated the suitability of Silver Springs for shooting underwater scenes, but also profiled Weissmuller in one of his first talking film roles.²¹ This attention from Hollywood was crucial to the growth of Silver Springs. As Davidson himself stated, it was “not until the movies discovered the possibilities that lay under our crystal clear waters did Silver Springs mean much outside Florida. Until then, Silver Springs was a sort of glorified picnic park and swim beach.”²²

²⁰ David Cook, “Seminole Village Popular at Silver Springs,” *Ocala-Star-Banner*, February 9, 2014.

²¹ Berson, 209.

²² Berson, p. 209.

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Silver Springs gained international attention in the 1930s as a filming location for the *Tarzan* movie franchise starring Johnny Weissmuller, starting with the initial movie *Tarzan the Ape-Man*.²³ The springs and the grounds around the springs served as a principal shooting location for the 1939 movie *Tarzan Finds a Son!* Weissmuller, who was already renowned as a champion competitive swimmer and Olympic gold medalist, became one of the most famous actors in Hollywood as a result of his role as Tarzan. Silver Springs exploited its connection to Tarzan as well, introducing the new Jungle cruises. In an effort to make the area look more tropical, macaque monkeys were introduced onto an island in the middle of the Silver River by a boat operator named Colonel Tooley. Unknown to Tooley, however, was that the monkeys were good swimmers. They quickly escaped from the island and today there are a number of non-native macaque colonies living along the Silver and Ocklawaha rivers.²⁴



Promotional image of Lloyd Bridges, star of *Sea Hunt*, taken at Silver Springs (source: State Archives of Florida)

were often used to cross-promote the productions and the attraction itself. A good example of this was the promotional photograph seen on the left, which shows *Sea Hunt* star Lloyd Bridges in front of the Silver Springs boat shelter with the glass bottomed boats in the background.²⁵

In addition to the *Tarzan* movies, a number of other movies were also filmed at Silver Springs, many of them utilizing the springs for underwater shots: *Creature from the Black Lagoon*; *The Yearling* starring Gregory Peck; *The Barefoot Mailman*; the James Bond movies *Thunderball*, *Moonraker*, and *Never Say Goodbye Again*; *Jupiter's Darling* starring Esther Williams; and *Don't Give up the Ship* starring Jerry Lewis among others. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, Silver Springs served as a principal shooting location for over 100 episodes of the popular television series *Sea Hunt* starring Lloyd Bridges. The proprietors of Silver Springs recognized the value of such exposure and went to great lengths

to accommodate film crews on the property. They often provided equipment and loaned out their workers to assist with productions. Mozart's photographs



Photograph of the premiere of *Underwater!* (Source: *Life Magazine*, January 10, 1955, p. 67)

²³ There is some debate as to precisely how many *Tarzan* movies were shot at Silver Springs. Some sources note the first six of the franchise. The movie site imdb.com mentions Silver Springs being used in at least four of the first six movies from 1932 to 1941.

²⁴ Berson, p. 205-206; Monroe, p. 34.

²⁵ Monroe, p. 33-35; Unit Management Plan, p. 53.

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In 1955, Howard Hughes staged an elaborate underwater premiere for the movie he produced, *Underwater!* starring Jane Russell. The movie was screened underwater on a plastic screen, with the stars of the movie accompanying a number of reporters in scuba gear to watch the movie on benches set up underwater specifically for the occasion. Those who did not wish to see it in scuba gear watched the movie from the portholes of a submarine brought in. It was the first such premiere ever held and garnished a significant amount of attention. The premiere marked a major milestone in the career of actress Jayne Mansfield. A little-known actress at this time, she crashed the premiere, showing up two days before the event in a red bathing suit.²⁶ Photographs of her circulated around the world, and as a result of the press, she signed her first movie contract with Warner Brothers.²⁷

When Hollywood arrived in Silver Springs, they often used the reptiles from the Reptile Institute. One particular alligator that was popular was a large alligator known as Old Cannibal, which was used in a number of film sequences. Allen's involvement with the filming often led to some injuries, including a bite from a cottonmouth snake and a bite from an alligator that nearly resulted in the loss of his hand.²⁸

Folklore of the Springs

The springs have long been a source of legends, which were often either invented or exploited by or for tourist interests. The most popular stories were the ones involving tragic lovers. As early as 1891, there was the story of Wenonah, the daughter of Chief Okahumkee who fell in love with a rival chief of her father by the name of Chuleotah. Upon finding out his daughter was in love with this chief, Okahumkee waged a war against Chuleotah's tribe and in the ensuing battle Okahumkee personally killed Chuleotah. In her despair, Wenonah ran to a spot on the river known as the Crystal Fountain, where the ghost of Chuleotah beckoned her, and she jumped into the river and drowned. According to local legend, the green moss and algae on the river bottom were the loosened braids of Wenonah's hair. It was a story that was told to tourists by the steamboat captains.²⁹

The most popular legend of the springs was that of the Bridal Chamber, which was told by an elderly African American woman by the name of "Aunt Silla." Her real name was Priscilla Scott and she was actually the ancestor of several generations of glass bottom boat captains. The Bridal Chamber story was similar in nature to the story of Wenonah. It told the story of two star-crossed lovers by the name of Claire Douglass and Bernice Mayo. Claire was the only son of a wealthy cotton planter while Bernice was a poor girl who was nursed by "Aunt Silla" as an infant and spent a great deal of time at her cabin. Claire and Bernice fell in love and

²⁶ According to some sources, she had a bathing suit "malfunction," while others mention that her bathing suit was see-through. In an interview for a mass market publication, however, Mansfield only mentioned she wore a red bathing suit.

²⁷ Monroe, p. 35; John Maynard, *The Jayne Mansfield Pin-Up Book* ([New York]: Standard Magazines, Inc., 1957), p. 51-52, 57.

²⁸ Hylander, p. 159-164.

²⁹ J.O.D. Clarke, *Ocala, Fla.: A Sketch of Its History, Residences, Business Interests, Etc.* (New York: The Republic Press, 1891), p. 48.

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Image of Priscilla Scott ("Aunt Silla") used in Silver Springs promotional material (source: "The Legend of the Bridal Chamber")

promised to marry, but Claire's father objected to the match, sending him away to Europe and intercepting any letters received from Bernice. Distraught, Bernice grew sick and died in "Aunt Silla's" cabin. On her deathbed, Bernice requested "Aunt Silla" to dispose of her body in what was then known as the Boiling Spring, which she did. Returning a year later, Claire, assuming Bernice moved on with her life, came to Boiling Spring one more time to reminisce. To his horror, he recognized the Bernice at the bottom of spring by the bracelet he gave her and dove in to pull her out of the water. Unable to dislodge her, he embraced her instead and drowned. The rocks at the bottom of the spring then opened up, engulfing both of them.³⁰

Exactly when Priscilla Scott started telling the Bridal Chamber story is unknown but she was certainly doing it well before the 1920s roadside attraction. The story came to be so closely associated with the spring that the name was changed Boiling Spring to Bridal Chamber Spring. Scott was photographed in front of her house in a stereograph image of Silver Springs in 1874, an indicator she was possibly telling this story at this time due to the connections in the story between her home and the fictional Bernice Mayo. She was making a living selling the story when steamboats were still plying the Silver River. In the early years of the roadside attraction, Scott was a mainstay. Other African American

employees at the springs, most notably the boat captains, were also entrusted with spinning folk stories for the tourists

and it became a big part of the visitor experience at Silver Springs. The Bridal Chamber story is perhaps the best known example of this.³¹



Visitors of Paradise Park on glass bottom boat ride (Source: Vickers and Wilson-Graham p. 6)

Silver Springs During World War II (1941-1945)

During the war, gas rationing made it difficult for civilian visitors to see Silver Springs. This forced the proprietors to make some adjustments to keep the attraction open. During the war, Silver Springs became the first private attraction in Florida

³⁰ Vickers and Wilson-Graham, p. 64-66; Paradise Park, "The Legend of the Bridal Chamber," in "See Florida's Silver Springs from Paradise Park for Colored People," [pamphlet], n.d.

³¹ Vickers and Wilson-Graham, p. 64-66.

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to drop prices for service members. Thanks in large part to this strategy, Silver Springs still managed to draw over 200,000 visitors during the war.³²

Paradise Park (1949-1969)



Promotional image of Paradise Park circa 1950s
(source: State Archives of Florida)

Silver Springs had long used African Americans to operate the boat tours along the Silver River. Despite this, African Americans were not allowed on the boat rides or in the reptile shows. They were somewhat tolerated at the springs but were not given full use of the facilities. Many of the African Americans working at the park were unhappy with being unable to take their families there. Seeing a demand and hoping to take full advantage of African American tourists, Ray and Davidson established Paradise Park in 1949, with its grand opening held on Emancipation Day. The park was built around a white sand beach along the

Silver River, downstream from the springhead. The land on which Paradise Park stood was at one time owned by M.R. Porter, who in the late 1920s opened a park known as Silver Springs Paradise. By 1935, Ray and Davidson acquired the former Silver Springs Paradise. After opening Paradise Park, Ray and Davidson hired Eddie Vereen, a local African American who was a glass bottom boat captain at Silver Springs, to operate it. The park quickly became an important gathering place for local African Americans, and featured a gift shop, soda fountain, pavilion with a jukebox, as well as picnic tables. Visitors could partake in the swimming beach and Ross Allen conducted reptile shows there. The boats were available upon request but only if they were not already being used by Silver Springs. Despite this limitation, Silver Springs was the only major private Florida attraction with an entirely new section for African Americans. Bruce Mozart handled the advertising for the park. Paradise Park would remain in operation until 1969, when it was closed.³³

Silver Springs After World War II (1945-1957)

Following World War II, Bok Tower and Cypress Gardens overtook Silver Springs as the most popular Florida attractions. In 1947, Newt Perry, a protegee of Ray and Davidson who was an active presence at Silver Springs, founded Weeki Wachee Springs. Despite this, the attraction remained popular throughout the 1950s and early 1960s. The Prince of Peace Memorial and Tommy Bartlett's Deer Ranch was added around this time. Bartlett was best known for his popular water ski shows based out of Wisconsin. He began his career as a radio

³² Berson, p. 214.

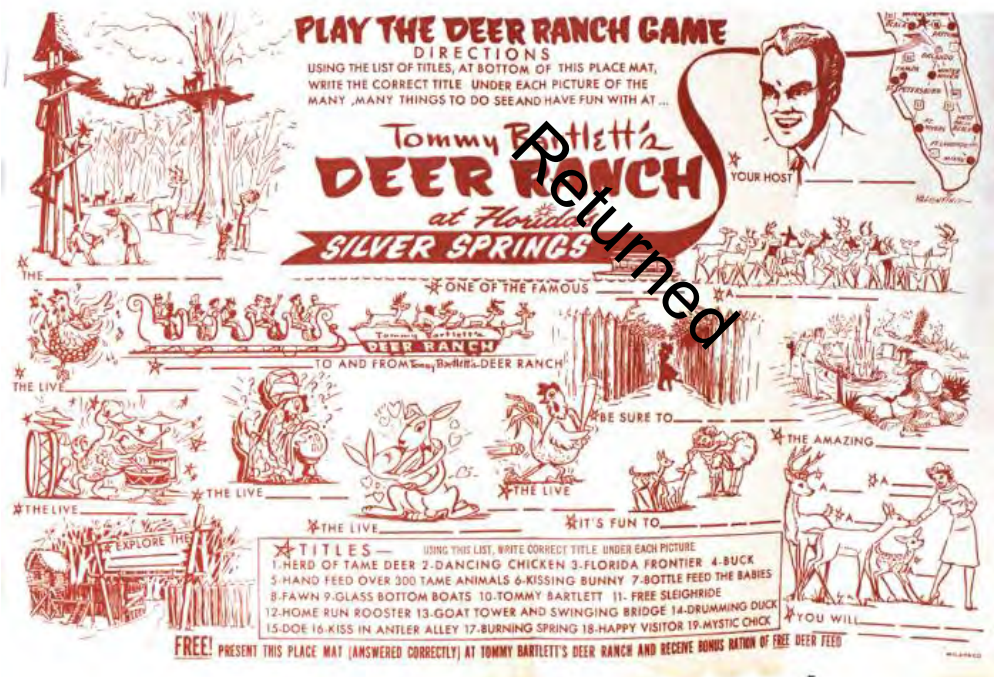
³³ Lu Vickers and Cynthia Wilson-Graham, *Remembering Paradise Park: Tourism and Segregation at Silver Springs* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2015), p. 2-15; Berson, 195-196, 221-223.

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personality, hosting the show *Welcome Travelers*, which would later be broadcast on CBS television. He later hosted *The Tommy Bartlett Show*, which appeared on ABC television. The Deer Ranch was a zoo with 150 species of deer among other animals. It often featured sets designed by artist Val Valentine, who worked with the Max Fleisher Studios as an animator for cartoons such as *Betty Boop* and *Popeye*. The zoo remained under the ownership of Bartlett until 1965, when he sold out his interest to Silver Springs.³⁴



This advertising for Tommy Bartlett's Deer Ranch is a good example of the innovative methods used by Silver Springs to promote their attraction. This was printed on a paper placemats used in restaurants (source: Tim Hollis, *Lost Attractions of Silver Springs*, p. 60)

Prince of Peace Memorial

At around the same time that the Deer Ranch was built, a religiously themed attraction known as the Prince of Peace Memorial was constructed. The religious attraction featured a series of small Carpenter Gothic chapels. Each chapel contained elaborate hand-carved wood dioramas depicting scenes from the Bible. These dioramas were carved by Paul Cunningham. The memorial remained a ubiquitous part of the Silver Springs attraction

³⁴ Berson, p. 227; Tim Hollis, *Lost Attractions of Silver Springs* (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2018), p. 56-63

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until the 1960s, when parent company ABC began removing concessioners. Afterwards, Cunningham took his dioramas on the road.³⁵



An example of the elaborate wood dioramas found in the Prince of Peace Memorial chapels
(Source: Tim Hollis, *Lost Attractions of Silver Springs* p. 68, 70)

³⁵ Hollis, p. 66, 69, 71.

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Construction of New Tourist Center



Aerial photograph of the Silver Springs Tourist Center shortly after its completion
(source: University of Florida Archives)

In 1955, a disastrous fire swept through the Silver Springs attraction, destroying the ticket, business, and publicity offices as well as a number of shops and restaurants. As the docks remained relatively unscathed, the park remained open as rebuilding efforts began. Ray and Davidson hired the architect Victor Lundy to rebuild a radically new complex, which became as the Silver Springs Tourist Center.

Finished in 1957, Lundy's design featured three primary components: a covered boat dock that swept across the springhead; a pavilion/concession building that housed the shops, bathrooms, and administrative offices; and a restaurant and coffee shop building. The concession building and the boat dock shelter were connected via a covered walkway, which extend part way to the restaurant. The design won almost universal praise in architectural circles when completed. For the owners of Silver Springs, this complex was a statement piece that gave the park a more modern look in keeping with the times.

End of Ray and Davidson Ownership (1957-1962)

By the late 1950s and early 1960s, parks began shifting away from more natural attractions to artificial ones, complete with their own fantasy worlds. A big catalyst for this was the opening of Disneyland in California in the mid-1950s. In 1959, Busch Gardens opened in Tampa. In Silver Springs, the Deer Ranch complete with its south pole theme and the usage of "sleighs" and the development of the Prince of Peace Memorial were good examples of the artificiality being employed by parks to keep pace with the changing tastes of visitors. A good local example of this fantasy park was the Six Gun Territory, a Wild West themed attraction that opened near

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Silver Springs. By the 1960s, the tourist attractions in Florida were becoming more corporate and consolidated. Between 1960 and 1972, 33 of 76 roadside attractions closed while another 22 opened.³⁶

There were three major developments that spelled the end of roadside tourism: the construction of the interstate, the increase of air travel, and the development of major corporate theme parks. By the early 1960s, Silver Springs' and tourism's importance to the nearby city of Ocala declined as the local citrus, cattle, and meat industry expanded. The arrival of a Libby's packing plant in Ocala reduced the influence of Silver Springs on the city's economy and infrastructure decision making. The tourist and hospitality industries no longer dominated the chamber of commerce as they once did. As a result, when the decision was made as to the placement of Interstate 75 in the early 1960s, the location of the interstate was placed through the city limits as opposed to a location more beneficial to both the city and Silver Springs.³⁷

The effects of interstate travel would prove disastrous for many small towns and for the roadside attractions built along the older highways. As early as 1965, business leaders were starting to see the effects of rerouting main traffic away from downtowns and the subsequent construction of corporate chain hotels, stores, and restaurants. The faster rate of traffic provided fewer opportunities for people to stop over along many of the old roadside attractions, and attendance dwindled there through the 1960s. The construction of Interstates 4 and 75 along with the Florida Turnpike proved instrumental in the selection of Orlando to serve as the new location for what became Disney World in the early 1970s. By the 1970s, more people were also flying, with the total number of tourists arriving by plane jumping from around 12% in 1962 to 30% in 1977. The arrival of Disney had a profound impact upon the tourism industry in the state, as there became more of an emphasis on destination tourism dominated by massive, corporately-owned theme parks. The expansion of Disney World and the arrival of Universal Studios and Sea World all but sealed the fate of roadside attractions across the state.³⁸

Perhaps seeing the beginning of the end, Ray and Davidson decided to sell out the attraction to the American Broadcast Company (ABC) in 1962, which ran the park through its subsidiary Silver Springs, Inc. The nature of the operation changed upon the ABC acquisition. The company set out cancelling numerous contracts and buying out Tommy Bartlett's Deer Ranch and Ross Allen's Reptile Institute. The company also broke with tradition by charging for access to the springs. They even closed the springs to swimming in the late 1960s. In 1969, they closed Paradise Park. The glass bottom boat rides remained a fixture, however. The ABC company owned Silver Springs until 1984, when they sold it to a group of Ocala residents.³⁹

³⁶ Berson, p. 240-242, 254.

³⁷ Berson, p. 248-250.

³⁸ Berson, p. 239-243, 250-253, 260.

³⁹ Berson, p. 250-255, 286.

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In 1978, ABC opened the adjacent Wild Waters water park. This large park was intended as a complement to Silver Springs and would often be marketed together with the older park. It would remain in operation until 2016, when it was permanently closed and taken over by the state of Florida for repurposing into part of the Silver Springs State Park. The structures in the park were demolished in 2018.⁴⁰

Silver Springs After 1984

The park changed ownership a number of times after ABC first relinquished it in 1984. The various owners of Silver Springs tried desperately to keep the park running in competition with the larger parks in Orlando. The Prince of Peace Memorial, the Reptile Institute, the Deer Ranch, the remnants of Paradise Park, and even the original Lundy-designed boat dock were demolished.

The beginnings of what is now Silver Springs State Park started in 1986, when the state began making a series of purchases along the Silver River to open Silver River State Park. In 1996, Ogden Entertainment of Florida, Inc., undertook a massive expansion of Silver Springs, which included adding a bear and alligator exhibits and a steamboat attraction. The last owner of the Silver Springs attraction was Palace Entertainment, which took over the attraction in 2002. The private park continued in business until 2013, when it was permanently closed and the state formally took over the property, which was merged with Silver River State Park to create Silver Springs State Park. Since taking over the property, the state began the process of converting the grounds into a conventional nature park. The two surviving Lundy buildings have been retained. Most of the modern zoological and theme park attractions added into the park after the mid-1970s, including Wild Waters, were removed and replaced by nature trails and campgrounds.⁴¹

Criterion B – Carl Ray and Shorty Davidson (Entertainment/Recreation)

The Tourist Center is the best surviving resource associated with the active professional life of Walter “Carl” Ray and W.M. “Shorty” Davidson. As the creators of the Silver Springs and Paradise Park roadside attractions, the two men had a profound impact upon the history of tourism in the Ocala area. Ray was a native of Georgia who moved to the unincorporated community of Martel, Florida, with his family in 1895. After serving in World War I, he returned to the Ocala area. It was at this time that he began discussions with the Silver Springs property owner Ed Carmichael to turn the springs into a tourist destination. Ray reached out to Davidson, who at this time was the owner of a popular café in Ocala, and the two men reached an agreement in 1924 to lease the land from Carmichael for 50 years. This being the height of the Florida Land Boom, Ray and Davidson initially subleased the property out to a New York businessman with the goal of converting the springhead land

⁴⁰ Berson, p. 286; Dave Schlenker, “Crews Now Demolishing Wild Waters,” *Ocala Star-Banner*, December 21, 2018.

⁴¹ Berson, p. 284-288; Florida Adventurer, “Silver Springs to Join the State Park System in October,” <https://floridaadventurer.wordpress.com/2013/01/26/silver-springs-to-join-the-state-park-system-in-october/>.

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into a massive development. As the Land Boom collapsed, however, the plans fell through and Ray and Davidson took back the lease in 1926. It was at this time that the development really began for the roadside attraction.

The two men made several key decisions that proved critical to the growth of Silver Springs. Wishing to exploit the newly developed highway system and to take advantage of the growing number of tourists arriving in Florida via automobile, they marketed the attraction as a stopover as opposed to a destination. They also provided free access to the spring itself, only charging a fee for the boat rides and the sideshows and also relying on souvenir revenue. They were also rather generous to their vendors, only taking a 10% cut of the revenues. The method they used of direct vendor ownership played a key role in the creation and development of attractions such as the Ross Allen Reptile Institute, the Tommy Bartlett Deer Ranch, and the photo studio of Bruce Mozert. Paradise Park, which was opened after World War II, became a major local African American tourist destination during the era of segregation and brought many black visitors into the area. The second floor of the Concession Building, which was built to replace an earlier complex that burned down, served as the administrative offices for the entire park operations. Both Ray and Davidson ran the Silver Springs and Paradise Park from this building between 1957 and 1962, when they sold both parks to ABC.

Under Davidson and Ray, Silver Springs was among the founding institutions of the Florida Attractions Association (FAA), which was started in 1949. Peter Schaal, who was the advertising director at Silver Springs, served as the first president of the FAA. Up until this time, there was a significant problem in the plethora of substandard tourist attractions throughout the state that resulted in many complaints and threatened business. To solve this problem, owners of Silver Springs, Cypress Gardens, Monkey Jungle, and Parrot Jungle started the FAA. They opened membership to other attractions across the state, provided that they uphold a certain standard of quality, pricing, and cleanliness. Membership in the FAA connoted a level of prestige that benefitted attractions throughout the state. The FAA quickly became an important promoter of the tourism industry in Florida, serving as one of the chief political lobbying groups in the state. The FAA also played an important role in networking, allowing attraction owners to share ideas, pool resources, and band together in times of natural disasters. The association is still in existence, and today has over 120 members.⁴²

Criterion B - Ross Allen (Conservation)

Ross Allen (1908-1981) was a noted herpetologist who was a recognized authority on poisonous snakes, alligators, and crocodiles. A native of Pennsylvania, he first moved to Florida as a child with his family during the Land Boom era of the 1920s. While still in his early 20s, Allen began avidly collecting and exhibiting both

⁴² Dorothy Mays, "Gatorland: Survival of the Fittest Among Florida's Mid-Tier Tourist Attractions," *Florida Historical Quarterly* vol. 87, no. 4 (Spring 2009), p. 522-523; Florida Attractions Association, "About Us," https://www.floridaattractions.org/Public/About/Public/About_FAA/About_Us.

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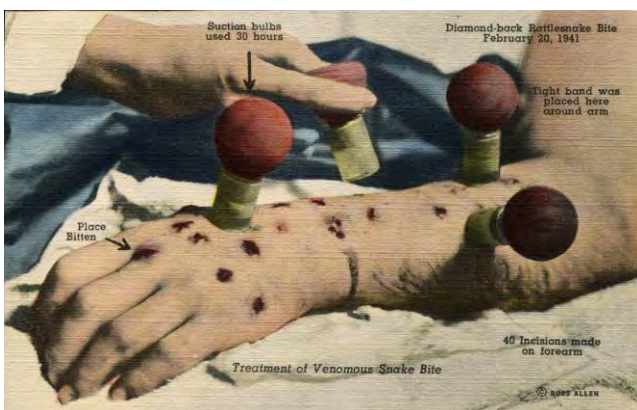
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live and deceased snakes and alligators in Winter Haven. He also started collecting reptile specimens for the University of Florida. Initially expressing interest primarily in taxidermy, he began charging a fee to visitors with the hope that they would leave without bothering him. He soon discovered that they were more than happy to pay admission and he was in fact making far more money from visitors' fees than through the selling of stuffed reptiles. After his live alligator collection grew to over 60 and a number of them escaped their enclosure, the authorities in Winter Haven forced him to either shut down his operation or relocate. Hoping to salvage his attraction, Allen got in his automobile and travelled across the state looking for a suitable place to move the reptiles. Thanks in large part to the help of Newt Perry, whom Allen knew as a competitive swimmer in Winter Haven, Allen received a favorable hearing from Ray and Davidson, who allowed him to set up his institute in Silver Springs in 1929.⁴³



Ross Allen (right) giving demonstration during live radio broadcast, circa 1930s (source: Stetson University Archives)



Allen made public education a major priority of the institute. This 1941 postcard gives a demonstration on proper snakebite treatment

its more lethal reputation. Allen was also mindful of the deaths of captured reptiles resulting from a lack of knowledge of how to properly handle and care for them. To combat this, he published a book with Neill titled *Keep Them Alive*.⁴⁴

Through the Institute, Allen became a prominent figure in the public education of reptiles, particularly poisonous snakes, and was very involved in the public health aspects of snake bites. Allen was particularly appalled by the widespread slaughter of poisonous snakes and snakes mistaken as venomous due in large part to public misunderstanding of the risks of specific snake populations. Starting in 1934, Allen and his assistants were very active in conducting a statewide survey of poisonous snake populations, particularly gathering information while none were attributed to the other rattlesnake species in Florida, the pygmy and canebrake rattlesnakes. They also determined that the eastern diamondback had a fatality rate of 40% while the coral snake had a 20% fatality rate despite

⁴³ C.J. Hylander, *Adventures with Reptiles: The Story of Ross Allen* (New York: Julian Messner, Inc., 1951), p. 33-39.

⁴⁴ Hylander, p. 62-85, 149.

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Although not formally trained in a university, Allen's unique line of work gave him a level of expertise that was highly sought out by professional publications. He was published in a variety of publications, including *Florida Conservator*, *Modern Taxidermy*, *Journal of the Florida Academy of Sciences*, *Herpetologica* and *Copeia* among others. He was tasked by the United States Air Force with writing an article on snake bite first aid and treatment, which received wide circulation. He even published an article on applying snake bite first aid for dogs in *Field and Stream* hoping to prevent the unnecessary deaths of hunting dogs. In 1948, he published one of the earliest full accounts of the habits of the cottonmouth snake, an important first step amongst other herpetologists looking to gain a better understanding of the snake. Working with Neill, Allen identified at least two new species of snake, the Everglades rat snake and the Eastern Apalachicola Lowlands king snake. The Everglades rat snake was given the scientific name *Elaphe obsoleta rossalleni* in his honor. To further the study of alligators and crocodiles, Allen founded the International Crocodylian Society.⁴⁵

Although all traces of the original Ross Allen Reptile Institute are gone from their original location, it was inextricably linked to the operations of Silver Springs and Paradise Park and Allen often collaborated closely with both of these parks. There is still one surviving resource directly associated with the Institute that is still standing, the Ross Allen Building, which has been relocated to the workshop area of the park and still remains within the boundary. The land on which the Institute stood was officially leased and later owned and managed by the Silver Springs. The Institute was officially a vendor of Silver Springs until 1965. After the departure of Ross Allen, the attraction was under the direct control of the ABC affiliate Silver Springs, Inc. Hence, the administrative offices of the Concession Building as well as the Ross Allen/Wildlife Office building stand as the best remaining resources associated with the active professional life of Ross Allen during his time at Silver Springs.

⁴⁵ Hylander, p. 168-172.

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Criterion B – Bruce Mozert (Art)



Mozert often captured underwater poses of people in everyday activities, circa 1950s (source: Monroe, p. 135)



Mozert also served as chief promotional photographer of Paradise Park (source: Vickers and Wilson-Graham, p. 149)

Bruce Mozert (1916-2015) was the longtime resident photographer of Silver Springs. He became renowned for his work in underwater photography and his promotional films and photographs of Silver Springs were circulated around the country. Mozert, who is considered a pioneer in the field of underwater photography, developed a much improved underwater camera casing that greatly enhanced the film quality of both still photographs and films. He caught the attention of Hollywood when he first arrived at Silver Springs during the filming of one of the *Tarzan* movies. He would later serve as a set photographer for a number of Hollywood movies and television shows filmed at the springs, including *Creature from the Black Lagoon* and *Sea Hunt*. His promotional images not only played a critical role in generating attention for Silver Springs, but it also helped popularize the field of underwater photography. His images were featured in a number of prominent national publications, including *Life*, *Look*, and *National Geographic*. His still images of movies and television shows being filmed at Silver Springs was often widely distributed to cross-promote both the productions and the park. An image Mozert published in *Life* magazine was one of the earliest underwater color photographs printed in a national publication. Within the Ocala area, Mozert was well-known and highly respected. In recognition for his achievements, the Ocala Film Foundation made him the first ever honoree on the Ocala Walk of Fame.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ Kate Pohlman, "Bruce Mozert First Inductee to Ocala Walk of Fame," *Ocala Star-Banner*, May 3, 2018, <https://www.ocala.com/news/20180503/bruce-mozert-first-inductee-to-ocala-walk-of-fame>.

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Mozert was among the first photographers to sell photographs of visitors on rides to them after they got off, now considered a staple in the theme park industry, circa 1950s (source: Stetson University Archives)

of the ride. While Mozert's "studio" was usually the spring itself, his entire business was run from the Concession Building. Hence, the Tourist Center represents the best surviving resource associated with the active professional life of Mozert.

Much like Ross Allen, Mozert operated his photography studio as a vendor of Silver Springs. He sold his images directly to customers, and also sold camera equipment and supplies direct from a shop he ran out of the Concession Building. As a tourist attraction photographer, Bruce Mozert was one of the first to photograph visitors and provide them with photographs of their experience, a side business that is now almost universally employed across the theme park and amusement park industry. Mozert would photograph visitors as they boarded the glass bottomed boats, taking the film back to be developed so that visitors could have a photographic print ready for purchase when they came back from the end

Architectural Context

Victor Lundy

Victory Lundy, who was born in New York in 1923, was a prominent architect whose career spanned most of the 20th century and into the early 21st century. A son of Russian immigrants, Lundy first trained at New York University's School of Architecture, studying under Georges Gromort, who was a graduate of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. During World War II, Lundy, who was serving in the US infantry, struck up a conversation with a captured German prisoner of war who was a professional architect. This German officer informed Lundy that two of the leading masters of European architecture, Walter Gropius and Mies van der Rohe, were now working in the United States. He then decided after he returned to the US to attend Harvard, where he studied under Gropius. While here, Lundy was classmates with a number of architectural students who would go on to become major forces in the field of architecture, including Paul Rudolph and Harry Seidler. Lundy received his bachelor of architecture degree from Harvard in 1947 and his masters the following year. After he won the prestigious Rotch Travelling Scholarship, he spent a little under two years traveling Europe, Africa, and the Middle East between 1948 and 1950. After a brief period back in New York, Lundy relocated to Sarasota in the

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early 1950s, where he became a fixture in the emerging Sarasota School of architecture thriving there. His first major commission in Sarasota was the Sarasota County Chamber of Commerce Building. The hallmark of Lundy's early works in Sarasota were the personal touches he put into a number of these buildings, particularly the churches, which often featured prominent laminated wood beams and prominent steep-sloped roofs inspired by hands in prayer. There were a number of ecclesiastical buildings designed by Lundy in Florida during this period, including St. Andrews's Presbyterian Church in Dunedin; St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Melbourne; Bee Ridge Presbyterian Church in Sarasota; and Gloria Dei Lutheran Church on Anna Maria Island among others. Lundy also became noted for his public buildings during this period. In addition to Silver Springs and the Chamber of Commerce Building, Lundy also designed the Galloway Furniture Showroom in Sarasota; the Alta Vista Elementary School Addition in Sarasota; and the Southgate Community Center in Sarasota.⁴⁷

By the 1960s, Lundy relocated his offices to New York City. By this time, he had achieved a national reputation and utilized this to secure several key federal government commissions. His two most notable examples were the United States Tax Court in Washington, DC, and the United States Embassy in Sri Lanka, which were commissioned in the early 1960s but not finished until the 1970s and 1980s. Among his other notable commissions while in New York City was the IBM Garden State Office Building in Cranford, New Jersey; the Space Flowers for the New York World's Fair Refreshment Stands; and the Traveling Air Supported Exhibition Building for the US Atomic Energy Commission. He eventually moved his practice to Texas before retiring.⁴⁸

He received numerous architectural design and achievement awards throughout his career and was nationally recognized as an architect. In 1965, he was one of five architects chosen by the US Department of State Cultural Exchange Program to serve as a Specialist Architect for a traveling architectural exhibit that toured the Soviet Union, India, Egypt, and Greece. The other four chosen were Louis Kahn, Robert Venturi, Paul Rudolph, and Charles Eames. For his work with the United States Tax Court, Lundy received the General Services Administration's (GSA) Honor Award. For his work with the embassy in Sri Lanka, he received the 1988 Federal Design Achievement Award, the highest award given by the National Endowment for the Arts in design. In 2014, in recognition for the importance of his contributions to federal government architecture the GSA produced a documentary on Lundy titled *Victor Lundy: Sculptor of Space*. Lundy has long been considered one of the most important architects of the Sarasota School as well. The actual term "Sarasota School" as applied to the style was popularized by architect Gene Leedy during a Florida Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) convention in 1982. The convention's main topic was the architecture of

⁴⁷ Donna Kacmar, "The Life and Work of Victor Lundy," in *Victor Lundy: Artist Architect*, Donna Kacmar, ed. (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2019), p. 17-23; Christopher S. Wilson, "The Sarasota Years," in *Victor Lundy: Artist Architect*, p. 53-85; Kacmar, ed. *Victor Lundy: Artist Architect*, p. 228-229.

⁴⁸ Kacmar, "The Life and Work of Victor Lundy," p. 23-25; Kacmar, ed., *Victor Lundy: Artist Architect*, p. 227.

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Silver Springs, Marion County, FL

Sarasota and Lundy was one of the keynote speakers there. In 2016, the Sarasota Architecture Foundation presented Lundy with the Lifetime Achievement Award.⁴⁹

Architectural Significance

The Silver Springs Concession and Restaurant buildings are locally significant examples of Sarasota School architecture. This is best expressed through the prominent usage of flat roofs; extensive usage of glass in the exterior walls; and the construction to the environment best embodied by the curvature of the buildings around the springhead. The Tourist Center was one of the most significant and highest profile commissions of Victor Lundy during his time in Florida. Lundy achieved recognition for his design of the Silver Springs Tourist Center, winning an Award of Merit from the Southeast Region of the AIA. The buildings display features that are textbook examples of the personalized touches Lundy often displayed on his buildings. This includes the prominent overhanging roof that served a dual purpose as a covered walkway; the prominent exposed beams; the free-floating staircases built along a single steel beam, and the usage of non-structural, partial-height brick walls. Lundy was also known for emphasizing forms with the landscape, which is best expressed through the curved forms of the buildings conforming to the springhead. The buildings are also of steel frame construction, which are demonstrated through the use of glass walls and non-structural brick.

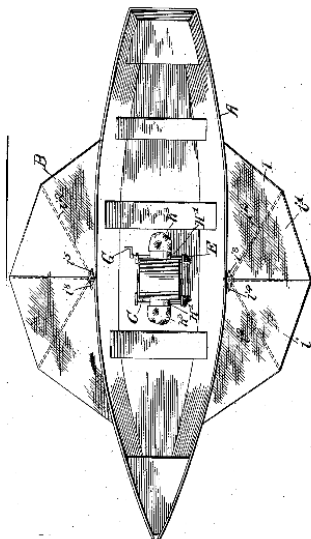


Diagram of an early glass bottom boat dated circa 1903. Note the single viewing pane in the center of the boat.

Engineering Context

Development of Glass Bottom Boats

The exact origins of glass bottom boats remain largely clouded in mystery. According to a story long advertised by Silver Springs, a local man by the name of Hullam Jones began offering glass bottom boat tours on the Silver River in 1878. Another local man by the name of Phillip Morrell was also an early operator of these boats. There is still some debate as to when exactly the boats were first introduced to Silver Springs. It is clear, however, that by the early 20th century, the boats were an established presence on the river.⁵⁰

In the early 20th century, Charles F. Holder was writing in *Scientific American* and *National Geographic Magazine* specifically about glass bottom boats in the Catalina

⁴⁹ Kacmar, ed., *Victor Lundy: Artist Architect*, p. 227.

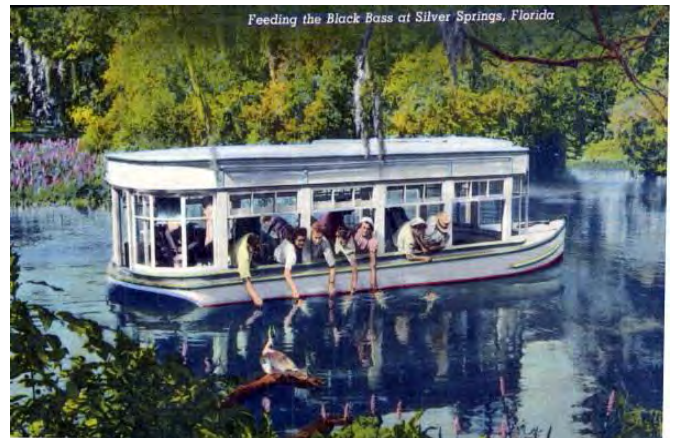
⁵⁰ Tim Hollis, *Glass Bottom Boats and Mermaid Tails: Florida's Tourist Springs* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 2006), P. 9-10.

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Islands in California. Holder mentioned the fishing boats off the coast of Florida in the 1880s as the inspiration for the development of glass bottom boats. These boats, which were known as welled smacks, had wells in them made of perforated wood that were used to hold live fish. These contraptions, which were built into the boats, had holes known as auger holes which were set below the waterline, allowing for oxygenation of the water. The openings to the wells were typically found in the center of the boats. An avid collector of rare corals, Holder needed a clearer view of the ocean floor to help guide his diving, so he replaced the bottom of the well in his boat with glass. He almost immediately saw the tourist potential of this contraption, which he brought with him to California. While it is unclear whether Holder was the true inventor of the glass bottom boats, he certainly played a role in popularizing the boats in the leading national publications of the day. He is also widely credited with introducing the boats to the Catalina Islands, which became famous for its usage of the vessels. As early as 1903, there are patents filed for glass bottom boats that clearly show the influence of welled smack boats, particularly in the replacement of the well opening with a glass contraption. These boats were originally repurposed fishing boats that were often powered by oars. As there was a growing awareness of the financial potential of these boat types, however, the designs changed. The drafts of the boats became much shallower, the boats were built to accommodate more people, and the bottoms of the boats came to comprise a larger surface area of glass.⁵¹



Postcard of passengers feeding fish at Silver Springs in glass bottom boat, circa 1940s (source: State Archives of Florida)



Postcard of glass bottom boats at Silver Springs, circa 1910 (source: State Archives of Florida)

The first glass bottom boats used at Silver Springs were simple rowboats with a single viewing plane in the center of the boats very similar to the prevailing glass bottom boat designs of the time. The boat operators started to improvise on the design early, with canopies and cushioned seats introduced sometime after 1908 by Ed Carmichael. By the 1920s, as the boats became a centerpiece of the Silver Springs attraction, the proprietors continued to improve their design. They started to take on a form closer in appearance to the current boats. These

⁵¹ Charles F. Holder, "The Windows of the Sea," *Scientific American* January 30, 1904, p. 94; Charles Frederick Holder, "The Glass-Bottom Boat," *National Geographic Magazine* vol. 20, no. 9 (September 1909), p. 761-765.

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Silver Springs, Marion County, FL

wood boats were fully enclosed, with the glass panes for viewing the bottom of the springs lengthened. The windows also opened to allow passengers to view the natural surroundings without any barriers and to feed the fish. The first powered boats relied on gasoline-powered outboard motors, which were replaced with gas engines in the mid-1920s. Deemed too noisy for the serene environment of Silver Springs, and so in 1932, the boats were refitted with electric engines. As the boats became powered, the oarsmen were replaced by African American boat captains who navigated the boats with a centrally placed steering wheel on the forward side of the craft. These captains were a ubiquitous presence at Silver Springs, and were not only tasked with piloting the boats, but were also responsible for providing guided tours of the river.⁵²



Postcard image of metal glass bottom boat, circa 1967

The wooden glass bottom boats remained in operation largely without much modifications for the remainder of Ray and Davidson's tenures as the owners of Silver Springs, which lasted until 1962. In the mid-1960s, at the height of the ABC ownership of Silver Springs, the wood glass bottom boats were replaced by the current fleet of metal boats. The boats are rounder in appearance than the older wood boats, measuring roughly 31 feet in length, 11.5 feet in width, and 14 feet in height with a net tonnage of 20 tons and a passenger capacity of roughly 35 people. The boats feature distinctive roof vents, porthole windows and metal ribbon windows along the port and starboard

sides. The interiors of the boats are mostly metal with wood furnishings. The interior layouts feature a centrally-placed glass floor pane flanked by wood bench seats and encircled by a metal walkway. Access to the interiors is via the aft side of the boats. The boat captain's seats and steering wheels are centrally-placed at the forward side of the boats. To allow access and to open the view for the captains, the rear doors slide open and a portion of the roof is lifted up.

⁵² Hollis, p. 10.

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Engineering Significance – Glass Bottom Boats



Passengers in glass bottom boat circa late 1960s
(Source: State Archives of Florida)

Glass bottom boats have long been an important vessel type on the Silver River. In particular, it was the glass bottom boats linked with the Silver Springs and Paradise Park roadside attractions that assumed local significance in their own right. The evolution of the boat design both for practicality and for visual appeal resulted in an iconic vessel that is perhaps more closely associated with the local community than any other resource in the park. The surviving vessels found within the district are the best surviving examples of these boat designs. They still ply the same routes that glass bottom boats have been taking for over 100 years and are still housed in a boat shelter and dry dock facility that was custom built for them.

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Section number 9 Page 1 Silver Springs
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Section number 10 Page 1 Silver Springs
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UTM References

	<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>
5)	17R	397859	3232346
6)	17R	397993	3232409
7)	17R	398119	3232410
8)	17R	398150	3232360
9)	17R	398294	3232405
10)	17R	398407	3232346
11)	17R	398498	3232365
12)	17R	398598	3232327
13)	17R	398596	3232173
14)	17R	398416	3232163
15)	17R	398267	3232253
16)	17R	398173	3232207
17)	17R	398046	3232285
18)	17R	397841	3232135
19)	17R	397744	3232144
20)	17R	397640	3232011
21)	17R	397737	3232008
22)	17R	397735	3231958
23)	17R	397663	3231923
24)	17R	397558	3231925
25)	17R	397487	3231963
26)	17R	397418	3232056
27)	17R	397640	3232326
28)	17R	397545	3232340

Returned

Verbal Boundary Description

The district boundary falls within the property of Silver Springs State Park and includes the Victor Lundy-designed buildings, Mammoth Spring springhead, and the Silver River for a distance of approximately .70 miles. The property also includes associated with the tourist activities at Silver Springs. The boundary encompasses portions of parcel number 3175700100 and parcel number 3175700000 of the Marion County, Florida, Property Appraisers Office records. Please see boundary map for more details.

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Silver Springs, Marion County, FL

Boundary Justification

The boundary encompasses the surviving resources associated with the historic operations of the historic Silver Springs roadside attraction as well as the portions of the Silver River historically used for glass bottom boat and steamboat tourism.

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Section number Photos Page 1 Silver Springs
Silver Springs, Marion County, FL

Name of Property: Silver Springs

City of Vicinity: Silver Springs County: Marion State: Florida

Photographers: Vincent Birdsong and Andrew Waber Dates Photographed: January 2019 and April 2019

Description of Photographs and number, including description of view indicating direction of camera

1. View of Concession Building main (southeast) facade, facing southwest
2. View of Concession Building main façade walkway, facing north
3. View of Concession Building main façade walkway, facing southwest
4. View of Concession Building south elevation walkway, facing north
5. View of Concession Building northeast elevation, facing southwest
6. View of Concession Building rear (northwest) elevation, facing northeast
7. View of Concession Building northeast elevation, facing southwest
8. Detail view of Concession Building main façade walkway skylight
9. View of Concession Building rear (northwest) elevation walkway, facing southwest
10. View of Concession Building first story roof, facing southwest
11. View of Concession Building second story fire escape, facing northwest
12. View of Concession Building second story, facing north
13. Interior view of Concession Building gift shop, facing northeast
14. Interior view of Concession Building museum space, facing northwest
15. Interior view of historic Concession Building store space, facing northwest
16. Interior view of additional Concession Building enclosed space, facing west
17. Interior view of Concession Building restaurant, facing northeast
18. Interior view of historic Concession Building gift shop space, facing east
19. Interior view of enclosed Concession Building corridor, facing southeast
20. Detail view of honorary plaque awarded to Davidson and Ray
21. Detail view of historic Silver Springs diorama
22. Interior view of historic employees' cafeteria
23. Interior view of Concession Building staircase, facing
24. Interior view of Concession Building second floor corridor, facing
25. Interior view of Concession Building second floor office, facing
26. Interior view of Concession Building second floor office, facing
27. Interior view of Concession Building second floor safe, facing
28. View of detached shelter between Concession and Restaurant buildings
29. View of east elevation of Restaurant Building, facing west
30. View of west elevation of Restaurant Building, facing east

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Silver Springs, Marion County, FL

31. View of Restaurant Building first story roof, facing northeast
32. Interior view of Restaurant Building corridor, facing north
33. Interior view of Restaurant Building space, facing east
34. Detail view of historic wall vent in Restaurant Building
35. Interior view of Restaurant Building, facing
36. Interior view of Restaurant Building kitchen, facing
37. Interior view of Restaurant Building second floor day care space, facing
38. View of Divers' Cabin, facing northeast
39. View of Osceola Statue, facing southeast
40. View of retention wall and walkway (notice historic stone wall underneath concrete slab), facing east
41. View of 1930s era retention wall, facing southeast
42. Detail view of *I Spy* statue
43. View of Mammoth Spring, facing southeast
44. Interior view of glass bottom boat shelter and dock, facing northeast
45. Interior view of glass bottom boat shelter and dock, facing northeast
46. View of Boat Barn and glass bottom boat shelter, facing northeast
47. View of glass bottom boat *Chief Emathla* in dry dock, facing northwest
48. View of Ross Allen Building/Wildlife Office, facing east
49. View of building adjacent to Ross Allen Building, facing southeast
50. View of metal workshop building, facing west
51. View of metal workshop building, facing northwest
52. View of warehouse, facing southwest
53. Detail view of Silver Springs National Natural Landmark plaque
54. View of historic boat ramp rails, facing east
55. View of glass bottom boat *Charlie Cypress* in dock, facing north
56. View of glass bottom boat *Chief Micanopy* in Mammoth Spring, facing northwest
57. Interior view of *Charlie Cypress*, facing north
58. Interior view of *Charlie Cypress*, facing south
59. View of Boat Terminal, facing north
60. View of canoe rental facility, facing west

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Silver Springs
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Figure 1: Selected Spring Map of Silver Springs

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National Park Service

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Silver Springs, Marion County, FL

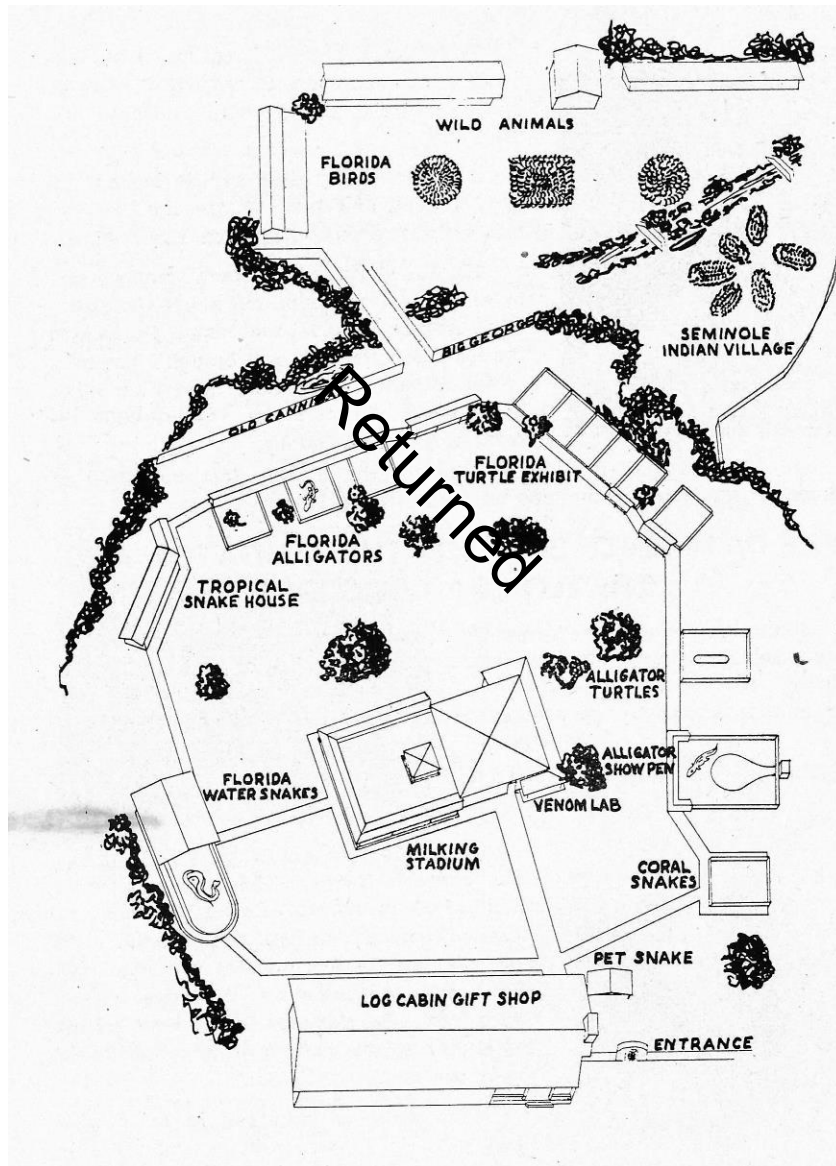


Figure 2: Layout map of the Ross Allen Reptile Institute, circa 1948
Source: Andreas Bothe, *Guide to Ross Allen's Reptile Institute*
(Ocala, FL: Ocala Star-Banner, 1948), p. 14

Silver Springs

5656 East Silver Springs Road
Silver Springs, Marion Co., FL

District Map and UTM Coordinates

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1) 17R 397582 3232594 | 15) 17R 398267 3232253 |
| 2) 17R 397674 3232592 | 16) 17R 398173 3232207 |
| 3) 17R 397670 3232454 | 17) 17R 398046 3232285 |
| 4) 17R 397766 3232456 | 18) 17R 397841 3232135 |
| 5) 17R 397859 3232346 | 19) 17R 397744 3232144 |
| 6) 17R 397993 3232409 | 20) 17R 397640 3232011 |
| 7) 17R 398119 3232410 | 21) 17R 397737 3232008 |
| 8) 17R 398150 3232360 | 22) 17R 397735 3231958 |
| 9) 17R 398294 3232405 | 23) 17R 397663 3231923 |
| 10) 17R 398407 3232346 | 24) 17R 397558 3231925 |
| 11) 17R 398498 3232365 | 25) 17R 397487 3231963 |
| 12) 17R 398598 3232327 | 26) 17R 397418 3232056 |
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| 14) 17R 398416 3232163 | 28) 17R 397545 3232340 |

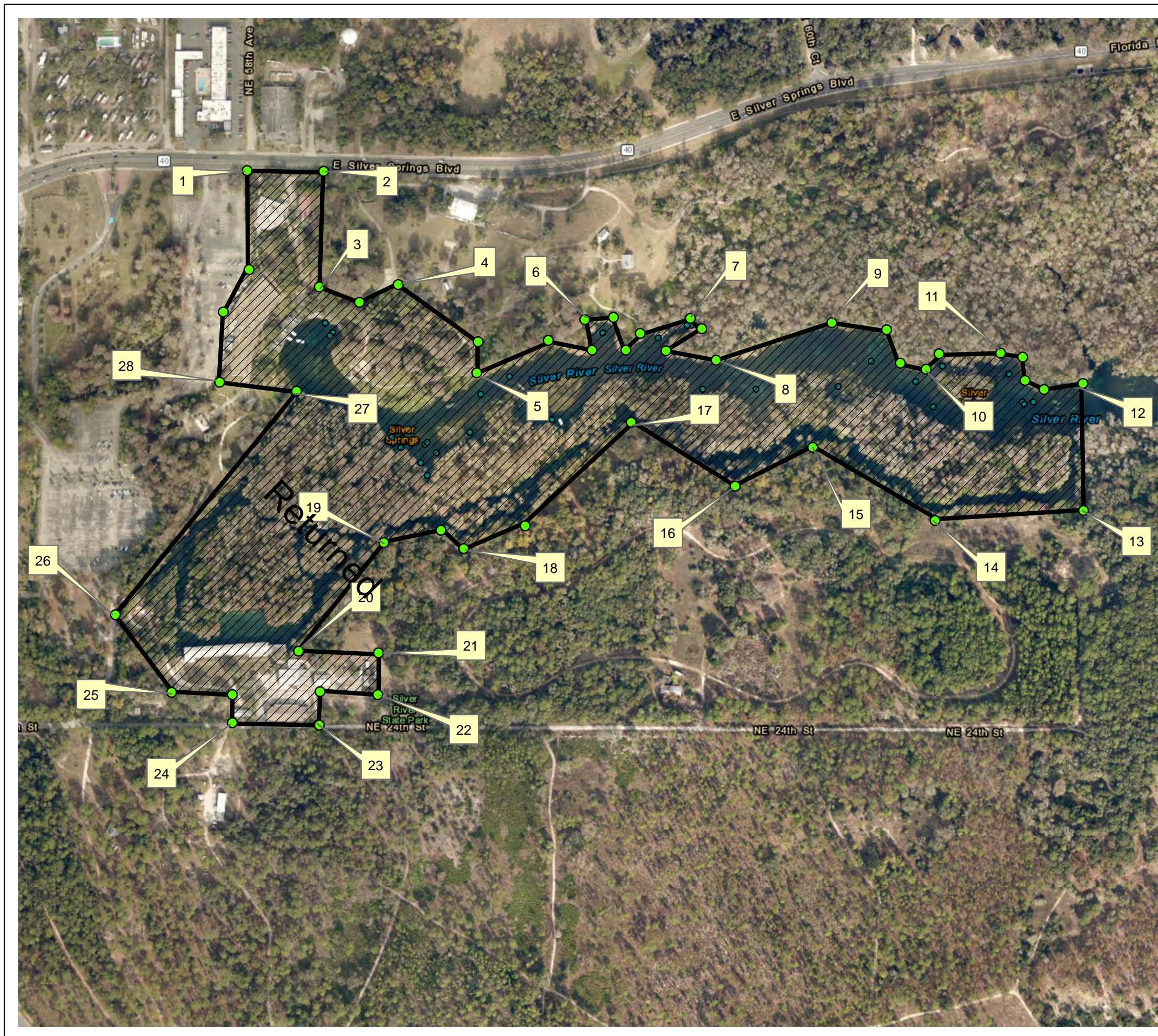


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0 55 110 220 Meters

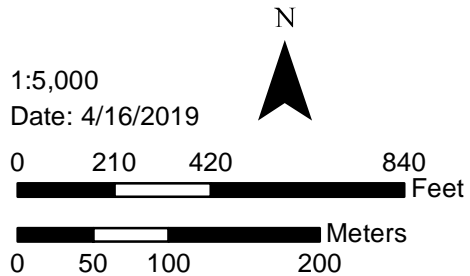
Basemap Source: Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community



Silver Springs

5656 East Silver Springs Road
Silver Springs, Marion Co., FL

Contributing and Non-Contributing
Resources



Basemap Source: Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community

Silver Springs

5656 East Silver Springs Boulevard
Silver Springs, Marion Co, FL

Exterior Photo Key

Boat Storage, Maintenance,
and Canoe Rental Areas



1:1,000

Date: 4/19/2019

0 40 80 160 Feet

0 10 20 40 Meters

Basemap Source: Source: Esri,
DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar
Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS,
USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping,
Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo,
and the GIS User Community

Silver Springs

5656 East Silver Springs Boulevard
Silver Springs, Marion Co, FL

Exterior Photo Key

Silver Springs Tourist Center
and Mammoth Spring areas



1:1,200

Date: 4/19/2019

0 50 100 200 Feet

0 12.5 25 50 Meters

Basemap Source: Source: Esri,
DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar
Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS,
USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping,
Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo,
and the GIS User Community

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: 7/23/2019 Date of Pending List: 8/9/2019 Date of 16th Day: 8/26/2019 Date of 45th Day: 9/6/2019 Date of Weekly List:

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

Accept Return Reject 8/29/2019 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:

The list of areas of significance found in Section 8 differs from the summary paragraph. The summary cites Ethnic Heritage: Black under Criterion A, but does not justify this area in the narrative. Please either drop the area of significance from the summary paragraph or support it in the narrative. Related, and whether you choose to support Ethnic heritage or not, it would be helpful if the location of Paradise Park on the map for reference.

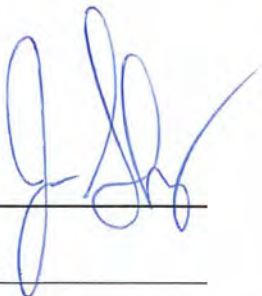
The nomination supports the significance of Ross Allen in Conservation, but further justification for the property a whole as the associated property is needed. It is unclear where the Ross Allen Institute was located in relation to the property boundaries, how far the one remaining building (which was a minor support building) was moved, or what relationship Allen had with the property at large. Did he utilize any other aspects of the property aside from the Institute?

There are two moved building in the boundaries that are counted as contributing. One is the previously mentioned Ross Allen building, the other is identified as the Divers' Building. Section 7 merely notes that the buildings were formerly located within the nominated boundaries, thus they still contribute. This is a misinterpretation of how we evaluated moved buildings. A building moved into, or within a district can contribute if the new location is appropriate. This means that the use and design of the building must be taken into account. For the Divers' building, its former location near the river made sense based on its use. In its current location, does it reflect its historic use? Also, the integrity of materials of that building are in question. It appears to have newer T-111 siding, metal clad windows, and new doors. As for the Ross Allen building, the same question arises. Where was its original location in relation to its current location? In its new location, does it reflect its historic environment and associations? Please re-evaluate these two buildings for their contributing status.

Finally, in Section 9, go ahead and note in Primary Location of Information/name of Repository section that it is a National Natural Landmark and that the NPS is the repository.

Recommendation/ Criteria:

Reviewer Jim Gabbert



Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2275

Date 8-29-2019

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

The United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Evaluation/Return Sheet

Property Name: Silver Springs (Sarasota School of Architecture MPS),
Marion County, FL

Reference Number: 100004353

Reason for Return

The nomination submitted for Silver Springs is being returned for revision.

The list of areas of significance found in Section 8 differs from the summary paragraph. The summary cites Ethnic Heritage: Black under Criterion A, but does not justify this area in the narrative. Please either drop the area of significance from the summary paragraph or support it in the narrative. Related, and whether you choose to support Ethnic heritage or not, it would be helpful if the location of Paradise Park on the map for reference.

The nomination supports the significance of Ross Allen in Conservation, but further justification for the property a whole as the associated property is needed. It is unclear where the Ross Allen Institute was located in relation to the property boundaries, how far the one remaining building (which was a minor support building) was moved, or what relationship Allen had with the property at large. Did he utilize any other aspects of the property aside from the Institute?

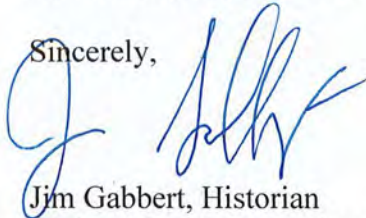
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new location, does it reflect its historic environment and associations? Please re-evaluate these two buildings for their contributing status.

Finally, in Section 9, go ahead and note in Primary Location of Information/name of Repository section that it is a National Natural Landmark and that the NPS is the repository.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this nomination and hope that you find these comments useful. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. I can be reached at (202) 354-2275 or email at James_Gabbert@nps.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jim Gabbert", written over the word "Sincerely,".

Jim Gabbert, Historian
National Register of Historic Places
8/29/2019



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT of STATE

RON DESANTIS
Governor

LAUREL M. LEE
Secretary of State

October 25, 2019

Dr. Julie Ernstein, Deputy Keeper and Chief,
National Register of Historic Places
Mail Stop 7228
1849 C St, NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Dr. Ernstein:

The enclosed disks contain the true and correct copy of the **resubmission** for **Silver Springs (FMSF#: 8MR03723) in Marion County**, to the National Register of Historic Places. We have addressed Jim Gabbert's comments on the nomination, which were provided to us on August 29, 2019. Changes include reclassifying the Diver's Cabin and Ross Allen building as non-contributing, dropping Criterion B significance for Ross Allen, and making edits to the Criterion A: Ethnic History – Black section.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at (850) 245-6364 if you have any questions or require any additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ruben A. Acosta".

Ruben A. Acosta
Supervisor, Survey & Registration
Bureau of Historic Preservation

RAA/raa

Enclosures