



Friends of Fakahatchee, Inc.

Striving to Preserve our Unique Ecology
"The Home of the Ghost Orchid"

P O Box 35, Everglades City, FL, 34139
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PRESS RELEASE

Explore Our Island History!

Join us for a really unique “Olde Florida” treat. The Friends of Fakahatchee are hosting a Coastal Cruise through the mysterious mangroves of the Ten Thousands Island. On the way, you will probably see dolphins cavorting with the tour boat. When you arrive at Fakahatchee Island, a naturalist will point out unusual plants on the path up to the old cemetery. On the return journey, the boat passes by a famous rookery where the birds will be settling down for the evening.

We might think of “Fakahatchee” as a swamp with Ghost Orchids and Florida Panthers but to many local Gulf Coast families, it was the Fakahatchee Island that was important. In fact, it even had a school!

That was back in the early 1900s when farmers and fishermen had settled around Fakahatchee Bay, west of Chokoloskee, and scratched out a living. They grew fruits and veggies to sail to market in Key West. And, they fished. Salted mullet by the barrel brought in much-needed funds.

What remains today is memories – and a cemetery, cisterns, a cow dip, and some wonderful unspoiled landscape with rare plants.

The Friends of Fakahatchee are repeating their successful *Fakahatchee Coastal Cruise* on **Sunday, March 20**. The event begins with a talk about the history of the area at the Everglades National Park Ranger Station in Everglades City at 3:00 p.m. Participants will then be ferried to the island by Everglades National Park Boat Tours. The event ends around 6:00 p.m. back in Everglades City where there are interesting restaurants in which to enjoy the area’s signature stone crabs and other delicacies.

This is a unique opportunity to learn about our outer islands and the communities that existed in olden times. It is also a chance to see a Ten Thousand Islands ecology that has not changed for over fifty years!

For information about the *Fakahatchee Coastal Cruise*, phone Marya at (239) 695-2905 or see www.orchidswamp.org and click on Events Schedule. Places are limited so please make your reservations by March 13.

