



Mission

Preserving, promoting, and celebrating the unique cultural heritage of Ybor City and supporting the Ybor City Museum State Park

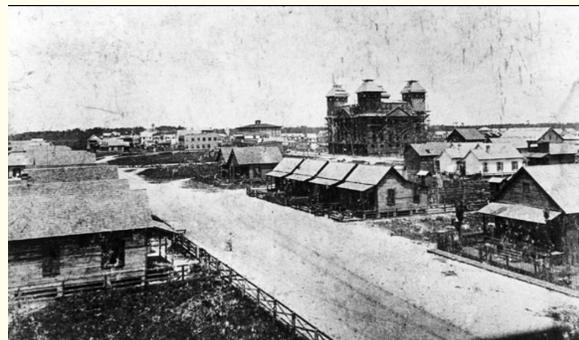
NEWS BRIEF

Ybor City is well known for its cigar industry, the traditions of the many immigrant groups who settled there, and its status as the "birthplace of modern Tampa". Not far away, a "sister community" named West Tampa was developed by Hugh MacFarlane, just a few years after Ybor City's founding. This week, we bring you a story of "Old West Tampa" worth exploring. As a nod to summer's arrival, we also share with you a recipe for Gazpacho, a chilled soup that originated in Spain. It is an example of food fusion at its best. Enjoy!

Chantal Ruilova Hevia, President and CEO

The Founding of West Tampa

Ybor City, containing one of only a few National Historic Landmark Districts in Florida, usually needs no introduction. The same is not always true of West Tampa, its somewhat younger and lesser-known "sister community".



In 1892, Scottish immigrant and local attorney, Hugh Macfarlane, purchased 200 acres of unincorporated land west of the Hillsborough River, approximately one mile from downtown Tampa. Inspired by the incredible success of Ybor City, Macfarlane's goal was to establish a new development and attract additional cigar factories to the Tampa area. Within months, the A. Del Pino cigar factory relocated to the new community from Key West.

Soon, many other cigar factories followed suit. Along with the arrival of these factories came the immigrants to produce the cigars. These workers were initially overwhelmingly Cuban, most arriving directly from Cuba. The growth of West Tampa was enhanced when Macfarlane constructed a bridge across the river, thus connecting the fast-growing area to Tampa's vast streetcar system. Within a few years, many Spaniards and Sicilians were also calling "West Tampa" their home. The cultural and economic mix became the same as Ybor City's.



In 1895, the community of West Tampa, with a population of 2,335, was formally incorporated as a city. In contrast to Ybor City, which was (and still is) a neighborhood within the City of Tampa, West Tampa was now a separate city with its own police, fire department, city council, and mayor. It remained a distinct municipality until 1925, when the City of Tampa annexed West Tampa, making it

yet another Tampa neighborhood, like Sulphur Springs, Seminole Heights, Jackson Heights, and Ybor City. Following the decline of the cigar industry after World War II, many of the original inhabitants relocated to other parts of the city. Today, West Tampa is being revitalized to again become a vibrant neighborhood, with historic elements that honor its past.

Story by Tony Carreño, *Photos courtesy of USF Special Collections*

Fun Facts

Here are some interesting "quick facts" about West Tampa:

- By 1900 it had more people than Tallahassee, Florida's state capital.
- The first public library in Hillsborough County is located in West Tampa. Built in 1914, it is still in use today.
- Fernando Figueredo, the first mayor of West Tampa, was a hero of the Cuban revolution against Spain.
- In some years, West Tampa produced more cigars than Ybor City.
- Macfarlane Park, a city park named after West Tampa's founder, is still in existence.



The generally accepted historic boundaries of West Tampa are:

North: MLK Blvd (formerly Buffalo Ave)

South: Kennedy Blvd (formerly Grand Central)

East: Rome Ave

West: Dale Mabry Highway

COOKING CORNER

Gazpacho

As the summer heats up, cool down with a traditional Spanish soup. Hailing from the Andalusian area, Gazpacho has many influences, from the Greeks and Romans to the Arabs and



Moors. Originally, the soup was a mixture of olive oil, garlic, stale bread, and a liquid. Various vegetables would be added depending on the region. This version was first introduced to Andalusia by Roman soldiers. They were expelled in the 8th century, but the Moors later brought ajoblanco, a chilled soup made with

almonds commonly known as "white gazpacho." Gazpacho only became popularized as the tomato-based dish when tomatoes and green peppers were brought to Spain from the Americas in the 16th century. Today, there are many different varieties. While many know it as a chilled tomato soup, there are numerous different versions that contain different combinations of fruits, vegetables, and nuts.

Photo courtesy of Delish

[Get the Recipe](#)

DO YOU LOVE HISTORIC BUILDINGS?

The Ybor City Museum Society owns five historic "casitas", which it preserves and maintains. These irreplaceable buildings are always in need of a little TLC. YCMS is currently looking for someone who can help with their maintenance by handling repairs and



overseeing larger projects. If you are interested or know someone who might be, please contact Chantal Hevia at info@ybormuseum.org or 813.247.1434. The "casita" pictured here is at 1903 N. 19th St. in Ybor City. It is the new home to the Ybor City Vegan Deli.

Save the Date

*July 11-17: [City of Tampa Archive Awareness Week](#)

*August 22: [Tie the Knot Tour](#) - Six locations including the Museum Garden

*September 25: Tampa Baseball Museum at the Al Lopez House "Grand Slam"

*October 3: Legacy Awards Brunch, Columbia Restaurant

*November 2021: Buildings Alive! Premiere in the Park

Yoga at the Ybor City Museum State Park: Every Saturday at 9:30 am

The Ybor City Museum State Park is Open

The Ybor City Museum State Park is now open to the public. For your safety, masks can be worn at your discretion during your visit.

Admissions can be paid by cash or credit card, however you are requested to bring exact change if you are paying by cash. The "casita" portion of the museum tour is closed due to Covid-19 restrictions but you can enjoy the Museum Garden during your visit.



You can also inquire about renting the Garden, a beautiful 10,000 sq. ft. outdoor space, by [clicking here](#). This unique venue creates its own ambience for your special event.

New Hours of Operation: 9 am - 4 pm Wednesday - Sunday
Admission: \$4 per person, free for children 5 years and younger
1818 E. 9th Avenue, Tampa, FL 33605, 813.247.6323

Please Join Us

Member benefits make it easy for you to strengthen your connection to Tampa's roots and experience the unique cultural heritage of Historic Ybor City. Now that the Ybor City Museum State Park is reopening, you can use the free admissions included in your membership. Thank you to our current members, whether you have been part of our family for years or have just joined us. For your convenience, new or current members can [join or renew your membership online](#).

With Gratitude

History teaches many lessons and gives us a lens to the future. While activities of the past year have given us reason to pause and reflect, we have benefitted in many ways as our friends and followers came together to celebrate the landmark events that make Ybor City such a unique community. Thank you to those who have supported our programs and educational activities. For those who enjoy this newsletter and learning more about Ybor City's cultural heritage, please consider a donation to support our current and upcoming programming.

DONATE

The Ybor City Museum Society is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, Federal Tax ID No. 59-2274494. While we do not give tax advice, donations are tax deductible to the extent the law allows.

YborMuseum.org ■ Info@Ybormuseum.org ■ 813.247.1434

