

AVIATION IN MIAMI: THE FIRST 100 YEARS

JUNE 30, 2011 – JULY 22, 2012

Q&A

Aviation in Miami: The First 100 Years at the Museum of HistoryMiami explores the extensive engagement Miami and its people have had with the aviation industry since the first historic flights one hundred years ago. The exhibition is guest curated by architect and historian **Antolin Garcia Carbonell** who managed design and construction projects for the Miami-Dade Aviation Department for thirty years.

HOW SIGNIFICANT IS MIAMI TO AVIATION HISTORY?

Aviation is a critical component of Miami's history and Miami has been a central component in the evolution of our country's aviation network. The aviation industry (airlines, airports, air cargo, air mail, training in all aspects of aviation, aviation administrative entities) has been one of the largest employers in Miami and during the 1960s in particular was the largest single employer in the county. Miami's airport was the third port of entry in the United States during the 1920s, so if you were traveling from a foreign country to the United States during this time it was one of the few places you could enter. Because of Miami's geographic location, it has become over the eighty years as the popular "jumping off" point from any part of the United States to Latin America, the Caribbean and now the world. Aviation has also been the dominant delivery and departure vehicle for Miami-Dade County's single largest source of income – tourism.

THE EXHIBITION APPEARS TO BE ORGANIZED THEMATICALLY AS OPPOSED TO CHRONOLOGICAL, CAN YOU DESCRIBE THE THEMES AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE?

The exhibition is indeed organized around several of the key issues in the aviation industry during its twentieth century development and how they impacted Miami and its people. These issues are: **Selling** (the promotions that needed to take place to make commercial aviation viable), **Safety** (the training and infrastructure that needed to be established to make flying safe), **Service** (attending to the needs of the flying public) and **Security** (how aviation has intersected with international politics). Two other sections of the exhibition explore the beginning of aviation in Miami through its first two flights and the development of Miami International Airport.

WHAT DOES THIS EXHIBITION MEAN TO THE COMMUNITY?

I think people will be surprised by how far aviation has reached into our communities and impacted the people here. Literally hundreds of thousands of people have been employed by the aviation industry in Miami since the late 1920s. The exhibition explores the many different jobs people in Miami have held – from developers and administrators to flight attendants, pilots, mechanics and baggage handlers.

It also examines the many different places in our community today that have been aviation sites or were planned originally as aviation sites – such as FIU South (which was formerly Tamiami Airport in 1945 – not the current one but a predecessor of that one), Miami Dade College North Campus (which was Miami Master Airport in 1939), Virginia Key and Oleta River State Park.

CAN YOU GIVE SOME EXAMPLES OF THE KINDS OF ARTIFACTS ON DISPLAY?

Images representing:

- Miami's first three flights in 1911 and 1912
 - Miami's involvement in both the emerging airmail and commercial aviation industry
 - Print ads from Pan Am, Eastern, National and Delta
 - Miami's different major airports over time including the Pan Am Airport at Dinner Key, the 36th Street Airport, Miami Municipal Airport and Miami Master Airport and present-day MIA
 - Famous aviators who had a presence here in Miami
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Models of airplanes that have been significant in Miami's history including:

- Wright Model B and Curtiss Model D that were the first land planes flown in Miami
 - Model of *Cubana* Viscount Turboprop, the plane representing the first Cuba to Miami airplane hijacking
 - Model of L1011 – the plane from the Eastern Airlines Flight 401 crash
 - Original Brown B-1 Racer flown at the 1934 Miami All American Air Maneuvers.
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Original artifacts related to the following people and events:

- Amelia Earhart
 - Juan Trippe
 - Eddie Rickenbacker
 - Charles Lindbergh
 - Miami All American Air Maneuvers
 - Pan American World Airways
 - Eastern Airlines
 - Curtiss Aviation School, the second flying school established in Miami
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Interactives include:

- Computer flight simulator, allowing you to fly over Miami and see the sights
- Control tower interactive, allowing you to hear planes as they land at MIA
- Airline television commercials from Eastern Airlines from the 1940s to the 1980s

WHAT ELSE SHOULD VISITORS LOOK FORWARD TO WITH THE CURRENT EXHIBITION?

There will be a wide variety of programming accompanying the exhibition. On the Third Thursday of every month we will present speakers, authors and panel discussions on topics such as *Aviation Pioneers in Miami*, *Aviation PR*, *Security*, the *Miami-Latin American aviation connection* and the *history of significant local airlines such as Eastern Airlines and Pan American World Airways*.

We will also present an aviation-related free Family Fun Day on January 14, 2012 where adults and children can meet a variety of people employed in the aviation industry and learn about their work experiences. Our City Tours program will feature aviation-themed tours to places like the former Dinner Key Airport and there will also be a film series featuring Hollywood movies, which have represented Miami's aviation industry. For more information about these programs, check out our website at historymiami.org