

January 1960

It's "h" after "a", Daytona Beach time Hampton Dunn collection

Hampton Dunn

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Recommended Citation

Dunn, Hampton, "It's "h" after "a", Daytona Beach time Hampton Dunn collection" (1960). *Hampton Dunn Phototouring Florida Collection*. 139.

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Photouring Florida

By HAMPTON DUNN



IT'S "H" AFTER "A", DAYTONA BEACH TIME

By HAMPTON DUNN

DAYTONA BEACH --- If it's 20 minutes past 11 o'clock elsewhere, it's "H" after "A" by the quaint landmark tower clock on this, the "world's most famous beach."

The unique face on the timepiece spells out Daytona Beach and fun-loving beachcombers seem to like the letters better than figures. The structure was built in the early 1920s at the same time as the Bandshell and Arcade, shown at left were erected. The natural building material used was coquina rock, a limestone quarried locally that was formed from atrophied tiny shells in the prehistoric era.

During World War II, the Women's Army Corps was established here.

The East Coast mecca was originally founded by a Mathias Day of Mansfield, Ohio, in 1870. He purchased an old Spanish grant containing 3,200 acres for a townsite. The village thrived, but Day is said to have lost money on his investment. His name was perpetuated, however, with "Daytona" winning over "Daytonia" and "Daytown" in a contest.

Actually, the community has a triple water-front. There's the 23-mile oceanfront and then the oposite sides of Halifax River.

Daytona was incorporated in 1876, with 23 voters favoring it and two against. The town did not begin to blossom until 1890 when the great developer Henry M. Flagler built a bridge across the St. Johns River near Palatka and transformed a primitive railroad into a standard size one and extending it southward to Daytona. The Florida East Coast Railroad eventually reached from Jacksonville to Key West.

