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St. Petersburg Through Time

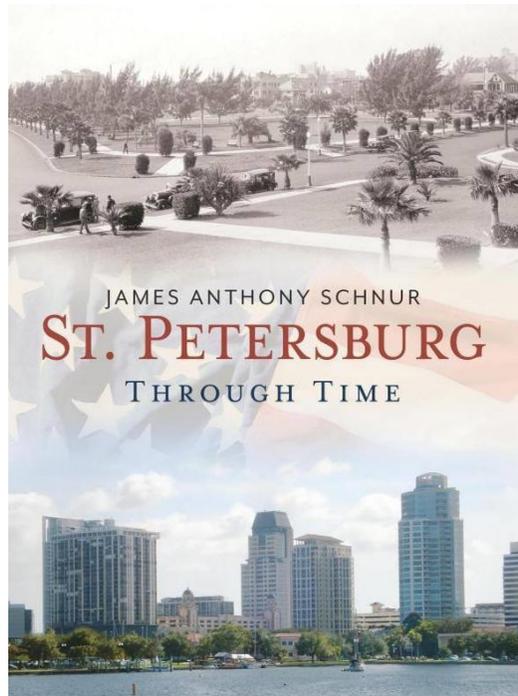
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Known as the "Sunshine City," St. Petersburg gained notoriety as a popular destination for seasonal residents during the Florida real estate boom of the 1920s. However, the history of footprints along with shoreline spans thousands of years. Long before the first contact with Spanish conquistadors during the sixteenth century, indigenous cultures flourished along the abundant estuaries and left shell mounds and pottery as evidence of their settlements. After these original inhabitants disappeared, occasional fishing parties from Cuba and the Caribbean visited a largely uninhabited peninsula along Florida's west coast. Indeed, fewer than 500 people resided along the entire Pinellas peninsula on the eve of the Civil War.

Throughout the twentieth century, waves of settlers, tourists, and residents encountered a colorful array of speculators and developers. Sometimes known as a winter wonderland for "snowbird" retirees, St. Petersburg tried to reinvent itself after pundits referred to the city as "God's waiting room" by the early 1960s. Fifty years later, much has changed.

This book offers a visual portrait of St. Petersburg since the early 1900s. Historical and contemporary photographs in four chapters illustrate St. Petersburg's waterfront heritage, the transformation of its downtown, the establishment of neighborhoods near downtown, and the city's expansion in more recent years. Rather than offering an academic narrative, *St. Petersburg Through Time* introduces the reader to important moments in the city's vibrant history and encourages further exploration.

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