

First known as Bay View Villa, it soon became known as Peacock Inn and went on to have a long and profitable history.

In 1886, Munroe purchased 40 acres of bayfront land for \$400 plus one of his sailboats, Kingfish, valued at an additional \$400. His boathouse was built in 1887. Munroe lived on its upper floor until his bungalow was completed in 1891. The house, a one-story structure, was raised off the ground on wood pilings. Its central room was octagonal in shape and Munroe came to call his home "The Barnacle," presumably because it resembled one. By 1908, the Munroes needed more space so the whole structure was lifted and a new first floor was inserted below.

The Barnacle survived the disastrous 1926 hurricane and Hurricane Andrew in 1992 with only minimal damage.

Munroe's principal passion in life was designing yachts. Boats were the major form of transportation and yachting a popular sport. Many South Florida residents and visitors commissioned Munroe to design theirs. In 1887, a group of residents formed Biscayne Bay Yacht Club, electing Munroe as Commodore, a title he held for 22 years. In his lifetime, the Commodore drew plans for 56 different sailboats.

In 1894, Munroe met Miss Jessie Wirth while on a cruise with friends; the couple married the following July beginning a long and happy home life at The Barnacle. In 1900, Jessie gave birth to a daughter, Patty, who was followed two years later by her brother, Wirth. After Ralph's death in 1933, the family continued to live at The Barnacle until 1973 when it became a state park.

As a seaman, naturalist and photographer, Commodore Munroe cherished the natural world around him; it is a fitting legacy that we, too, can share at The Barnacle Historic State Park.

## Florida State Parks

Florida Department of Environmental Protection  
Division of Recreation and Parks

### The Barnacle Historic State Park

3485 Main Highway  
Coconut Grove, Florida 33133  
(305) 442-6866

[FloridaStateParks.org](http://FloridaStateParks.org)

## Park Guidelines

- Open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. with tours at 10, 11:30 a.m.; 1 and 2:30 p.m., Friday through Monday and for groups by reservation Wednesday and Thursday.
- The park is closed on New Year's, Thanksgiving, Christmas and Tuesdays.
- An entrance fee is required.
- Collection, destruction or disturbance of plants, animals or park property is prohibited.
- Well-behaved pets are permitted in designated areas and must be on a leash no longer than six feet. Service animals are welcome in all areas.
- Grounds are available for wedding/party rental.
- Become a volunteer or join The Barnacle Society, call (305) 442-6866.
- Special events and activities are posted on [www.FloridaStateParks.org/TheBarnacle](http://www.FloridaStateParks.org/TheBarnacle) and the park's bulletin board.
- Florida's state parks are committed to providing equal access to all facilities and programs. Should you need assistance to enable your participation, please contact the park office.

Large  
Print

Alternate format  
available upon  
request at any  
Florida state park.



**The Barnacle  
Historic State Park**  
Southeast  
Florida

*A treasured remnant of the Era of the Bay*



Photos: Bill Sumner

*...the Real Florida*<sup>SM</sup>



**National Gold Medal Winner**

Florida State Parks - "America's First Three-Time Winner"

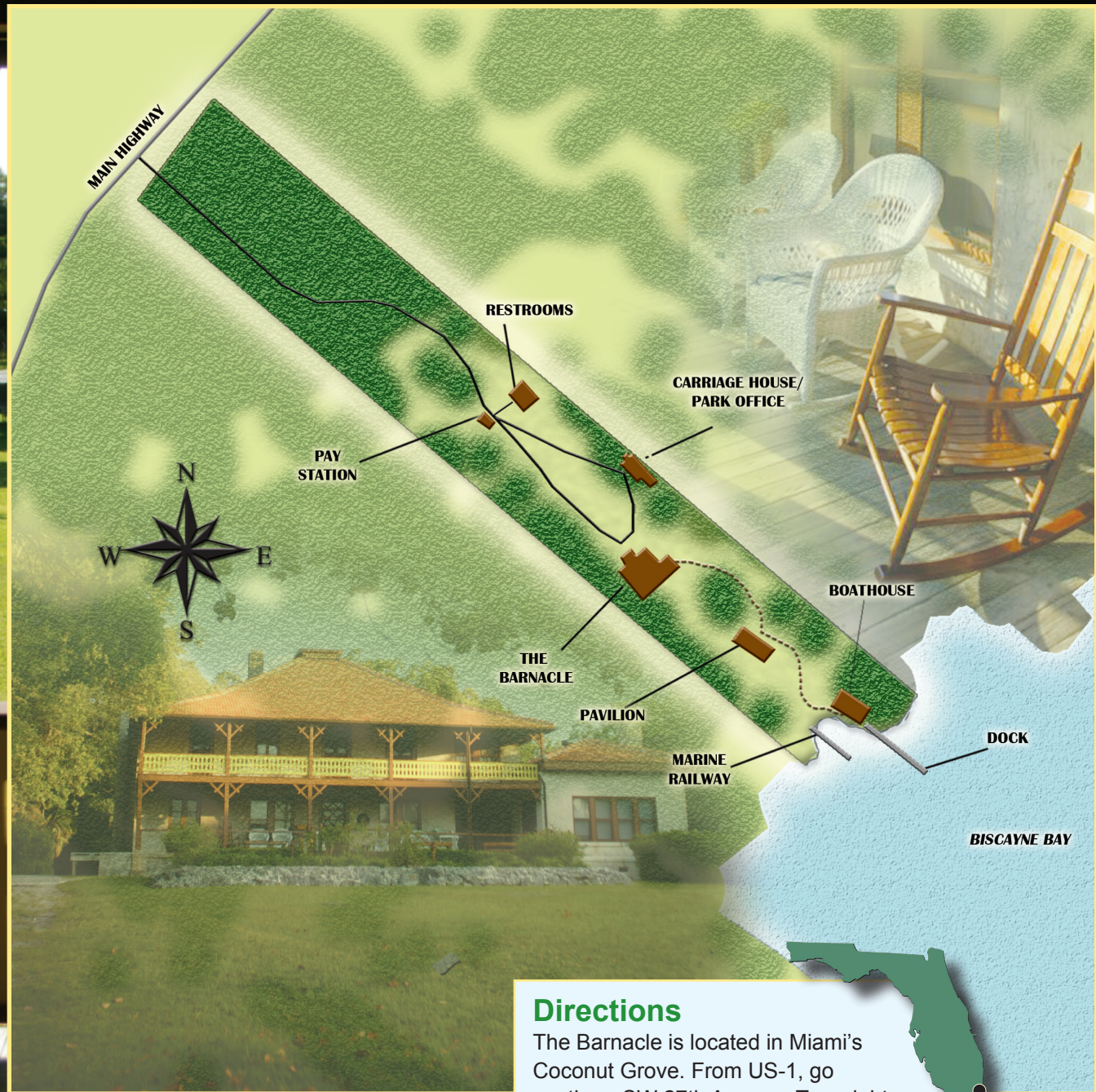
## Nature & History

Just off Main Highway, in downtown Coconut Grove, awaits a jewel from a quieter time. The Barnacle, the 19th century home of Ralph Middleton Munroe, one of Coconut Grove's most influential and charming residents, is one of the oldest houses in Miami-Dade County still in its original location. The Barnacle offers an opportunity to revisit Old Florida during the Era of the Bay.

A walk from busy Main Highway passes through a tropical hardwood hammock, one of the last remnants of the once vast "Miami Hammock." Ralph Munroe preserved the original hammock between the road and The Barnacle, cutting a winding buggy trail barely one vehicle wide. Today, the forest appears much as it did in Munroe's day.

Munroe first visited South Florida in 1877 while vacationing from New York. In 1881, his wife Eva contracted tuberculosis; doctors indicated that a change of climate was their best and only hope. Munroe immediately remembered beautiful Biscayne Bay, and prepared to take her there. Despite his efforts, Eva passed away at their camp on the Miami River. Munroe learned of their infant daughter's death upon his return to New York.

He returned to South Florida in 1882 to visit his wife's grave and to help open a hotel on Biscayne Bay.



### Directions

The Barnacle is located in Miami's Coconut Grove. From US-1, go south on SW 27th Avenue. Turn right on Bayshore Drive. Bayshore becomes McFarlane. Continue to Grand Avenue/Main Highway intersection. Take sharp left onto Main Highway.