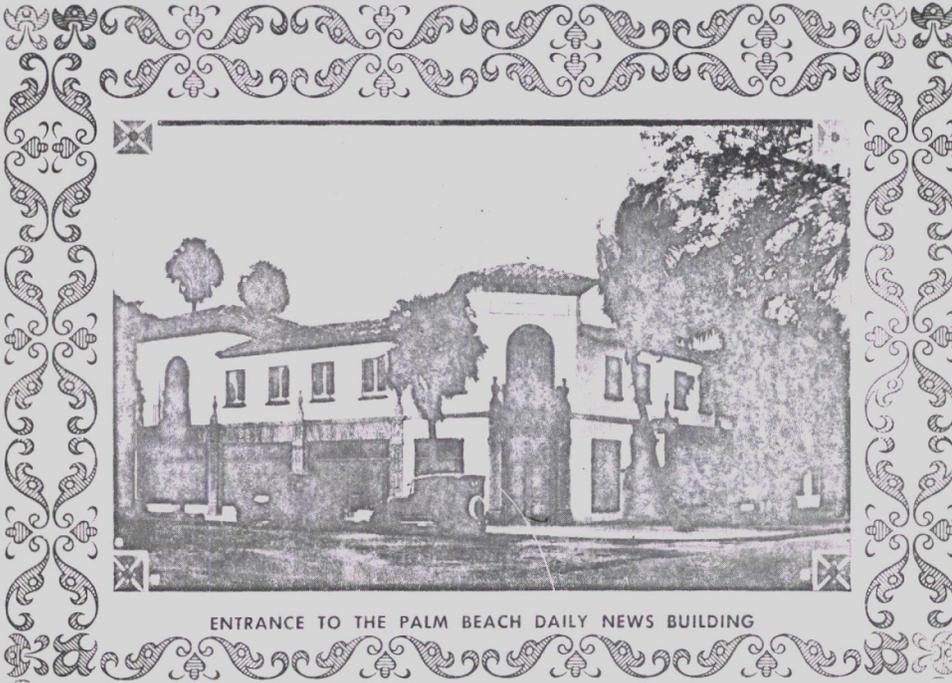


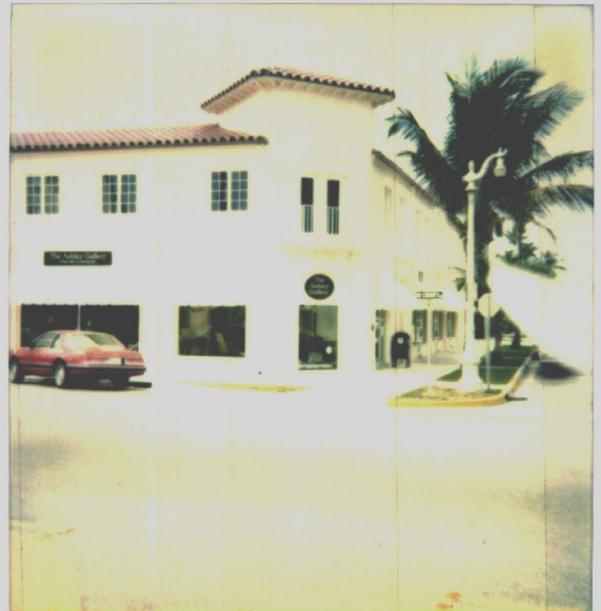
February 26, 1986



## DESIGNATION REPORT



# THE PALM BEACH DAILY NEWS BUILDING



204 BRAZILIAN AVE.



South County Road perspective



Brazilian Avenue perspective



Corner perspective



Brazilian Avenue perspective

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Report prepared by: Janice Drewing, Coordinator  
Landmarks Preservation Commission

I. General Information

Historic Name: The Palm Beach Daily News Building

Current Name: Same as Historic Name

Location: 204 Brazilian Avenue, Palm Beach, FL

Date of Construction: 1925

Architect: Unknown

Builder: Wilcox Brothers, Inc.

Present Owner: Mr. Averell and Mrs. Mary Fisk  
204 Brazilian Avenue  
Palm Beach, FL 33480

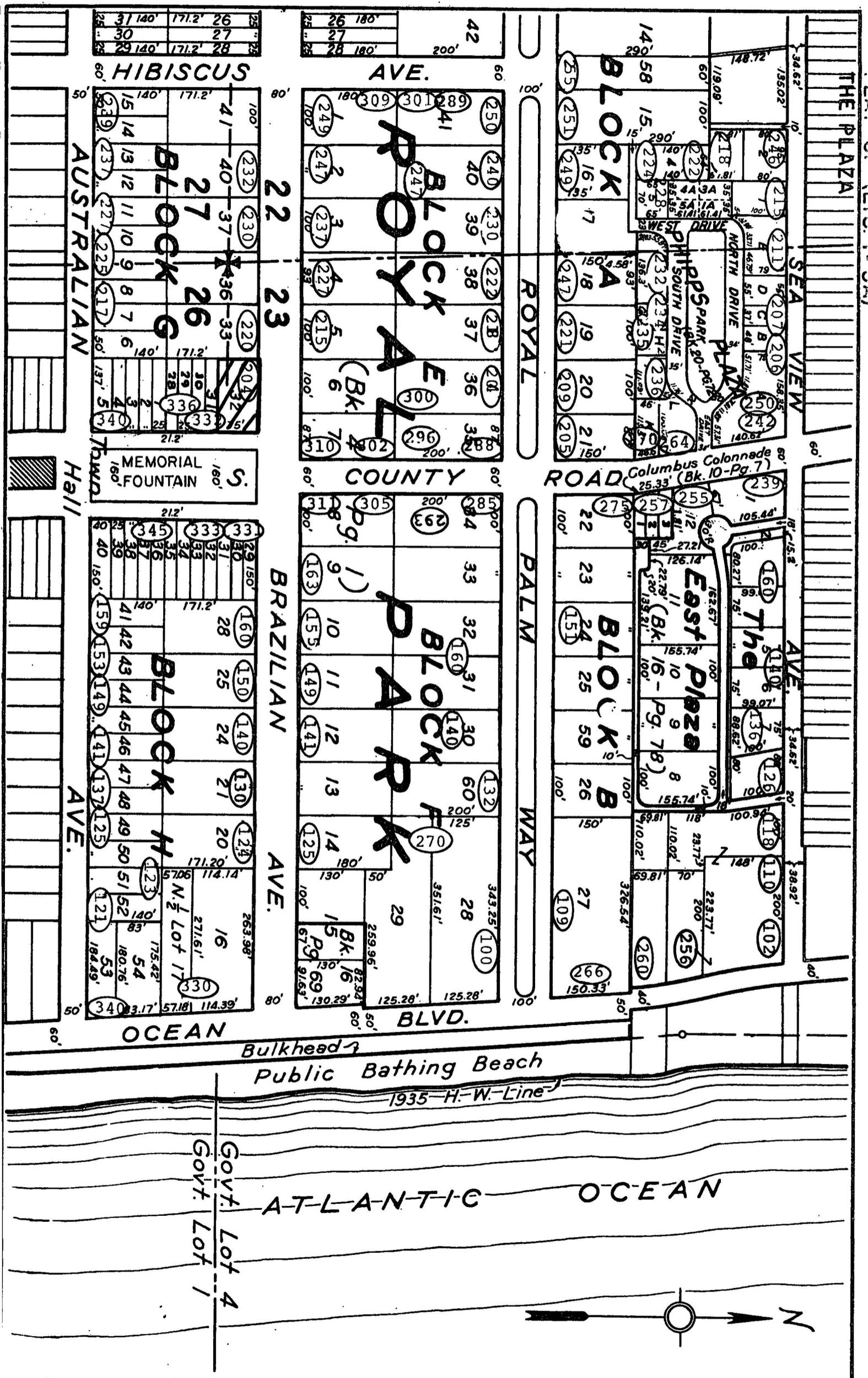
Present Use: Commercial

Present Zoning: C-TS, Commercial Town-Serving

Legal Description: Royal Park Addition, Block G, Lot 32

Palm Beach County Tax Folio Number: 504343-23-05-0270-320

Classification in the "Historic Building Survey of Palm Beach": Grade B: A structure which is of statewide or local architectural significance, but is not necessarily eligible for the National Register. It may be representative of a certain stylistic development in Palm Beach at its finest, or a document of an important era or trend in the Town's history.



### III. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A building permit application was submitted by Palm Beach Daily News President and Publisher, Oscar Davies on May 28, 1925 to construct a two story building to provide a publishing house and apartments at 204 Brazilian Avenue. (see Exhibit A) The architect of this building, which became a focal point of town activity, is unknown. However, the design of this Mediterranean Revival Style structure made effective use of its corner location. To provide interest and "avoid the cupcake-box effect of a low, spreading commercial building visible from more than one side", "ambitious false roofs and variations of the skyline are used". (from the "Town of Palm Beach Historic Building Survey")

The building is constructed of brick with a textured stucco exterior. Heavy timbers were used in the supporting structure to accomodate the added stress of the printing operation. In addition to the work areas, apartments were provided for the publisher Mr. Davies and his family. It is commonly believed that the residential portion of the building was designed by Addison Mizner.

The facade is highlighted by the use of an arched portal, decorative moldings, balconies, and cantilivered slabs with decorative iron railings. The red barrel tile roof is a combination hip and cross gable.

### IV. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Although its architectural style is significant in itself, the building's contribution to the history and development of the Town and surrounding area adds futher to its distinction.

In March 1906, R. Overend Davies bought the "Palm Beach Daily News" and its associated publications from Henry Flagler. Mr. Davies son, Oscar, purchased the remaining Flagler interests in the paper in December 1920, and became the sole owner. Oscar Davies was publisher of the "Shiny Sheet" until he sold the operation to John H. Perry of Palm Beach in 1948.

The Palm Beach Daily News and Palm Beach Life enterprises were originally headquartered in West Palm Beach. The operation was moved by Mr. Davies to Palm Beach, and a

house and its owner. The Davies family literally "ate and slept" the newspaper business. Frank Davies Sr., Oscar's son, provides a lively account of the paper's history, including how it got its famous "Shiny Sheet" nickname in an article attached as Exhibit B.

Oscar Davies was a dedicated and fair-minded publisher. With the aid of his able female editor, Ruby Edna Pierce, Davies' paper chronicled the personalities and activities of the Town of Palm Beach and its surrounding communities. It was the editorial policy of the "Shiny Sheet" "to reflect the ambiance and activity of the community it serves". While doing this, however, the paper and its companion publication, "Palm Beach Life", developed a circulation far beyond the local community. A sample of the types of stories covered in the "Daily News" is provided as Exhibit C.

Aside from his publishing activities, Oscar Davies worked for the interests of the town. For example, he originated the idea of the Memorial Fountain and Plaza as a tribute to those who made significant contributions to the development of Palm Beach. Davies elicited the assistance of his friends and subscribers to raise funds for the project and secured the free services of the illustrious Addison Mizner for its design. The result of Mr. Davies' efforts remains as a Town historical monument to this day.

The publishing house of the Palm Beach Daily News remained at 204 Brazilian Avenue for sixty-one (61) years until it moved to its present location at 265 Royal Poinciana Way in 1974.

The Brazilian Avenue building was sold to Mr. Averell Harriman Fisk in 1979. Recognizing the rich legacy of this site, the owner has succeeded in having the property officially listed on the National Register of Historic Places (see Exhibit D). To further ensure the building's preservation, in 1986, a facade easement was granted to the Preservation Foundation of Palm Beach, Inc.

## V. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE AND CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION

### Statement of Significance

The Daily News Building, located at 204 Brazilian Avenue, has been a vital part of Palm Beach since the building was constructed in 1925. It is built in the colorful Mediterranean style of architecture popular in the 1920`s and now synonymous with the "Palm Beach style". It has been well maintained over the years, and has stayed active in its commercial use. The combined contributions of the structure, its uses, and owners has resulted in its listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

### Criteria for Designation

Section 16-38A. of the Town of Palm Beach Landmarks Preservation Ordinance 2-84 outlines the criteria for designation of a landmark or landmark site and suggests that at least one criterion be met to justify the designation. Listed below are designation criteria which relate to this property and justification for designation:

(a) "exemplifies or reflects the broad cultural, political, economic, or social history of the nation, state, county, or town."

The Daily News Building, constructed in 1925, was the headquarters for publishing and distribution of the "Palm Beach Daily News" and "Palm Beach Life". With its broad circulation, it served the dual purpose of keeping the world informed about events in Palm Beach, and helping Palm Beach residents stay abreast of world affairs.

In addition to its journalistic enterprises, the Davies Publishing Company also served as "distinctive social and commercial printers to the Palm Beaches" providing invitations, stationary, business cards, etc. for the area's bustling social and commercial functions. (see Exhibit E)

The business purchased from Henry Flagler by the Davies family, housed at 204 Brazilian Avenue, and begun as a seasonal publication to serve the town`s "winter colony" has developed into a viable full time operation which continues to serve the Palm Beach area.

(b) "is identified with historic personages or with important events in national, state, or local history"

More than likely, Oscar G. Davies, President and Publisher of the "Palm Beach Daily News" personally oversaw the planning and construction of his building at 204 Brazilian Avenue. He personally applied for the construction permit, (Exhibit A) and probably prescribed the mix of publishing house, offices, apartments, and shops which were contained in the building and contributed to its economic success. Its corner location on busy South County Road mirrored the activities of both the newspaper and the man. The Daily News has continued through the years as a notable publication and has included articles by and about many well-known persons (see Exhibit C).

In addition to its journalistic legacy, the Davies family fostered many valuable town improvements and activities including the construction of Addison Mizner's Memorial Fountain and Plaza on South County Road.

(c) "Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type or specimen inherently valuable for the study of a period, style, methods of construction or use of indigenous materials or craftsmanship"

This commercial structure is an interesting example of the Mediterranean Revival Style of architecture popularized in Palm Beach in the 1920's. The architect is unknown, however, one could speculate that Publisher Oscar Davies may have contributed to the ultimate design. In any case, the building is unique in that it was specifically engineered to accommodate the special demands of the Davies printing and publishing operation while also providing offices, ground floor shops, and living quarters for Davies' family. It remains today an appealing commercial building whose pleasant appearance and attractive detailing significantly enhances the area in which it is located.

### Selected Bibliography

Florida Master Site File  
State of Florida  
Department of State  
Division of Archives, History, and Records Management  
Tallahassee, FL.

Historic Building Survey of Palm Beach  
Landmark Planning, Inc.  
Pittsburgh, Pa.

"Palm Beach Daily News" and "Palm Beach Life"  
Palm Beach Newspapers, Inc.  
Palm Beach, FL.

Identifying American Architecture  
Blumenson, John J.-G.  
American Association for State and Local History  
Nashville, Tenn., 1979.

### Special Acknowledgements

Historical Society of Palm Beach County for access to various files and publications in its collection.

Mr. Ed Ehinger, former Palm Beach Building Official, for his personal insights into the Daily News Building and the Davies family.

Exhibit A

No. 453 Palm Beach, Florida, May 28 1925

TO THE BUILDING INSPECTOR  
of  
PALM BEACH, FLORIDA:

The undersigned requests that you grant a permit to

Oliver G. Davis  
to Build Two Story Building

as per plans and specifications submitted with this application.

Class of Building Flushing House + apartment Size of Addition

Material tile + brick + steel Roofing tile + built up

Located on Lot 32 Block A G Addition Royal Park

On County Rd. Street, Between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

Owner's Name Oliver G. Davis Address \_\_\_\_\_

Builder's Name Walter Bros Inc Address W. Palm Beach

Approximate Cost \$7,400.00 Height 30 ft Story 2

Now therefore, in consideration of the granting of this permit, the owner and builder agree to undertake said work in full compliance with the ordinances of the Town of Palm Beach, Florida, and further agree that no work shall be undertaken prior to securing a Building Permit, issued by the Building Inspector.

Signed Oliver G. Davis  
By Walter Bros Inc Applicant  
Walter

State of Florida, )  
County of Palm Beach.)

Before me, the undersigned authority, personally appeared Walter Bros Inc to me well known, who being duly sworn deposes and says that the foregoing application signed by applicant, is true in point of fact.

Oliver G. Davis  
by Walter Applicant

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 28<sup>th</sup> day of May

A. D. 1925.

Joseph Botman  
Notary Public State of Florida at Large  
My Commission Expires  
April 11-1926

U  
4128  
No. 4128

TO THE BUILDING INSPECTOR  
OF  
PALM BEACH, FLORIDA:

permit to Mr. \_\_\_\_\_  
TO CONSTRUCT: \_\_\_\_\_  
CLASS of ZONE \_\_\_\_\_  
as per plans and \_\_\_\_\_  
Class of Building \_\_\_\_\_  
Material tile  
Located on Lot \_\_\_\_\_  
on Biscayne  
Owner's Name Walter Bros  
Builder's Name Walter Bros  
Approximate Cost \_\_\_\_\_  
Now therefore, in \_\_\_\_\_  
owner and builder \_\_\_\_\_  
with the ordinance \_\_\_\_\_  
agree that no work \_\_\_\_\_  
Permit, issued by \_\_\_\_\_

State of Florida, )  
County of Palm Beach.)

Before me, the undersigned authority, personally appeared \_\_\_\_\_ to me well known, who being duly sworn deposes and says that the foregoing application signed by applicant, is true in point of fact.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_

A. D. 192 \_\_\_\_\_.

No. \_\_\_\_\_

TO THE BUILDING INSPECTOR  
OF PALM BEACH, FLORIDA:

The undersigned \_\_\_\_\_  
Mr. \_\_\_\_\_  
TO CONSTRUCT \_\_\_\_\_

# Frank Davies Sr. Grew Up With 'The Shiny Sheet'

By KATHY HANSEN MORAN

Special To The Daily News

Frank Davies Sr.'s life and family are closely linked with the *Palm Beach Daily News*.

"I grew up with *The Shiny Sheet* — literally," he said.

Davies is the son of Oscar Davies, publisher of the paper from 1925 to 1948, and the grandson of Col. Richard Overend Davies, publisher from 1905 to 1925.

Frank Davies called the old *Daily News* building home. The paper then was published at 204 Brazilian Ave.

"From a very young age, I lived in a newspaper atmosphere. My family had an apartment in the back of the newspaper building," Davies explained. "The paper was

'Growing up with the Shiny Sheet was exciting. It was hard at first to realize that the rest of the world does not live like Palm Beach.'

*Palm Beach Daily News 2/19/1984*

everything to my father."

While his father was publisher, Davies worked in a number of positions at the *Shiny Sheet*.

"In high school, I was a newspaper boy," he recalled. "When someone didn't get their paper for one reason or another, they would call a special number. I'd take it from there. I'd run out, hop in the See DAVIES, Page A12



Frank Davies Sr., the son of *Daily News* publisher Oscar Davies, lived with his family in an apartment in the back of the Daily News Building on the corner of Brazilian Avenue and County Road

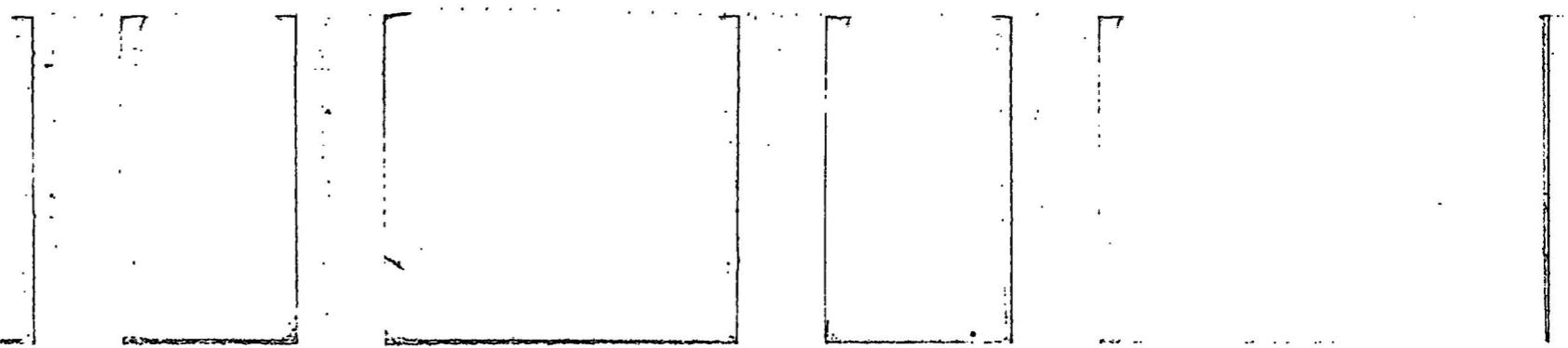
any paper was so expensive.

"My father paid a great deal for that special paper. If I recall correctly, it came from Canada on a large into the Port of Palm Beach. Every year I watched as the trucks arrived to deliver those great rolls of paper."

Davies' grandfather, Col. Da-

course, my father did not always see eye-to-eye with her. There were the usual conflicts between editorial and advertising. She could be very tough."

Besides working at the *Shiny Sheet* during high school, Davies also worked as a lifeguard at the then Seaspray Beach Club. He also



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...ly deliver the paper.  
... accounting work —  
... clerical, bookkeeping  
... things. One of my main  
... to handle the billing for  
... advertising.”

Davies' father, who was advertising manager in addition to being publisher, would sell advertising space at the beginning of the season by personally calling on accounts.

“He knew everybody in town,” said Davies. “He'd walk up and down Worth Avenue, go into the shops and have them sign a contract for the season. That was when the paper was published from Dec. 20 to April and was shut down all summer long.”

After Davies prepared the advertising bills at the end of the season, his father again would visit the shop owners on Worth Avenue — this time to collect.

The Depression took a temporary toll on the *Daily News*. Davies remembers that “if the paper was four or six pages at that time, we were lucky. Normally, the paper was around 40-50 pages. The shiny paper was so expensive.

“My father paid a great deal for that special paper. If I recall correctly, it came from Canada on a barge into the Port of Palm Beach. Every year I watched as the trucks arrived to deliver those great rolls of paper.”

Davies' grandfather, Col. Da-

vies, was the second publisher of the paper. He was installed by Henry Flagler, after Flagler bought out the paper's founders, Joel and Bobo Dean.

“My grandfather always used to say that he put up the know-how and that Henry Flagler put up the money,” Davies said. It wasn't until 1948, when Oscar Davies sold the newspaper to John H. Perry Sr. of Perry Publications, that Flagler's connection with the *Shiny Sheet* was revealed publicly.

Davies remembers Ruby Edna Pierce, a woman who earned the reputation of “dean of Florida newspaperwomen.” Col. Davies hired “Miss Ruby,” as she was called, to be his secretary in 1907. In just three years she became business manager and editor of the *Daily News*, a position she held for the next 44 years. When Oscar Davies succeeded his father as publisher and advertising manager, Miss Ruby stayed on.

“She was excellent, good at her job — a very good writer. She spawned many top-notch, young writers,” recalled Davies. “Of course, my father did not always see eye-to-eye with her. There were the usual conflicts between editorial and advertising. She could be very tough.”

Besides working at the *Shiny Sheet* during high school, Davies also worked as a lifeguard at the then Seaspray Beach Club. He also

exercised his athletic abilities in swimming and tennis at the Everglades Club.

In 1941, Davies joined the Navy. When he returned to Palm Beach in 1946, his father was already in the process of selling the paper. “There was never any question that I would pursue something else,” he said.

“My father was very active up until he sold the paper.” Oscar Davies, who had been police commissioner, a member of the Palm Beach Town Council, active in his church and in civic affairs, died in 1949.

And Davies, a graduate of Williams College, did follow somewhat in his father's and his grandfather's footsteps by pursuing a career in advertising.

He spent 19 years in the adver-

tising business in New York City, leaving his position as senior vice president with Cunningham and Walsh to return briefly to Palm Beach. He went on to develop real estate for a convenience store chain, and now operates the Palm Travel Agency in Sarasota.

Davies keeps in touch with his childhood friends in Palm Beach, and comes to the island several times a year.

“Growing up with the *Shiny Sheet* was exciting,” said Davies. “It was hard at first to realize that the rest of the world does not live like Palm Beach.”

Frank Davies Jr., Davies' son, also continued the Davies family's newspaper tradition. He is assistant state editor of *The Miami Herald*.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>PAGE</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>INTERVIEWED</u>	<u>BY</u>
Dec. 21	1	We'll have Bare-Foot Mailman.		Ralph Russell
22	2	Christmas Pageant Riviera Beach	Conrad & Benard Hetsel.	Leone King
24	1	If Xmas' Pkg's don't arrive-just give them time.		Ralph Russell
27	1	Cited as Author on Eng.	Wm. Stanier	No Name
27	1	Officer Returned from Korea-has high praise for youngsters on Battlefield.	Col. E.J. Carruthers	Ethel Ehlen
28	1	In Palm Beach for Sunshine, Sports and Family	Garry Cooper	Ralph Russell
29	1	Palm Beachers are Sad and Serious about News from Korea.		Ralph Russell
30	1	Palm Beach Plans for Civil Defense-outlined by Director	R.L. Ray	Ralph Russell
Jan. 1	1	Everglades Club on New Years Eve.		Ethel Ehlen
3	4	Wide Variety of Hedge Plants May be Grown in Florida		No Name
4	1	The Proper Bostonian Seans the Proper Palm Beaches	Cleveland Amory	Ralph Russell
4	3	Georgous Gardenias-Ordinary Here-May be grown in your gardens.		No. Name
5	1	Visitor-President of Chamber of Commerce of the Neverlands-Declares Holland is Anxious to Destroy Scars of War and be free-	A.D. Bestebreurtje.	Ethel Ehlen
6	1	Screen Star Spins a Yarn about a Beat-Up pair of Cowboy Chaps	Gary Cooper	Ralph Russell

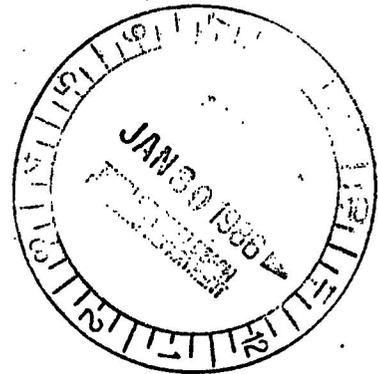
EXHIBIT



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
George Firestone  
Secretary of State  
DIVISION OF ARCHIVES,  
HISTORY AND RECORDS MANAGEMENT  
The Capitol, Tallahassee, Florida 32301-8020  
(904) 488-1480

WTC / Billy Dept  
11-2  
JD  
OPF

January 27, 1986



The Honorable Yvelyne Marix  
Mayor of Palm Beach  
Post Office Box 2029  
Palm Beach, FL 33480

Dear Mayor Marix:

It is a pleasure to advise you that the Palm Beach Daily News Building, 204 Brazilian Avenue, Palm Beach, has been officially listed in the National Register of Historic Places as of December 24, 1985.

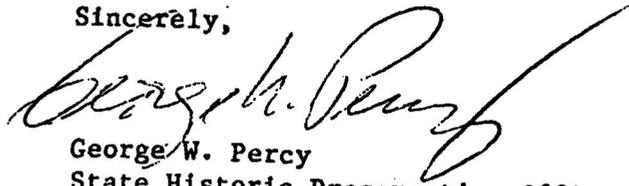
The National Register was established in 1966 as part of the National Historic Preservation Act and serves as a list used by the Federal government to recognize properties of historical, architectural and archaeological significance. Over the years, listing in the National Register has resulted in the protection, preservation and enhancement of many of the nation's non-renewable cultural resources.

In addition to the identification of resources worthy of preservation, listing in the National Register offers the potential for additional benefits. The listing of a property makes owners eligible to be considered for Federal grants-in-aid to assist rehabilitation or restoration work and also makes owners who rehabilitate income producing properties, eligible for income tax credits. Each of these incentives encourages the rehabilitation and reuse of historic buildings, thereby accommodating the needs of growing communities in ways which preserve community identity and a valuable sense of place and time.

The Honorable Yvelyne Marix  
January 27, 1986  
Page Two

On behalf of Secretary of State George Firestone, our office would like to thank you for your interest in the preservation of Florida's historic resources.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "George W. Percy". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

George W. Percy  
State Historic Preservation Officer

GWP:mc

Exhibit

# THE DAVIES PUBLISHING CO., INC.

Publishers of

## THE PALM BEACH DAILY NEWS

== ==  
**PALM BEACH LIFE**

Distinctive Social and Commercial Printers

To The Palm Beaches

**Social Stationery**

**Guest List Cards**

**Announcements**

**Business Cards**

**Letterheads**

**Placards**

**Advertising Folders**

**Envelopes**

**Office Forms**

**Broadsides**

**Booklets**

**Catalogs**

**Menus**

**Daily News Building**

**Telephone 6166**

PB DAILY NEWS 16 Dec 41

2