

**Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse & Museum
Loxahatchee River Historical Society**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Loxahatchee River Historical Society Celebrates 50th Anniversary with
Proclamation Presentation from Palm Beach County Board of Commissioners**

Telling the Stories from Oil House Museum to Outstanding Natural Area

February 3, 2022 – Jupiter, Fla. – On a breezy deck, below the restored 1860 Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse, a small group of dignitaries and supporters gathered on Thursday, January 27, 2022, to celebrate an historic milestone in the community. The date marked the 50th Anniversary of the Loxahatchee River Historical Society (LRHS) - five decades of historic preservation and educational programming for the local nonprofit. The Historical Society was deeply honored to be presented with a Proclamation from Palm Beach County Commissioner Maria Marino of District 1 that afternoon.

Jamie Stuve, President & CEO of the LRHS, welcomed guests and began by briefly telling the story of pioneer descendent Bessie Wilson DuBois and her love for history and collecting artifacts from Jupiter's multi-layered past and from her time living on the Jupiter Inlet. Stuve then introduced the original founder of the Loxahatchee River Historical Society and long-time local resident, Ethel Gravett.

Gravett recounted the pivotal moment that sparked an idea and that would shape the future of the Jupiter Inlet for generations to come. As a den mother, she decided to take her sons' Cub Scout troop (her scout is now 57 years old) to earn their History Badge by visiting Bessie DuBois at her home in DuBois Park.

Bessie shared tables and walls full of remarkable historic artifacts and photographs, and later asked "What is going to happen to all this?" This was Gravett's 'ah-ha' moment. Active in the Junior Women's League and other local organizations, she galvanized local community members like Bill & Judie Wood, Anna Minear, Rose Meyerowitz, Pat Magrogan and others, to form a group dedicated to the area's historic preservation and the 'Loxahatchee Historical Society' was born.

As the fledgling Society took shape, the new organization consulted with museums and individuals such as Judge Knott, with experience on how operate and properly protect the important cultural heritage of the Jupiter Inlet area.

Many people contributed to the success of the Loxahatchee River Historical Society over the years. Gravett expressed how excited she was to see what the LRHS has grown to become. Early on, the US Coast Guard told Gravett that the Lighthouse was difficult to maintain and happily agreed for the LRHS have the Oil House as a Museum, opening only on Sundays. Gravett told how the mail would come to her at the Coast Guard site, addressed to "The Girl at the Lighthouse."

Palm Beach County Commissioner Marino greeted the audience and enthusiastically read the Proclamation, recognizing the Historical Society for 50 years of accomplishments in preservation of the iconic Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse and other historic buildings as well as service to the community. Commissioner Marino then presented the Proclamation to Jamie Stuve, President and CEO, who has been at the helm of the Historical Society since 2002.

The Society's historian & collection manager Josh Liller gave a brief overview of the accomplishments and key moments of the Historical Society's 50-year journey. "We've had many wonderful people volunteer for over 20 years. Many staff members also have been with the organization for more than 10 years and that means something...stability!" related Liller. Some notable docents mentioned for their contributions to the Society were John Walker, Red & Marylou Shirar, Evelyne Bates, and acknowledged posthumously, were "Saint" Joan Hudiburg, historian Chuck Milhauser, "Lighthouse" Bob Boyd, and Jim & Molly Sparger.

"The LRHS have been community advocates and fierce watchdogs of history and historic preservation," Liller added. The LRHS has always made it clear through their communications and efforts that this area's history was extremely important and worth preserving." He observed that there were always "the right people at the right time" to further the Society's mission work. Liller pointed out that the LRHS has stood through storms both figurative and literal, persevering and overcoming obstacles with the dedication of volunteers and staff.

Jamie Stuve once again took to the microphone to recognize a few key supporters and partners present at the ceremony. Notably, Peter De Witt, Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse Outstanding Natural Area, Bureau of Land Management, Ron Delaney Councilor with the Town of Jupiter, Joe Chaison, executive director of the Jupiter Inlet District, and author and former board chair James D. Snyder for his remarkable history book "Five Thousand Years on the Loxahatchee." Also recognized was Robert Carr, executive director of the Archaeological and Historical Conservancy, for his important site work at the Lighthouse, uncovering the location of the original Lighthouse Keepers house and cistern among other discoveries.

From the original Oil House Museum in 1973 to the spearheading the 2008 Congressional legislation to create the *Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse Outstanding Natural Area*, to safeguard the nationally significant historic site, the LRHS has helped to transform the former military site into a keystone heritage destination for Palm Beach County and the nation.

Stuve capped the ceremony by touching on an expanded new vision to create much-needed new facilities to better serve the needs of the community and our history.

Dr. Robin Sykes, LRHS Board Chair added, "We hope we can count on all of you to be our ambassadors as we make a leap towards truly sustaining our heritage for future generations of our community and for all Americans."

The ceremony was followed by a buffet of mini-Bundt cakes from Nothing Bundt Cakes and Oceana coffee served in LRHS 50th Anniversary café mugs, a take-home token of appreciation to the attendees for their commitment in furthering the Historical Society's mission and its support. More programs and events will take place throughout the year to celebrate the 50-year milestone. For more information visit www.jupiterlighthouse.org.

[About the Loxahatchee River Historical Society:](#)

In June of 1973, the newly formed Loxahatchee River Historical Society opened the first Lighthouse Museum in the 1860 Oil House adjacent to the Lighthouse. For nearly 20 years the Society conducted infrequent public tours by permission of the Coast Guard. In 1994, the Society signed a long-term lease with the Coast Guard to restore the Lighthouse and to conduct tours on a regular basis. The Lighthouse and Oil House were restored in 2000 and the Society continues as the civilian “Keepers” of the Light and our local history through the present day.

On Pearl Harbor Day 2006, the Society opened the Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse & Museum in the restored WWII Navy Married Men’s Housing building. The Society then spearheaded efforts to obtain permanent protection of the Lighthouse and surrounding 120 acres of sensitive habitat as an Outstanding Natural Area (ONA) in the National Conservation Lands. Unfamiliar in the eastern United States, these special Conservation Lands are a vital part of the US Department of Interior and managed by the Bureau of Land Management. The Congressional Bill was signed by President George W. Bush on May 8, 2008, and gave the Jupiter Light the national recognition it deserves, as one of only 3 Outstanding Natural Areas in the nation. The Society was named as a managing partner, an unusual honor for a nonprofit in public lands legislation.

Since 1994, the Society has worked diligently with federal and local partners at the ONA on behalf of the public, transforming the lighthouse property into a national heritage site that generates a \$12 million annual economic impact in our community. The Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse & Museum has restored additional historic buildings and native plant communities that showcase indoor and exterior exhibits connected by interpreted pathways. Local residents and visitors from around the world can enjoy authentic experiences, educational events and programs, docent-led tours, and self-guiding tours in English, French, and Spanish, as well as the best “selfie” spot in Palm Beach County.

The Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse has become a symbol of home and the heart of history in our community. The Loxahatchee River Historical Society is committed to the ongoing preservation of our Lighthouse and collecting and sharing our area’s unique history with students, residents, and visitors, providing a meaningful anchor for our community and a gift we give to the next generation.

About the Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse & Museum:

Open Tuesday - Sunday, 10am-4pm, Gift Shop open until 5pm. Visit our website for more information. www.jupiterlighthouse.org. Operated by the Loxahatchee River Historical Society a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization and managing partner in the Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse Outstanding Natural Area, National Conservation Lands. Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse & Museum, 500 Captain Armour’s Way, Jupiter, FL 33469

This activity is conducted under permit from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and occurs all or in part on public lands administered by the BLM within the Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse Outstanding Natural Area.