

Rich History

A rich history of Florida's Caladesi Island is made available to all who visit. Visitors to the center will learn about the Tocobaga Indians who inhabited the island before the arrival of Spanish, English, Caribbean, and American soldiers, sailors and fishermen who used Caladesi as an anchorage stopover or a site for fish camps. The island adventures of a young girl named Myrtle Scharrer who lived on Caladesi in the early 1900s will show park guests the challenges and simple beauty of growing up in "paradise."

Evolving Habitat

The evolving habitat of Caladesi Island provides a valuable glimpse into the wonder of an undeveloped barrier island. From the acres of mangrove to the lush forest of slash pines to warm inviting beaches, visitors will be afforded a glimpse into a landscape that has been virtually untouched by development.

Fascinating Wildlife

CDC visitors will explore the wonders of the wildlife on the island. Gopher tortoises thrive there as well as owls and osprey. Caladesi's beach is critical to shorebirds for resting and nesting. Through hands-on exhibits, park guests will learn about the diverse wildlife that depends upon Caladesi for a home.

The Past

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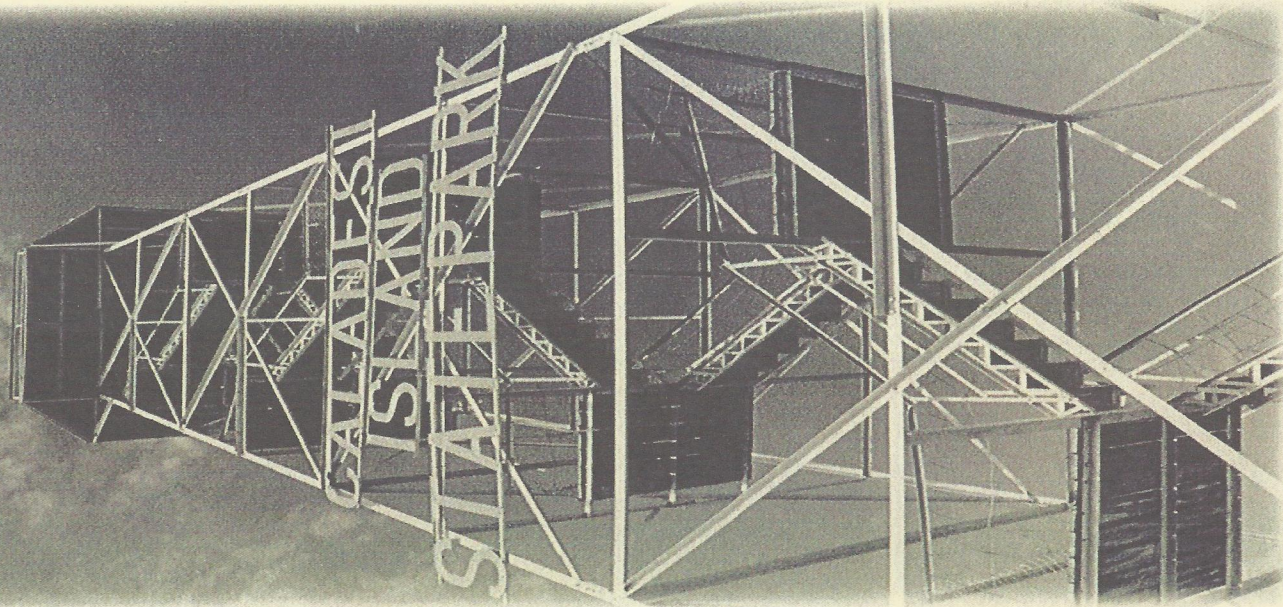
Friends of the Island, Inc. / CDC
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For additional information,
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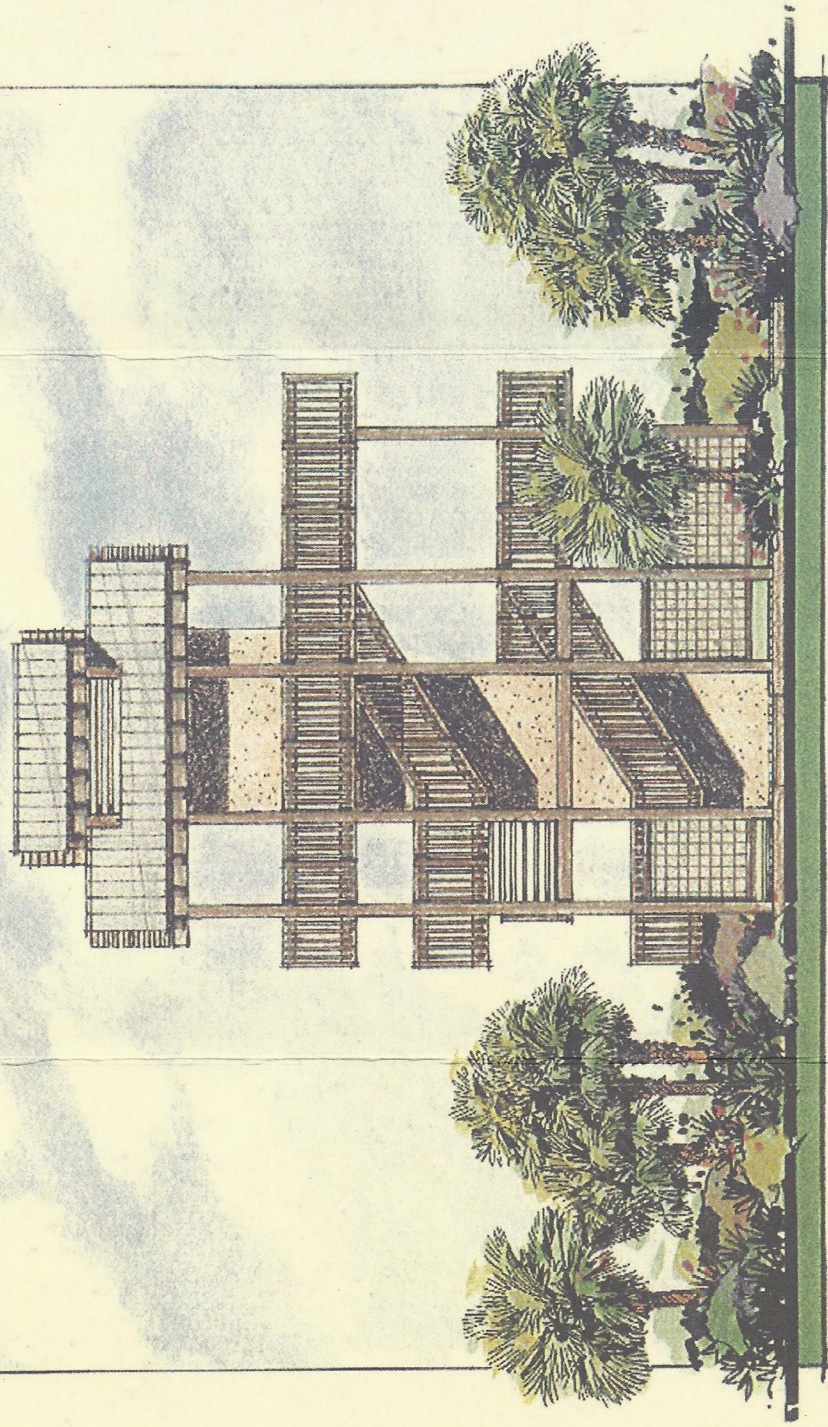
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The Future



CALADESI DISCOVERY CENTER

The Caladesi Discovery Center (CDC) will be an open air, ADA compliant, interpretive facility rising from the old fire tower site at Caladesi Island State Park. An observation deck located approximately 25 feet above ground level will provide visitors a panoramic view of this undeveloped barrier island. In addition to offering a magnificent bird's eye view of the topography and plant communities of one of the last undeveloped barrier islands on Florida's Gulf Coast, the CDC will provide hands-on exhibits where park guests will be able to investigate aspects of Caladesi's history, habitat and wildlife. At the Caladesi Discovery Center every person will have an opportunity to experience the nature of "the Real Florida."