



Mission

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

NEWS BRIEF

As we move toward summer, we are sharing stories of events that happened in Tampa during the months of May and June, many decades ago. We found it interesting that the City of Tampa annexed Ybor City in 1887, just two years after its founding.... for a good reason. Teddy Roosevelt and his Rough Riders arrived in Tampa on June 3, 1898 to fight in the Spanish-American War. Coincidentally, the modern-day "Tampa Rough Riders" will host a parade in Ybor City this Saturday, honoring Hometown Heroes. Please join us this Memorial Day in remembering and honoring our nation's heroes.

Chantal Ruilova Hevia, President and CEO

Rough Riders Arrive in Tampa



On June 3, 1898, Teddy Roosevelt and his Rough Riders arrived in Tampa, en route to Cuba to fight against Spain in the Spanish-American War. While their stay in Tampa was brief (10 days) they did leave a lasting impression. When the approximately 1,000 troops arrived in the city, its entire population was only about 15,000. When the soldiers received their first paychecks, a large portion of the money was spent on local Tampa businesses. One result of this was that many items

were suddenly in short supply, to the dismay of the ordinary citizens of Tampa. Nonetheless, most of the local residents enjoyed having the rowdy and entertaining troops in their city!

Most of the soldiers camped out in areas such as Tampa Heights and near the mouth of the Hillsborough River. However, most of the officers, including Teddy Roosevelt, stayed at the then luxurious Tampa Bay Hotel, which currently houses the University of Tampa. The hotel grounds were also used as a staging area, where Roosevelt could organize the troops and materiel destined for Cuba. The Rough Riders departed Port Tampa on June 13, 1898. After arriving in Cuba, they engaged in three battles,

including the famous Battle of San Juan Hill.

While the original Rough Riders disbanded many years ago, their name lives on in our community. The "Tampa Rough Riders" are a social and philanthropic group that was established in 1978.



Their mission is to preserve the vision of the original Rough Riders

and to celebrate a particularly colorful period in Tampa's history. Among their projects is the completed restoration of the gazebo in the Spanish-American War Memorial Park and the annual sponsorship of the St. Patrick's Day parade in Ybor City. New this year, the 1st U.S. Volunteer Cavalry Regiment – Rough Riders, Inc. will host the Hometown Heroes & Celebration of the Armed Forces parade on Saturday, May 29 beginning at 7 pm.

Our readers may recollect hearing about Teddy Roosevelt and his troops in a previous story about Las Novedades Spanish restaurant. During their stay in Tampa, many of the Rough Riders patronized this well-known eatery in Ybor City. Among their favorite meals was "Arroz con pollo"... Spanish yellow rice and chicken. We offer this recipe for this Tampa favorite from (the former) Las Novedades' friendly competitor, the Columbia Restaurant.

Photos compliments of Florida Memory

Annexation of Ybor City



Ybor City, informally established in 1885, was formally annexed by the City of Tampa on June 2, 1887. Tampa officials noted that Ybor City was generating high amounts of revenue and wanted to increase the city's tax rolls. They also saw the need for a police force in this "wild frontier town".

The annexation was opposed by Vicente Martinez Ybor, the founder of the rapidly growing center of cigar manufacturing. Ultimately, the move proved to be beneficial to both Ybor City, which benefited from the development of infrastructure, and the City of Tampa, which was able to increase its tax revenues substantially. Ybor City had become the "economic engine" that would ultimately transform the small fishing village of Tampa into one of the largest and most industrialized cities in the Southeast USA.

In contrast to West Tampa, its somewhat younger "sister community" across the Hillsborough River, Ybor City was never an independently incorporated city. It transitioned rather quickly from an unincorporated area immediately adjacent to Tampa to a colorful, vibrant and economically important neighborhood of the now booming City of Tampa in 1887.

Please "stay tuned" to learn more about WEST TAMPA....that "other" CIGAR CITY!"

Photo compliments of Tampa Historical Society

Help honor our hometown heroes and celebrate our Armed Services. Attend the Rough Riders parade in Ybor City on Saturday, May 29.



COOKING CORNER

Arroz con Pollo



While our earlier newsletter brought you the recipe of arroz con pollo (rice with chicken) from Las Novedades, we're featuring a recipe as made by the Columbia Restaurant. The version of arroz con pollo is Valencia style and is baked in a traditional Spanish clay dish.

[Get the Recipe](https://tamparoughriders.org/hometown-heroes-parade)

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@yborcymuseum.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

*Tie the Knot Tour - August 22 - Six locations including the Museum Garden

*Legacy Awards Brunch - Sunday, October 3, Columbia Restaurant

*Buildings Alive! - Premiere in the Park, November 2021

The Ybor City Museum State Park is Open

The Ybor City Museum State Park is again open to the public. To ensure your safety, masks are required to be worn 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 2020 was a year 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 supported our programs and educational activities last year. For those who enjoy this newsletter and learning more about Ybor City's cultural heritage, please consider a donation to support our 2021 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

