



Please join us for a speaker program and book signing, Sunday, January 28, 2024, 2 pm to 3:30 pm, Homemaker's Club. Corner of Centre and Park streets. Melrose's own Phil Eschbach will share stories from *Spires in the Sun*, written by Jonathan Rich and photographs by Phil Eschbach. Free to attend. Light refreshments will be served.

We look forward to purchasing an autographed copy. The beautiful and historic Melrose Trinity Episcopal Church will be open after the presentation, too.

#### Other exciting HMI dates:

- Florida historic marker dedication for Banana, Florida at Melrose Heritage Park, 9am, Saturday January 13, 2024
- Banana mill site cleanup, Saturday January 13, 2024 930 to 1130 am
- Field trip to Mandarin History Museum, March 2, Saturday adventure! Possibly with a talk by the historic *Maple Leaf* divers who discovered Civil War artifacts deep in the St. John's River. First Saturday of the month is when Historic Mandarin Store and Post Office are open.



**We would be truly grateful for you to join or renew your HMI membership for 2024.**

Take a photo of the F.S.Lewis boat and the PayPal link. Kindly pay using a credit card or PayPal account. Be sure to include your mailing address and email. Thank you.

Or

Mail your annual membership (\$15 single / \$25 family) to HMI, Box 704, Melrose FL 32666

*We see Florida as a place struggling to stay true to itself — struggling to maintain an honest identity. We, like everybody else, want luxuries and conveniences too, but we think it is possible to pay too much for them. Sometimes, we think that what we are getting is not as good as what we are losing.*

—Al Burt (1927-2008), beloved author and past president of HMI.  
HMI is a nonprofit organization, 501(c)(3), EIN 59-2743455

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Box 704  
Melrose FL 32666

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2024 Postcard to all addresses in 32666

## Merry Christmas and Happy New Year 2024 from Historic Melrose, Inc!

It's been about twenty years since we sent out a mass mailer and we wanted to reach out to express our sincere gratitude! Thank you to all our wonderful volunteers and members! We have so much to be grateful for:

- HMI is preserving and maintaining **St. John the Fisherman cemetery** in Earleton. Located on the west side of CR1469, we encourage you to visit this peaceful and extraordinary place.
- **Melrose Heritage Park** was destined to be a strip mall but the wonderful people of Melrose and HMI purchased the lots in 2002. HMI donated the park to the county and we have enjoyed a 22-year partnership with Putnam County ever since. We are grateful to our volunteers at the Daurer Center for the First Friday Art Walks. We continue to feature special collections. Come visit!
- The historic **Homemaker's Club** (formerly Vogelbach drugstore, circa 1886) on Park and Centre streets has hosted HMI since 1985. We are humbled and honored to manage, preserve, and schedule this treasured building for family and group meetings.
- HMI maintains property that was once **Banana, Florida**. Remains exist of a post office, general store, grist mill, and a bridge across Mill Pond on the old Orange Springs to Starke road. Several Boy Scouts have earned their Eagle rank through cleanups, mill preservation, benches, and signs. The **QI Roberts high school history & archaeology club** completed the Banana historic marker. We are fulfilling one of our core HMI missions: connecting young people with our fascinating and brilliant local history.
- Our website is <https://historicmelroseflorida.org/> We hope you enjoy the photos within the old calendars, previous newsletters, and articles. Join HMI and volunteer!



Thank you, Q.I. Roberts History and Archeology Club for the Banana historic marker!

Have you heard about the Melrose Inn, circa 1880? Join HMI, learn, and volunteer!

