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## Sarasota's unique curbside culture

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# Photouring Florida

By HAMPTON DUNN



## SARASOTA'S UNIQUE CURBSIDE CULTURE

By HAMPTON DUNN

SARASOTA --- Travelers entering Sarasota from the North on U. S. 41 are delightfully surprised to see outstanding statuary greeting them from the center of the busy highway.

They may join others in thanking circus magnate John Ringling for adding this splendid touch of outdoor culture to high-toned community. There are statues of lions, cherubs, Greek gods and other exciting figures spaced in the parkway of the main drag, as well as out on St. Armand's Key where Ringling speculated in real estate during the Florida boom. Other statuary is loaned to New College here, adding to the cultural atmosphere of that institution.

An official of the Ringling Museum of Art reports that town planners realize the only products of man which can attract the tourist as the beauties of nature do are works of art. Public works of art are not only attractive to tourists in terms of visual experiences they offer, this official says, but are concrete indications of the cultural environment of the town in which they exist.

In September, 1925, Ringling and Sam Gumpertz met Swiss art dealer Julius W. Boehler in Germany. They visited Venice, Rome, Naples, Florence, Madrid, Barcelona and other cities where Ringling bought tons of marble columns, polished stone, and terra cotta, hand-carved doorways and quantities of statuary. One piece, which became a landmark in the Ringling museum was a bronze cast of Michelangelo's statue of David. There are 366 statues at the museum, ranging in size from three-footers to the 16-foot David.

