



Palmetto Expeditions

PALMETTO EXPEDITIONS, LLC

Consulate Suites, Apalachicola, FL _



History

The historic Grady Building was originally built in the late 1880s to house J.E. Grady & Co., a family operated hardware and ship supply store along Apalachicola's bustling riverfront. A bank and storage for the hardware store filled the other half of the massive two story, 9,500 square foot building. The upper floors were shared by the Captain of the Port, a French Consulate, and a U.S. Customs office.

J.E. Grady & Co. specialized in supplying cargo ships and steamboats which tied up to the Water Street docks in front of the store. Shipping was a major business in Apalachicola during the 1800s. At least 130 steamboats were on the Apalachicola River between 1831 and 1928.

A devastating fire on May 25, 1900 destroyed much of downtown Apalachicola including the original Grady Building. Sparked by a kitchen fire three blocks away, the fire ravaged the town, destroying 71 buildings - among them several of the majestic three story cotton warehouses that once lined Water Street.

The present day Grady Building was reconstructed within six months and reopened in November 1900. J.E. Grady & Co. closed in the 1930s, a victim of the Depression and the death of Henry Grady, one of the two brothers that ran the store.

World War II brought the Apalachicola Tent and Awning Co., which manufactured canvas tents to supply the overseas troops. Although the war ended in 1945, the manufacture of canvas supplies continued with the Apalachicola Manufacturing Co. from 1951-1956. Restoration of the Grady Building began in 1995, taking approximately three years.

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