



# WHAT IS PAST IS PROLOGUE

The Prologue Society Newsletter

December 16, 2015

## FROM THE CHAIR

**Sean McMeekin** challenged us all with his excellent, rapid-fire review of the last days of the Ottoman Empire. This was territory familiar to some, so the questions were particularly interesting. This important period lay the groundwork for the Middle East we know and worry about today.

**Next Luncheon:** Not until January 20, when Arva Moore Parks will speak to us about her new biography of George Merrick, founder of Coral Gables. We're sure that this will be a well-attended event, so don't delay your registration. Today would be a good time.

**The Spring Season:** We can now announce the following:

**Jan. 20:** Arva Moore Parks, *George Merrick, Son of the South Wind: Visionary Creator of Coral Gables*

**Feb. 24:** Fergus Bordewich, *The First Congress: How James Madison, George Washington, and a Group of Extraordinary Men Invented the Government*

**March:** TO BE ANNOUNCED

**April 14:** Janice Nimura, *Daughters of the Samurai: A Journey from East to West and Back*

**Spring Season Members:** NOW is the time to recruit folks for the Spring Season! Consider giving a Spring Season membership to a family member, friend, or neighbor this year. Just contact Debbie and let her know the person's contact information.

**Clearing out your bookshelves:** Tony Miyar of The Education Fund picked up a bunch of books on December 10, and he's willing to pick up any Prologue-type books at every session—so if you're clearing out your bookshelves, bring your books to the next luncheon, and they will go to teachers in the Miami-Dade County Public Schools via The Education Fund.

**IRS Deductions:** Bad news—I am told by the experts that the books we all receive are *not* deductible from our personal income taxes, because they represent tangible benefits received. The luncheon fees just cover the luncheons, so they are not tax-deductible. Beyond that, members receive 8 books each year, averaging in cost about \$25.00, for a benefit of about \$200 per year. That much is *not* deductible from an individual's tax return; for a couple, the amount is \$400.

In behalf of the Board, I want to wish you all happy holidays. See you all in the new year—

Dabney (Bud) Park

## NEXT LUNCHEON: ARVA MOORE PARKS, JANUARY 20

*George Merrick, Son of the South Wind: Visionary Creator of Coral Gables*

### To register:

- **The deadline for members to register for this luncheon is Thursday, January 14.**
- **Online:** Go to [www.theprologuesociety.org](http://www.theprologuesociety.org) and follow the instructions;
- **OR by telephone:** Call 305-323-1154 and talk to Debbie Hirshson or leave a voicemail message that you plan to attend;
- **OR by regular mail:** Send note with a check for \$50.00 per person to The Prologue Society, 18495 S. Dixie Highway #373, Miami, FL 33157.
- **Include** the names of your guests.
- **IMPORTANT: IF YOU REGISTER BY MAIL, you must also call Debbie** (or reply to this email) so that she knows to expect you!

### To pay:

- **Enter your credit card number** on the website;
- **OR mail a check** for \$50.00 per person to The Prologue Society, 18495 S. Dixie Highway #373, Miami, FL 33157;
- **OR bring a check** to the luncheon.

### Note:

- **IMPORTANT: We are no longer** sending out registration cards for luncheon events.
- To speed up luncheon check-in and accounting, our preference is that you: 1) pay online, OR 2) mail a check well in advance of the luncheon.
- Mail is taking a while to reach us. (Remember to call or email Debbie right away if you're registering via the mail.)
- **If you haven't yet sent in your membership application**, please do so right away (or activate and pay for your membership online). You will need to be on the membership rolls before we can accept your reservation for this and all future luncheons of this season.

## JANUARY 20: ARVA MOORE PARKS

*George Merrick, Son of the South Wind: Visionary Creator of Coral Gables*

The story of developers selling off the Sunshine State is as old as the first railroad tracks laid across the peninsula. But seldom do we hear about the men who actually built a *better* Florida. In *George Merrick, Son of the South Wind*, South Florida historian Arva Moore Parks recounts George Merrick's quest to distinguish himself from the legions of developers who sought only profit.



Helping to create the land boom of the 1920s, Merrick transformed his family's citrus grove just outside of Miami into one of the finest planned communities: the "master suburb" of Coral Gables.

With a team of architects and city planners, he built homes for the growing middle class in the Mediterranean Style using local stone, while investing in public infrastructure by designing and building parks and pools, trolley lines and waterways. He pledged land for a library and the university that would become the University of Miami. Hailed in national publications as a visionary, Merrick was green before green, a New Urbanist before the movement even had a name.

As Coral Gables and Merrick prospered, he reinvested in education, affordable housing, and other progressive causes. But the Great Depression ravaged Miami, and Merrick's idealism cost him his fortune. He died with an estate worth less than \$400.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, whose essays and poems inspired Merrick, wrote, "An institution is the lengthened shadow of one man," and Merrick's legacy is imbued in every stone and every tree of Coral Gables.

With unprecedented access to the Merrick family, and mining a treasure trove of Merrick's personal letters, documents, speeches, and manuscripts, Parks presents the remarkable story of George Merrick and the development of one of the nation's most iconic planned cities.

~ University Press of Florida

photo credit: Carl Juste, *Miami Herald*

## RECENT LUNCHEONS

We enjoyed hearing from Sean McMeekin on December 10!



## UPCOMING LUNCHEONS

### SAVE THESE DATES

**February 24, 2016**

Fergus Bordewich is scheduled to be our February author -- his book is titled *The First Congress: How James Madison, George Washington, and a Group of Extraordinary Men Invented the Government*.

**March - To Be Announced**

**April 14, 2016**

We will be hearing from Janice Nimura, whose book is titled *Daughters of the Samurai: A Journey from East to West and Back*

### **ALL LUNCHEONS**

are held in the Riviera Country Club Ballroom  
1155 Blue Road, Coral Gables  
12 Noon to 2:00 pm  
Doors open at 11:30 am

*Happy  
Holidays*

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For membership and luncheon information, please visit us online at [www.theprologuesociety.org](http://www.theprologuesociety.org), email us at [theprologuesociety@gmail.com](mailto:theprologuesociety@gmail.com) or phone us at [305-323-1154](tel:305-323-1154).

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