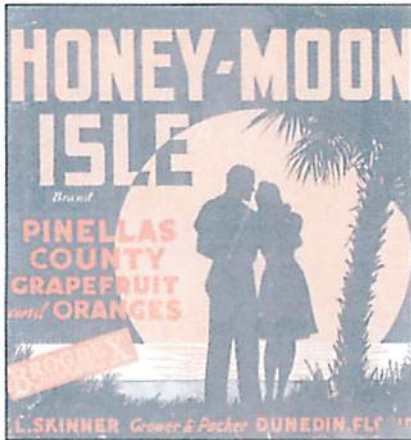


HONEYMOON ISLAND

In 1938, Clinton M. Washburn purchased North Caladesi Island for \$25,000. After failing to sell it for \$150,000, he decided to offer the use of the idyllic island to newlyweds who couldn't afford a honeymoon. A friend from Life magazine put the story on the wires, and the idea spread rapidly. Requests from prospective honeymooners came in from all over the nation. Eventually the little honeymoon community consisted of two rows of fifty cottages and a 300 seat mess hall.

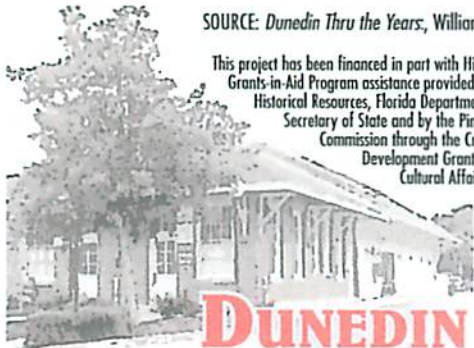


When the first couple arrived on March 30, 1940, newsreel people were on hand and Honeymoon Island became national news. Civic groups all over the country held contests to select newlyweds for the two-week honeymoon on the now famous island. By the end of the first season, roughly 250 couples from 100 cities had honeymooned on the island. By March, 1941, publicity had spread world-wide. Honeymooners arrived by train and were taken to Dunedin's dock where they boarded a launch for the trip to the island. Sports, contests, evening bonfires and sing-alongs, and dining with other couples kept the honeymooners occupied. Sadly, the beginning of WWII in December, 1941 brought the Honeymoon Island idea to an end. In 1942, a Cleveland, Ohio defense manufacturer leased the island to use it as a resort for its workers.

Storm and wind slowly erased the honeymoon compound, and in 1956 Washburn sold the island to A.V. Davis, CEO of Arvida Corp., for \$600,000.

SOURCE: *Dunedin Thru the Years*, William L. Davidson

This project has been financed in part with Historical Museums Grants-in-Aid Program assistance provided by the Division of Historical Resources, Florida Department of State, Secretary of State and by the Pinellas County Commission through the Cultural Development Grants Program of the Cultural Affairs Department.



DUNEDIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

DUNEDIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

349 Main Street, Dunedin, FL 34698 • Phone & Fax: 727-736-1176
Hours: Tues. thru Sat. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

HONEYMOON ISLAND

1800

1883

First recorded landowners of the northern end of Hog Island; only one owner settles there.

1921

A hurricane washes out the low-lying area in the middle of Hog Island effectively creating two separate islands.

1940

Washburn decides to offer use of the island to newlyweds who can't afford a honeymoon. The Clearwater Lions Club offers to build a palm-thatched cottage; other organizations build more. Called Honeymoon Island, the project appears in national newsreels. By Labor Day, 1940, 50 cottages and a dining hall have been used by 250 couples. Civic groups nationwide have held contests to select couples for the two-week honeymoon.

1960's

After various complex financial and political problems, the project is completed on a limited basis, comprising a causeway, the beach, and a few condominiums.

1919

Clearwater owner of the Fort Harrison Hotel buys the entire north end of Hog Island, and is suspected of using it for a rumrunning operation (prohibition).

1933

Haley sells island to syndicate of Tampa businessmen.

1938

The island is sold to C.M. Washburn for \$25,000.

1942

A Cleveland, Ohio defense contractor leases the island as a resort for work-weary employees.

1945 to 1956

Storm and wind slowly erase the honeymoon compound, and in 1956 Washburn sells the island to A.V. Davis, CEO of Arvida Corp., for \$600,000.

1958

Davis sells the island to a South Carolina syndicate, and contracts to build a \$2 million causeway to the island which will be deeded to Dunedin.

1974

On December 17, the Florida Cabinet votes to buy the island for \$25 1/2 million. This purchase will include Caladesi Island: the state park is born.

1974