

**Presented to
Merrilyn Rathbun**

- WHEREAS,** Merrilyn Rathbun has dedicated many years of her life to preserving the history of Fort Lauderdale, particularly the documentation and securing of historically significant properties, through her work at the Fort Lauderdale Historical Society; and
- WHEREAS,** Merrilyn was born in Jamestown, New York, and graduated from Cornell University; and
- WHEREAS,** Merrilyn remembers her first visit to Florida at 2 years old when her family came to Fort Lauderdale for its warm climate one winter and stayed in a little motel in what is now the Gateway area around Sunrise Boulevard and U.S. 1; and
- WHEREAS,** Merrilyn and her family started spending Christmas with grandparents in Florida and then she moved here permanently in 1968; and
- WHEREAS,** Merrilyn at first helped take care of her grandmother and worked as a professional artist doing etchings and silkscreens upon moving to the city; and
- WHEREAS,** at the behest of neighbors Joel and Becky Martin, Merrilyn began helping organize the papers of Frank and Ivy Stranahan for the Fort Lauderdale Historical Society in 1978; and
- WHEREAS,** Merrilyn was fascinated by reading through old newspapers to find any mention of the Stranahans and decided to volunteer further by helping the Historical Society be open to the public on weekends and reviewing other historical files; and
- WHEREAS,** Merrilyn spent many hours researching the social aspects of city history as well as its growth and development; and
- WHEREAS,** Merrilyn was instrumental in a campaign that resulted in the creation of Smoker Park and the relocation of the historic Oliver House that had been designed by architect Francis Luis Abreu after developers proposed construction plans for the site; and
- WHEREAS,** Merrilyn formally began working as a research assistant for the Historical Society in 1997 and later became the group's point person on assisting the city Historic Preservation Advisory Board; and
- WHEREAS,** Merrilyn has since been a key player in identifying and designating historic properties throughout the city for preservation in which she has researched and written reports on projects too numerous to mention. Those efforts have included preserving the façade of the Art-Deco style Lauderdale Beach Hotel, the mid-century modern Escape Hotel and the old Coca-Cola bottling plant.

NOW THEREFORE, WE, as City Commissioners of the City of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, do hereby proclaim **December 7 2014,** as:

MERRILYN RATHBUN APPRECIATION DAY

in the City of Fort Lauderdale and urges all citizens, interested groups and organizations to honor Merrilyn Rathbun for her service.

DATED this, the 7th day of December 2014.

Mayor John P. "Jack" Seiler

