

May 23, 2017

The Venice Historic Preservation Board and the City of Venice take pleasure
in presenting the

Venice Legacy Award

to

J.H. Lord

in recognition of his contribution to the development of Venice.

Joseph H. Lord, one of the keystone historical figures of Venice, came to the area in the 1880s as a real estate investor/entrepreneur. Born in Wells, Maine in 1860, Lord graduated from Brown and Boston University, was chairman of the English Department at Brown and moved to Sioux Falls, South Dakota after passing the bar to practice law. Seeking newer opportunities, he moved first to Chicago, and then to Florida after acquiring large tracts of land which he advertised for sale in major newspapers across the United States.

For over four decades Lord bought, sold and promoted real estate in the Venice-Sarasota area. He bought Venice area land that was part of the original Disston Land Sale. Hamilton Disston paid the State of Florida 25 cents an acre for four million acres in 1881. Lord acquired over 70,000 acres of land up and down the coast of Florida, as well as inland. Actively engaged in Sarasota and Venice regional land drainage plans, Lord was elected to the State legislature as the first representative from Sarasota County, which was formed in 1921.

Lord's career accomplishment was to persuade Bertha Palmer to come to the Sarasota-Venice area to invest in real estate. Lord and Palmer joined together to form the Sarasota-Venice Company. Maintaining a 50% interest in many of the land transactions with the Palmer Family, Lord was named Vice President of the Company along with Bertha Palmer's brother Adrian Honore as President, Potter Palmer Jr. as Treasurer, and Honore Palmer as Secretary.

Lord's land holdings, in conjunction with Palmer titles and property owned by the Sarasota-Venice Company, controlled blanket holdings from Sarasota to the Myakka River which represent over two thirds of Sarasota County as we know it today.

Lord bought 90 acres of area around Roberts Bay with the original intention of mining phosphate. He ended up planting orange groves on what is today Bayshore Estates. In 1896 Lord built what is now the oldest surviving house in Venice, the Lord-Higel House at 409 Granada Avenue, which is currently being restored as a pioneer museum.

The seminal impact that Joseph Lord had on the Sarasota-Venice area resonates to this day. With blocks of real estate transferred to Dr. Fred Albee, the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and the Kentucky Military Institute helped to put the City of Venice Plan on the National Register of Historic Places.



Jean Trammell

Venice Historic Preservation Board

John W. Helie

Mayor

Venice Legacy Awards are given to individuals or organizations in recognition of their contributions to historical preservation or significant historical impact in the Venice area.