



# THE INTERNATIONAL PALM SOCIETY

Jan. 2021

NEWSLETTER

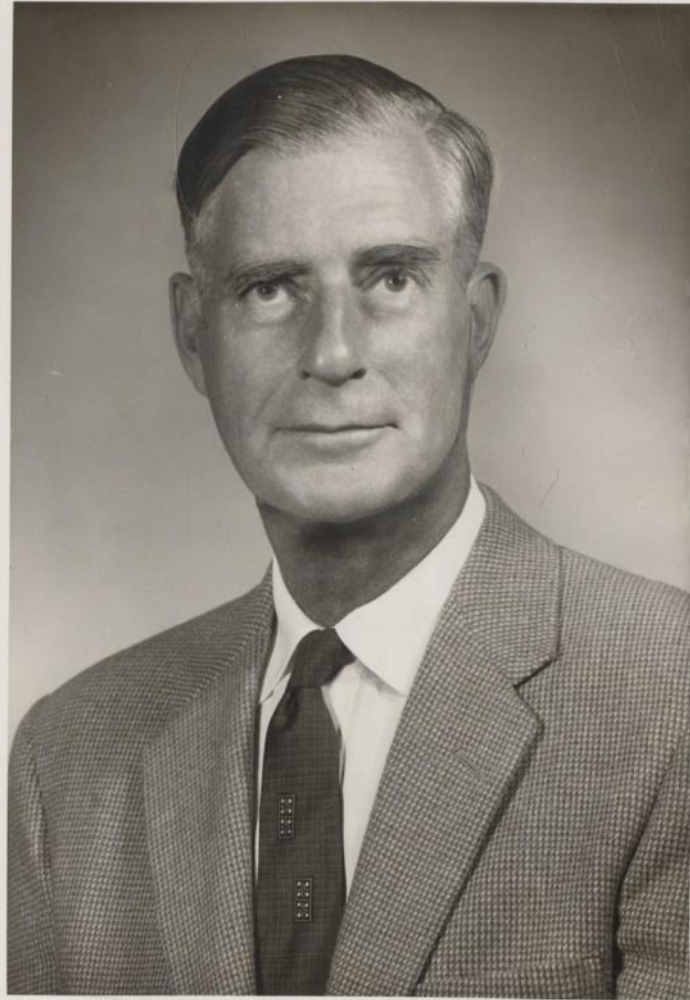
## Let the Celebrations Begin! by Andy Hurwitz

Announcing the 65th anniversary International Palm Society fundraising campaign for our general endowment.

As I am sure many have noticed, frequent palm-related scientific reports begin with this very FIRST sentence: “Generous support from International Palm Society enabled us...” (e.g., *PALMS*, 62(2): 87. 2018). In fact, according to IPS Administrative Secretary Dr. Larry Noblick (pers. com.), “Since its inception 35 years ago, the IPS Endowment Program has donated more than \$400,000 to over 115 research & education projects on six continents.”

The International Palm Society was founded by Dent Smith in 1956. This year, 2021, marks our 65th anniversary.

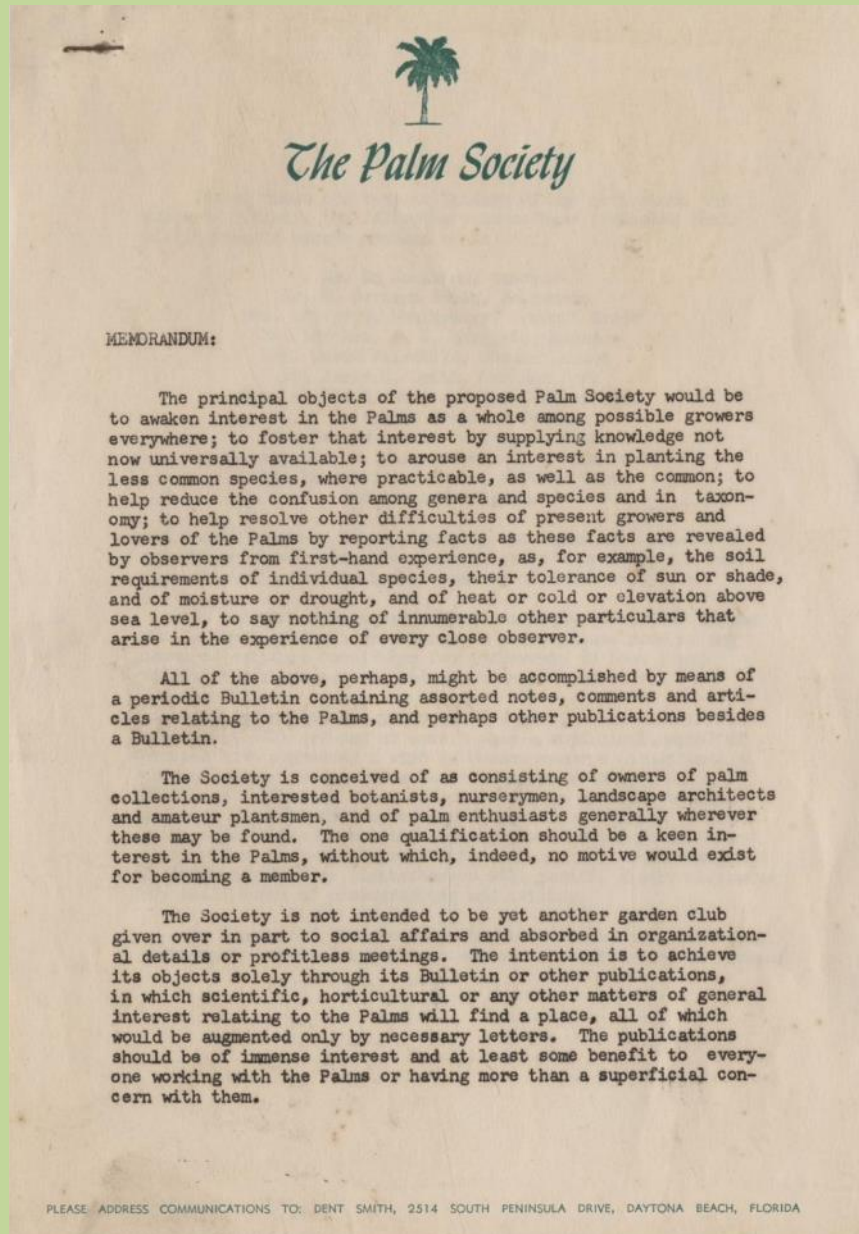
Dent Smith was born in 1897 in Staunton Virginia and lead a rather “itinerant lifestyle,” which included stints in Mexico and New York City. Eventually he settled in Daytona Beach, Florida and began his beloved palm garden (see *PALMS* 50: 27–32. 2006). He also battled the local meteorologists, or “boobs,” holding them accountable for inaccurate forecasts which resulted in loss of plants.



International Palm Society Founder, Dent Smith. All photos courtesy of Brett Jestrow, Ph.D., Director of Collections, and are housed in the Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden archives.

## Let the Celebrations Begin!

By March 1955 he envisioned establishing a palm society, and the first meeting was held at the Fairchild Tropical Garden (as it was known then) on April 17, 1956. Pioneer members included famed names like Fairchild, Montgomery, and Langlois, along with passionate hobbyists such as Lucita Wait (for whom *Ptychosperma waitianum* was named). The last surviving inaugural member, Stanley Kiem, passed away last year (see IPS Newsletter October 2020.)



## Let the Celebrations Begin!

The International Palm Society exists 65 years later, stronger than ever, with an endowment directed toward research, education, and conservation. We take our mission very seriously. Mr. Smith's correspondence from 1955 decried "The society is not intended to be yet another garden club...." (please see photographs of the actual memo). If he could only see us now!

Though there has been no fanfare of any sort about the proposed Society, the following persons have indicated their willingness to become members of it:

Mr. Ed Johnston, Tavares  
Mr. H. Bertram Smith, Melbourne  
Mrs. Robert H. Montgomery, Coconut Grove  
Mr. and Mrs. A. C. Langlois, Nassau  
Mrs. David Fairchild, Coconut Grove  
Mr. James E. Smith, Oakland Park  
Mrs. Lucita H. Wait and Mr. Stanley Kiem  
of Fairchild Tropical Garden  
Mr. Harold Loomis of Chapman Field  
Mr. and Mrs. W. Walter Hargert, Ormond Beach  
Miss Margueriete Martin, Daytona Beach  
and the undersigned.

All others known to be working with the Palms will receive a copy of this memo, together with a letter expressing the hope that they will wish to become members of the Society.

We now need additional supporters of the project. If you are in favor of the ideas expressed here, please send me any names of suitable candidates for membership so that I may solicit their interest in this much-needed endeavor.

The Society is not yet organized as such, so that there are now no officers and no dues. When a sufficient number of persons have expressed a wish to become members (considerable time may elapse before this desired end is reached), there will be a meeting at which officers will be elected, by-laws or other regulations adopted and dues, if any, fixed. I suggest, nevertheless, that the Society may function in the meantime, and to that end I propose to edit and mail a mimeographed Bulletin as often as circumstances will permit, gladly defraying any small costs of mimeographing and mailing.

In conclusion, it seems reasonable to hope that, with your assistance, our Society will become of substantial use and value.

# Let the Celebrations Begin!

Your participation in the 65th anniversary campaign will allow the IPS many more years of research, education, and conservation. Fundraising for this endeavor will close on September 1, 2021. And then we can look forward to our 70th anniversary in 2026.

The Dent Smith Founder's Society\*

Gold: \$10,000

Silver: \$5000

Bronze: \$1000

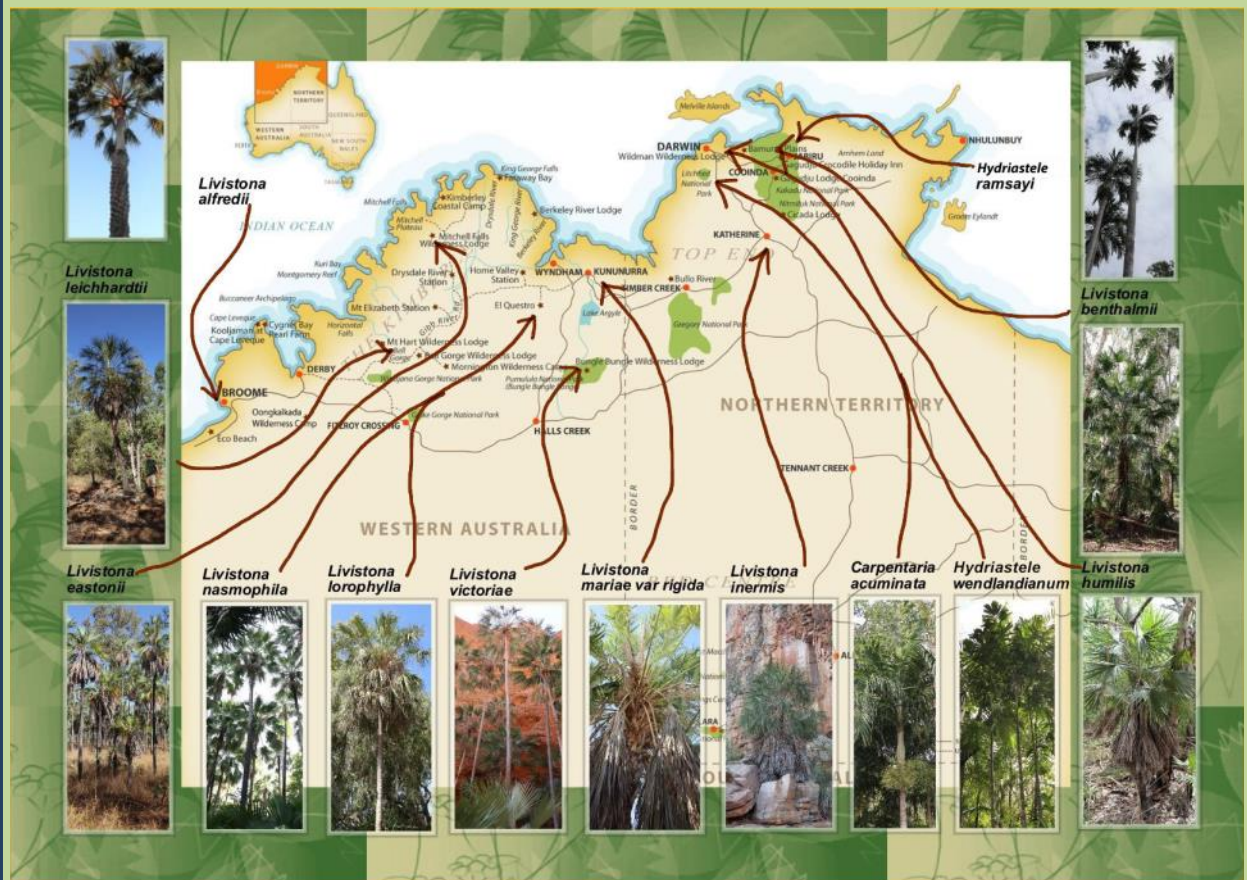
\*All Founder's Society level contributors will be Recognized in the December, 2021 PALMS journal.

Other Donation levels: \$500, \$250, \$100, \$50, \$25 or \$10.

The International Palm Society is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, Federal Tax I.D. 59-0829820 All or a portion of this gift may be tax deductible, less any goods or services received. Consult with your tax advisor regarding deductibility.

## Next month: PIMBY

Graphic by David Tanswell



## IPS Affiliate Showcase

The International Palm Society boasts over 30 affiliates worldwide. While the IPS focuses on its mission of research, education and conservation, local clubs provide members with exclusive garden tours, growing tips and access to rare palms. This month:

### The South Florida Palm Society

The South Florida Palm Society (SFPS) dates back to the very inception of the International Palm Society. In fact, from the time Dent Smith founded The Palm Society in 1955 until 1982, the local group did not have a separate identity. Dent's home, Daytona Beach, doesn't possess the climate to support much palm diversity, so he made frequent trips to Miami to visit Fairchild Tropical Garden and local palm growers. In the first ten years of the IPS's existence, many of its officers and directors were from southern Florida: They included luminaries such as Dr. R. Bruce Ledin, Lucita Wait, Nat DeLeon, Dr. Harold 'Hal' Loomis, Nixon Smiley, Dr. John Popenoe, and Marian Bell Fairchild, wife of Dr. David Fairchild. Notably 28 of the first 35 IPS members were Floridians, many of them lived in the southern end of the state.

The SFPS was chartered as a separate organization in 1982 in Miami. Meetings are held at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden in Coral Gables, the very place where Dent Smith convened the organizational meeting of the IPS in 1956. The membership of the SFPS has historically been remarkably active both by volunteering for and funding projects to promote knowledge of and interest in palms.

In recent years, the SFPS has contributed to the restoration of historic Virginia Key Beach Park and the palmetum at Miami's Morningside Park. Members are quite collegial, and obviously enjoy the rewards of a subtropical climate by regularly visiting outstanding public and private gardens. I strongly encourage all IPS members to view the achievements of this admirable organization at our website: <https://www.southfloridapalmsociety.org>

Membership and all other inquiries: [Palms@SFPSMiami.org](mailto:Palms@SFPSMiami.org)

To join the SFPS e-mail list follow this link: <https://bit.ly/SFPSemailmc>

At right, Dr. Laz Priegues with *Lodoicea maldivica* (Photo credit: Elvis Cruz, SFPS & IPS Member)



## IPS Affiliate Showcase



*Hemithrinax ekmaniana* (Lollipop Palm) specimens, planted in the 1990s, at Montgomery Botanical Center. Photo by SFDS member Leonard Goldstein.

## The Next IPS Webinar

Our next webinar will feature Don Hodel, noted author and expert on *Chamaedorea* palms. To sign up for this event, free for all IPS members, go to:

<https://palms.org/webinar-half-a-century-with-palms-with-don-hodel/>

A promotional poster for a webinar. The background is light green with decorative palm leaf silhouettes. At the top, it reads 'THE INTERNATIONAL PALM SOCIETY' and 'EVERYONE IS INVITED!'. The main title is 'HALF A CENTURY WITH PALMS' in large, bold, green letters. Below the title is a photograph of Don Hodel, a man in a green shirt, standing in a garden and pointing at a plant. Underneath the photo, it says 'WITH DON HODEL'. The event details are 'Virtual Webinar' and 'JANUARY 23, 2021, 3:00PM EST'. At the bottom, there is a detailed bio of Donald R. Hodel, mentioning his role as emeritus landscape horticulture advisor at the University of California Cooperative Extension in Los Angeles, his 50-year career, and his numerous publications on palms and cycads.