



## The Elliott Museum

Yesterday's Ingenuity. Tomorrow's Inspiration.

### **OLD ELLIOTT MUSEUM STARTS COMING DOWN TO ROAR OF CROWD AND HEAVY MACHINERY**

A large glass window in the car collection wing shattered and with that the old Elliott Museum started to crumble on June 1, 2011.

There was noise, dust and cheering as the shovel-claw of a demolition machine punched through the large window next to the sign "Elliott Museum" at about 10 a.m. The machine then knocked a larger hole in the outside wall, chewed away the roof and collapsed the garage door at the back left corner of the museum.

"It was remarkable to watch," said Scott Baratta, chairman of the Elliott Museum, who led an on-site ceremony marking the teardown of the 50-year-old building. About 100 people, including museum supporters and local leaders in the arts, government and business, gathered under a white tent to witness the event.

"As the old Elliott comes down, everyone can see that the New Elliott is becoming a reality," Baratta said. "We are on our way to creating a world-class home for our collections and traveling exhibits."

The ceremony began under sunny weather with remarks from invited speakers and announcements of \$42,500 in new pledges toward the \$18 million capital campaign. Sarah Feather, a member of a local founding family, pledged \$32,500 and Mr. and Mrs. Paul Zito of Martin County pledged \$10,000.

Speaking at the demolition were former state senator Bill Scott, who helped dedicate the Elliott Museum when it opened in November 1961, Steve Leighton, whose family is among the founders of Stuart, and Martin County Commissioner Doug Smith, a former employee and former board chair of the Historical Society of Martin County, the parent organization of the museum.

All spoke in praise of the old Elliott and the people who have supported the cultural institution. Scott recalled that Harmon Elliott waved from the second floor to the crowd assembled outside the entrance on opening day. Leighton spoke of how the Elliott has contributed to the quality of life in Martin County. And Smith shared his memories of putting on exhibits and building collections.

Demolition was scheduled for June, followed by clearing of the parking lot and preparation for a new concrete slab to be poured that month or in July. General contractor Biltmore Construction is directing construction of the New Elliott, which will have a contemporary design. At 44,000 square feet, the New Elliott will be nearly twice the size of the old building. The museum will meet requirements for traveling exhibitions and be highly energy efficient.