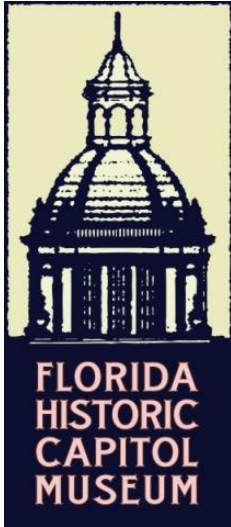


Press Release



What *Traveling to Paradise: Tin Can Tourists on Parade*

Where Florida Historic Capitol Museum
400 S. Monroe Street, Tallahassee, FL 32399-1100

Date & Time **Saturday, November 5, 2011**
10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
FREE EVENT

Contact Alma P. Hubbard, Director of External Relations
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tallahassee, FL, October 27, 2011-- The Florida Historic Capitol Museum invites you to join us as we *Travel to Paradise* with the Tin Can Tourists!

The beautiful grounds surrounding the Florida Historic Capitol Museum are the perfect setting to view vintage vehicles, trailers and historic campers owned by members of the Tin Can Tourists Organization. Avid collectors of these restored trailers will set up camp around the Historic Capitol on Saturday, November 5, 2011, from 10:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. to showcase their “mini traveling museums.” In conjunction with the current exhibit, *Remembering Paradise: Souvenirs of Historic Florida Attractions*, visitors will get a chance to tour the interiors of these vehicles, talk with the owners and learn more about what it was like to travel to Florida during the golden era of Florida tourism through post-WWII. The parade of vintage vehicles will include a 1949 Little Caesar, a 1950 Spartanette, a 1954 Holiday, a 1968 Serro Scotty, plus many more.

Tin Can tourism first emerged in the late 1910s and early 1920s, according to Johnathan Grandage, Archives Historian with the State Library and Archives of Florida. As automobile prices dropped, middle-class Americans enjoyed greater mobility and fulfilled their growing desires for travel, leisure and outdoor activities. Expanded national and state highway systems allowed Americans to travel further and faster than ever before. Travelers ventured south to Florida during the winter months and north during the summer. Many stayed at campgrounds and visited roadside attractions catering to the Tin Can Tourists.

The Tin Can Tourists (TCT) were organized at DeSoto Park, Tampa, Florida, in 1919, and received the official state charter a year later. The organization’s official brochure states the group’s objective was “to unite fraternally all auto campers”. Their guiding principles were clean camps, friendliness among campers, decent behavior and to secure plenty of clean, wholesome entertainment for those in camp.

The group known for the soldered tin can on their radiator caps grew rapidly during the twenties and thirties. Members could be inducted by fellow campers through an initiation process that taught the prospective member the secret handshake, sign, and password. After singing the official song, which is “The More We Get Together”, the trailerite then became an official member of the Tin Can Tourists of the World.

Though the organization’s membership dwindled in the 1960s – 1990s, a renewed interest in the club was sparked by members Forrest and Jeri Bone in 1998. Membership in the organization has grown steadily since then and now includes more than 1000 members. Forrest Bone serves as the current President of the TCT and he and his wife will be showcasing their 1955 Trotwood camper. The Southeast Representative of TCT, Tim Heintz, will also feature several of his restored trailers during the event. Mr. Heintz, a graduate of the FAMU School of Architecture, is an avid collector of vintage trailers and owns Heintz Designs Vintage Trailer Restorations located in Panama City, Florida. He bought his first vintage trailer at the age of 18 and currently owns 7 vintage trailers that he has meticulously restored to their original appearance. For more information on the history of Tin Can Tourists and their Pioneer Automobile Campers Organization, please visit www.tincantourists.org.

Secretary of State Kurt S. Browning and the Florida Department of State’s Division of Library and Information Services recently announced the latest edition to its Florida Memory online photo exhibits. “Tin Can Tourism” features a short historical narrative on the origins and development of custom vehicles and campers in the United States as well as numerous photographs depicting the culture of Tin Can Tourists (TCT) in Florida. The photographs included in the exhibit range from the 1920s to the 1970s.

Many of the images in the exhibit portray the lively atmosphere of barbecues, recreational sports and socializing characteristic of TCT campgrounds. Other photographs highlight the variety of vehicles used by TCT, both custom-made rigs and cutting-edge manufactured models. The vehicles built and purchased by TCT provide insight into the consumption patterns and creativity of middle-class Americans on the move. For more information on Tin Can Tourists and to find other resources related to tourism in Florida history, please visit the Florida Memory website at http://www.floridamemory.com/photographiccollection/photo_exhibits/tincans/.

After viewing these on-line photo exhibits, see the vintage trailers in person during *Traveling to Paradise: Tin Can Tourists on Parade* at the Florida Historic Capitol Museum, 400 South Monroe Street. For details, see www.flhistoriccaptol.gov or call (850) 487-1902.

Also, visit us on FaceBook each day and follow early travelers’ journal entries and a chronology of the Tin Can Tourists to learn what it was like to be “on the road” traveling to Florida beginning in 1919!

Promotional images available upon request.

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