



**Media Contact:**  
Scottie Campbell  
Scottie.Campbell@ocfl.net  
689.278.7982

## **December at the History Center: Celebrate Stories, Create Holiday Memories!**

### ***Discover Cypress Gardens, the heyday of malls, and Audubon's amazing legacy***

Visitors to the Orange County Regional History Center this December will find engaging programs, guided experiences, and exhibitions that highlight the people and places that shaped our region. We'll time-travel to Cypress Gardens in Winter Haven and revisit the heyday of malls, especially Orlando's Colonial Plaza, in a special offsite program. It's a wonderful season to visit the museum with friends and family and enjoy all the museum has to offer. Learn more at [TheHistoryCenter.org/Events](https://TheHistoryCenter.org/Events).

#### **Lunch & Learn: The Legacy of Cypress Gardens**

***Friday, December 5, 2025, Noon – 1 p.m.***

A classic Florida attraction known the world over, Cypress Gardens delighted guests for decades. Join Jeremy Hileman, our assistant curator of collections, as he traces the history of this Winter Haven treasure, remembered as the "Water Ski Capital of the World." You'll explore the park's development and opening, its expansive gardens, and the iconic shows and rides that made it a beloved destination for generations. Participate online or in-person. Closed caption available online.

**Cost:** Free for History Center Members; General Public \$5. Cost with lunch: \$12 for History Center Members; General Public \$17. (Lunch must be ordered by 9 a.m. on Thursday, December 4.)

**Details and to register:** [TheHistoryCenter.org/Event/Lunch-Cypress-Gardens/](https://TheHistoryCenter.org/Event/Lunch-Cypress-Gardens/)

#### **History Alive: Highlights of the Museum**

***Saturday, December 6, 2025, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.***

The Historical Society of Central Florida has been preserving community stories since 1942. During this special day of guided tours and hands-on activities, discover how we safeguard the region's history—and help inspire the next generation of historians. Create your own mini-exhibit using items from our collection, learn how artifacts are cared for and cataloged, and explore the steps involved in preparing objects for long-term preservation.

**Guided museum tours:** 10:30 a.m., Noon, 1:45 p.m., 3:30 p.m.

**Details:** [TheHistoryCenter.org/Event/History-Alive-Highlights-of-the-Museum-2/](https://TheHistoryCenter.org/Event/History-Alive-Highlights-of-the-Museum-2/)

### **Colonial Plaza and the Era of the Malls**

***Saturday, December 6, 2025, 7 – 8 p.m.***

After a popular Lunch & Learn program on this topic, we're taking it on the road! Join History Center historian Rachel Williams at The Nook on Robinson for a lively look at Colonial Plaza and the heyday of Orlando's shopping malls. Discover how suburban growth reshaped retail across Central Florida and why malls continue to spark nostalgia and curiosity today. Let's make history a little more social!

**Details:** [TheHistoryCenter.org/Event/Colonial-Plaza-and-the-Era-of-Malls/](https://TheHistoryCenter.org/Event/Colonial-Plaza-and-the-Era-of-Malls/)

### **Pocket Exhibit: 125 Years of Audubon in Florida**

***On Display through Sunday, February 8, 2026***

Developed with the Audubon Society of Florida, this pocket exhibit explores the organization's remarkable legacy of protecting birds and habitats—from early battles against plume hunting to modern work restoring the Everglades and safeguarding bald eagles.

**More information:** [TheHistoryCenter.org/Exhibition/125-Years-of-Audubon-in-Florida/](https://TheHistoryCenter.org/Exhibition/125-Years-of-Audubon-in-Florida/)

### **Final Weeks: Orlando Collected**

***On Display through Sunday, January 11, 2026***

Take a break from the holiday rush to explore Orlando Collected, one of our most ambitious exhibitions to date. The show tells 150 years of Orlando's history through 150 objects—many rarely seen and selected with community partners. There's no better time to visit (or revisit!) this special anniversary exhibition during its final weeks of 2025.

**Details:** [TheHistoryCenter.org/Exhibition/Orlando-Collected/](https://TheHistoryCenter.org/Exhibition/Orlando-Collected/)

**The Orange County Regional History Center**, housed in a historic courthouse at 65 E. Central Blvd. in downtown Orlando, features four floors of permanent and special exhibitions. The museum is a Smithsonian Institution affiliate and accredited by the American Alliance of Museums. It is funded in part by Orange County Government through the Community & Family Services Department under Orange County Mayor Jerry L. Demings and the Board of County Commissioners. The Historical Society of Central Florida Inc. is supported by United Arts of Central Florida and sponsored in part by the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Arts and Culture, and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture. For more information, visit [TheHistoryCenter.org](https://TheHistoryCenter.org).

###

Media Advisory: November 26, 2025