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## **Award winning exhibit highlights History Center Museum opening**

The Sarasota County History Center Museum, 701 N. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota, will open to the public on Saturday, March 21, 2009. The featured exhibit, "Sarasota: The Settlement Era" was the recipient of a 2009 Gold ADDY Award. Other exhibits include "Paul Rudolph: The Florida Houses" and "Sarasota Archaeology and Paleontology."

"Sarasota: The Settlement Era" begins in 1910 with the arrival of Bertha Palmer and shortly thereafter, Owen Burns and then John and Charles Ringling. When the 1920s real estate boom struck, these people and many others who saw Sarasota's potential as a snowbird paradise were ready to capitalize on the flood of newcomers. Within a handful of years, Sarasota transformed from a backwater town into one of the most desirable areas in the state. The cornerstone of the exhibit is several recently donated items from the family of John Hamilton Gillespie, including his uniform, medals, and golf clubs.

"Paul Rudolph: The Florida Houses" gives visitors a rare look at one of Florida's most influential architects. Rudolph's early residential work in Florida was widely published at the time of conception and played a significant role in the culture of mid-twentieth century American design. Beginning in the mid 1940s, Paul Rudolph was one of the pioneers in the use of the natural landscape and innovative construction materials.

"Sarasota Archaeology and Paleontology" showcases the animals and people who inhabited the Sarasota area from the height of the last glacial period until the eve of contact with European explorers. This time period witnessed the extinction of marvelous ice age animals, the entry of humans into this hemisphere, and the steady march of the sea landward as the glaciers melted.

The History Center Museum, formerly the Chidsey Building, was home to the History Center's administrative offices and archives. The office and archives were moved to 6062 Porter Way, Sarasota in 2007 in order to protect the historical collection in the event of a hurricane. Renovation of the former office space into the museum began in late 2007.

For more information contact the Sarasota County Call Center at 941-861-5000 and ask about the Sarasota County History Center Museum.