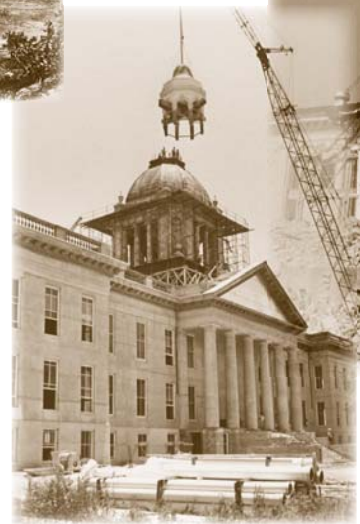
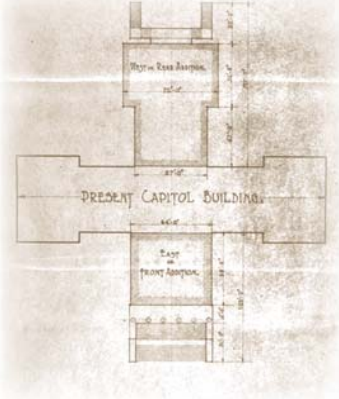


Section 5. And be it further  
 enacted, That said State of Florida,  
 shall embrace the territories of East  
 and West Florida, which by the treaty  
 of amity, settlement and limits be  
 tween the United States and Spain,  
 on the nineteenth day of February,  
 eighteen hundred and seventeen,  
 were ceded to the United States.  
 Section 6. And be it further  
 enacted, That until the next census



When, by treaty with Spain, Florida became a Territory of the United States in 1821, it was still a largely unsettled wilderness. The British, during their tenure (1763-1783), divided the land into two political regions with separate capitals at St. Augustine and Pensacola. Despite reunification of the Floridas under American rule, territorial legislators struggled to manage their political business over the almost 400 miles between the two capitals. Travel was hazardous and took almost twenty days – clearly an unsatisfactory arrangement.

On March 4, 1824, Tallahassee, the half-way point between the two cities, was chosen as the new capital of Florida. Log buildings housed the government for the next two years until a two-story masonry structure replaced them.

The replacement capitol was actually only one wing of a proposed larger building that was never completed because funds were unavailable. Finally, in 1839, Congress appropriated \$20,000 for the construction of a suitable building. The masonry structure was immediately razed and Florida's government went into temporary rented quarters.

On June 25, 1845, cannons roared a twenty-eight-gun salute. Spectators thronged and the band played "Hail Columbia." Florida was finally a state.

William D. Moseley was its first elected governor, and a new capitol, six years in the making, was finally completed. This brick building, spacious enough for public as well as private business, would continue to serve Florida government throughout the 19th century.

By the 1880s, however, the state began to experience an economic boom, which soon caused growing pains in Tallahassee. By 1891, the half-century-old brick capitol was in need of "thorough repair." The building was repainted and running water installed for the first time. A small cupola was added to the top which soon became quite an attraction for visitors who found that they could obtain "a magnificent view...from this outlook."

Also about this time, boldly striped exterior awnings were added. A highly practical addition, they shaded the offices from the intense Florida sun.

Tallahassee did not reign undisputed as the seat of Florida's government. Periodically, the possibility of moving the capital arose and by the turn of the 20th century, the question was tied to a need for expanded space for government business. It was decided to place the decision in the hands of the voters. In the election of November 6, 1900, Jacksonville, St. Augustine and Ocala were the alternate sites proposed but Tallahassee was reconfirmed by a wide margin. Subsequently, the state legislature felt justified in appropriating \$75,000 for the renovation and expansion of its statehouse.

Frank Pierce Milburn, the architect chosen to remodel the capitol, was one of the most prominent in the South. Because of Florida's traditionally conservative fiscal policy, Milburn's final design was "plainer" than originally proposed, but it still incorporated features typical of his other works.

The dome, his most obvious addition, was not unlike domes he designed in South Carolina and Kentucky. Considered a "beautiful and graceful addition," it rose 136 feet above the ground and was covered with copperized iron and allowed to oxidize naturally to green. Within the building, a colorful art glass "subdome" admitted light into the rotunda.

On the east and west entrances, in triangular tympana above the columned porticos, Milburn included pressed metal reliefs incorporating details from the State Seal. He and Governor Jennings disagreed over their design. The governor wanted the Seals in color but the architect maintained that the building was a "plain subject [which] must be handled on simple lines or the architectural effect will be lost." The Seals were painted the same color as the building.

The 1902 capitol was the last statehouse in which all of Florida's political business was housed under one roof. Within the short span of a decade, the Supreme Court moved out to occupy its own building.

Governor Cary A. Hardee presided over the next major change in the configuration of the capitol in 1923, at the peak of the Florida Boom. This period, unique in the national experience and bigger than the California Boom of the 1880s, saw the creation of thirteen new counties in the state before it was ended by hurricanes and the Great Depression.

Henry J. Klutho, the architect of the 1923 capitol, had attained wide prominence as an adherent of Frank Lloyd Wright's Prairie School and state notoriety, first as the rebuilder of Jacksonville following its disastrous 1901 fire, then as the architect of the governor's mansion in Tallahassee in 1906. His capitol alterations were extensive, nearly doubling the usable space in the building while retaining its classic lines.

Prior to the 1982 restoration, only two more alterations were made to Klutho's capitol. In 1936 and 1947, north and south wings were added for the House of Representatives and the Senate, respectively.

The Historic Capitol represents much more than just a building. Within its walls almost 150 years of political history was staged. Its "core" has been standing, on this site, since 1845. It has witnessed wars, political and cultural upheaval and rapid economic expansion. Within its legislative halls and executive offices Florida has been guided to the forefront of America's Space Age. When you look at this building you are also seeing a social and architectural monument. The architect who designed the structure in 1902 was making a public pronouncement about the cultural and aesthetic values of his day. The simplicity and dignity of the building present a classical statement which is timeless in its own right. In the mid-20th century, our people cared enough about their special heritage as Floridians to fight for preservation of this symbol, this tangible statement, of their faith in their State's past and present.

As the guiding hand behind the 1902 restoration project, Herschel E. Shepard of Shepard Associates Architects & Planners, Jacksonville, was the latest in the line of illustrious architects who helped shape Florida's Historic Capitol. A native Floridian, Shepard is widely known for his restoration architecture.

The restoration of The Historic Capitol (1978-1982) took place under the joint supervision of the Department of General Services and Florida's Department of State. This intensive project of historical, architectural and archaeological investigation made Florida's Capitol one of the most thoroughly documented capitol restoration projects in the nation.

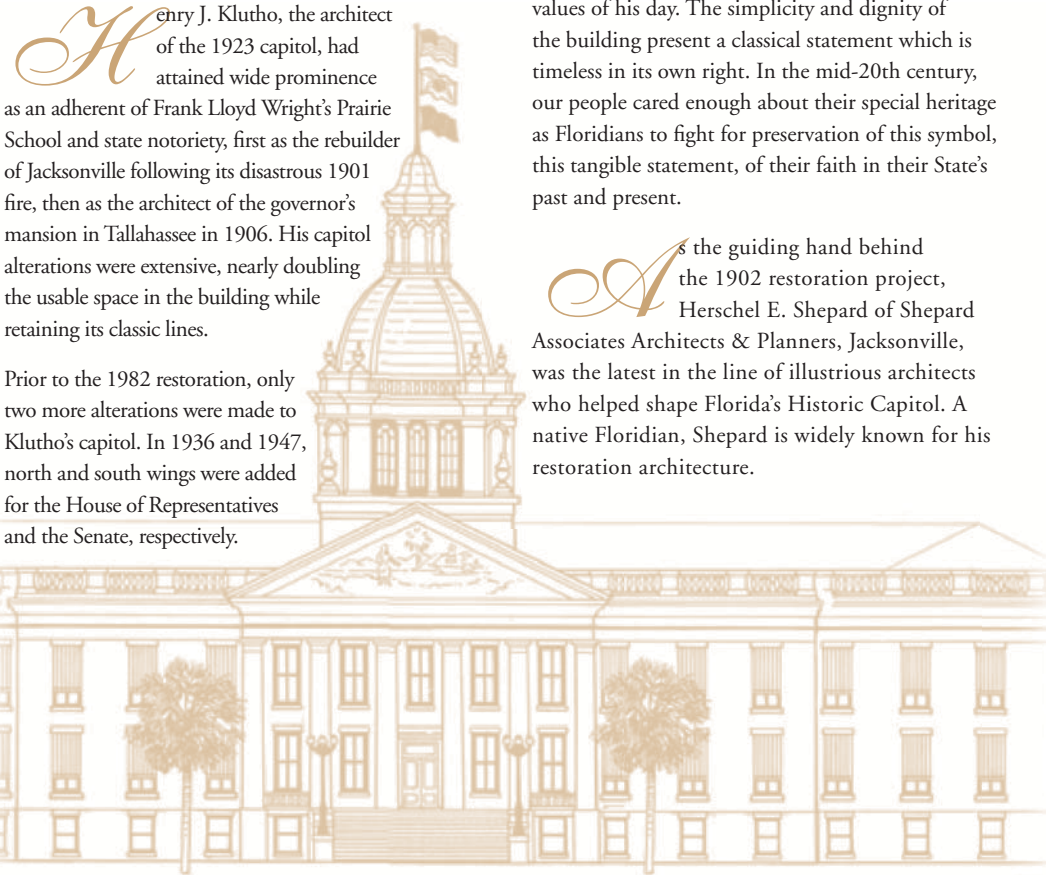
The public areas of the building contain two distinct types of spaces. Restored spaces include the Governor's Suite, Supreme Court, House of Representatives and Senate Chambers, rotunda and halls. These areas have been refurbished as they were in 1902. Adapted spaces contain museum exhibits dealing with the State's political history.

The Historic Capitol is under the management of the Florida Legislature.

*Hours:*  
Monday - Friday ..... 9:00 am - 4:30 pm  
Saturday ..... 10:00 am - 4:30 pm  
Sunday & Holidays ..... Noon - 4:30 pm  
Closed on Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day.

**The Historic Capitol of Florida**  
850.487.1902 *phone*  
info@FLHistoricCapitol.gov *email*  
www.FLHistoricCapitol.gov *website*

**Florida Legislative Research Center & Museum at the Historic Capitol**  
*The mission of the FLRC&M is to promote the understanding and appreciation of Florida's political history and to facilitate its preservation for posterity.*  
850.410.2230 *phone*  
info@FLRCM.gov *email*  
www.FLRCM.gov *website*



Photographs courtesy of the Florida State Archives

# THE HISTORIC CAPITOL OF FLORIDA

