



# Rise of Sarasota, The: Ken Thompson and the Rebirth of Paradise

*Jeff LaHurd*

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## **Rise of Sarasota, The: Ken Thompson and the Rebirth of Paradise** Jeff LaHurd

Ken Thompson served as Sarasota's city manager from 1950 to 1988, making him the longest-serving manager in United States history. During these years, Sarasota experienced a population explosion and an unprecedented modernization of city services. The city moved from a sleepy little town to an independent city with an identifiable economy. This period of growth gave residents a vastly improved bayfront that included Island Park and the Marina Jack development and saw the creation of the current city hall and the Van Wetzel Theater. In thirty-eight years, Sarasota moved from the Circus City to the multifaceted city it is today. Follow well-known Sarasota historian Jeff LaHurd as he recounts the sometimes controversial era of Sarasota's greatest growth.

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