

10th Anniversary Year

Museum No. I: A Birthing
Museum No. II: A Moving Experience
Museum No. II: A Dress Rehearsal
Museum No. III: Tracking the Culture Center Tract

The Historical Association of Southern Florida

UPDATE

Volume 10, Number 1

February 1983

\$1.00



START A HISTORY MUSEUM? You find a building.



WHAT'S AN ARTIFACT? Anything made or used by man.



becomes an exhibit.

any exhibits make a museum.





Charles Thompson's 45-foot, 30,000-lb. whale shark photographed in 1919.

A Whale of a Job

Is moving the contents of two warehouses
and the present museum. Most of that has been done.

An Even Bigger Job

Is stowing it all away in the new museum...
to be displayed... researched... repaired...
sold... filed... stored... paid for...

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Members & Tequestans & Non-Members Are Needed —

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• Decorators for seasonal displays

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• Benefit committee members
• Hospitality Hostesses



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The Historical Museum

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Volunteer Coordinator

VOLUNTEER UNIT
OF HASF

The Historical Association of Southern Florida

UPDATE

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 Southern Florida**
 3280 S. Miami Avenue
 Miami, Florida 33129

Mrs. James S. Wooten
 PUBLICATIONS CHAIRMAN

Marie Anderson
 EDITOR

Linda Williams
 MANAGING EDITOR

Lee Aberman

Dorothy Fields

Arva Moore Parks

Thelma Peters

Eugene Provenzo

Yvonne Santa-Maria
 ADVISERS

Update is the magazine of popular history published quarterly by the Historical Association of Southern Florida. Designed to appeal to a broad audience, it presents articles, illustrations, and photographs which help to capture the known and the little known aspects of South Florida's past in a lively, informative and attractive manner.

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Dr. Thelma Peters, as a volunteer, helped settle the museum in its new quarters in 1972 and then served as interim director until 1974.

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Linda Williams takes the association from the development of a story-line gallery, through accreditation, expansion of education and development programs to plans for a new museum.

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Ownership of the land was recognized in 1821 when Florida became a U.S. Territory but it never was part of the Big Scene until now. Margot Ammidown leads the way through the records.

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On the cover: Peggy Fisher's montage combines Zannie May Shipley's introduction to **Update's** lead article with all the photographs in this issue's four museum articles, illustrating that many exhibits make a magazine cover as well as a museum.

Photo credits: p. 2 Metro-Dade/Communications; p. 12 Arva Moore Parks; p. 13 Miami Dade Public Library, Romer Collection. All others, HASF.



Latest photograph of Museum III shows Dade County building rising up to the north.

LETTERS

A HANDFUL OF NOSE

You will recall that I talked with you several weeks ago about some snapshots I had of the "decorations" along Bayfront Park during the Shrine Convention in 1928.

The photographs were rather small and of course over 50 years old. I did take them to Rich's for some enlargements. Although I think that some retouching could be done to make them better, I thought I would send the results to you together with the negatives in case you want to try to make improvements.

Standing on the lap and leaning on the Pharaoh is yours truly. I had hair then! Hope these photographs will be helpful to you.

Lon Worth Crow, Jr.
151 Majorca Ave.
Coral Gables FL

Mr. Crow's efforts to have the small, old snapshots rephotographed paid off for the museum's iconographic collection, with a thank you from Curator Rebecca Smith. Besides Mr. Crow, there were pictures of Everard Sturman and Walter Schwab, both in the Class of 1928 at Miami High.

FIU'S FIRST DECADE

I certainly enjoyed the August 1982 issue of Update. Chuck Perry had a copy sent to me.

The article on FIU was very nicely done and so nostalgic. I left there in 1978, but I still have good feelings about the place and about working with Chuck.

William A. Jenkins, Chancellor
The University of Michigan
Dearborn, MI



Lon Worth Crow and Shriners' Pharaoh.

Chancellor Jenkins was the second Vice President for Academic Affairs at FIU, succeeding William T. Jerome.

FIU is now firmly launched on its Second Decade, and, thanks to your historical perspective of FIU in Update, our community is much more aware of our university and its people, services, history and goals.

Thank you very much for your editorial support of Southeast Florida's four-year state university.

Connie Crowther, Director
Information Services
Florida International University

Director Crowther also has added to Curator Smith's collections by donating the FIU prints used (and some not used) in the August Update.

BOOK REVIEW

Dorothy Downs, text and Bill Held, photographs. **Micosukee Arts & Crafts.** Miami: Micosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, 1982. Preface, Bibliography, Photo Credits, 21 pages. \$5.95.

Ms. Downs' book is a good survey of the Micosukees' history and their arts. However, it is too short to be a comprehensive study of such a complicated people. The fact that the Micosukees published it, however, shows that the book agrees with their own views.

Downs outlines the history of the Micosukee tribe, the development of their colorful costumes, and patchwork designs. She also describes how these Indians have used their traditional crafts to survive and prosper in a modern world.

This book is well illustrated and it will introduce many people to the Micosukee culture. Hopefully, it also will induce them to do further reading and research on this complex and little known tribe.

Hampton Dunn. **Wish You Were Here: A Grand Tour of Early Florida Via Old Post Cards.** Saint Petersburg, Florida: Byron Kennedy and Company, 1981. Foreword, 283 pages. \$19.95.

Hampton Dunn's book is aptly described on the inside cover as "a coffee table conversation piece," which, "provides a Post Card Album for every household." The most important aspect of this book is that it will make more people in Florida aware of their history. Many people have been caught up in the mystic spell cast by photographic images. Old pictures can stimulate a person's curiosity, imagination, and intellect.

Dunn provides pictures from a variety of post cards from all 67 counties in Florida. Each card is accompanied by a short history of the image portrayed. No one volume could be a comprehensive collection of the myriad scenes available on post cards produced of Florida from the late 1800s to the present. But this book includes a good blend of the views available.

The history of Florida has been well served by Hampton Dunn. Any work that makes history available to the general public is important. A book that stimulates an interest in history also is valuable. This book combines both of those factors in a pleasant mix of verbal and pictorial images, which should foster more interest and research in Florida history.

DANIEL MARKUS

MUSEUM I: A Birthing

BY ZANNIE MAY SHIPLEY

HOW DO YOU START A HISTORY MUSEUM?

You find a building.

THEN WHAT? You put artifacts in it.

WHAT'S AN ARTIFACT? Anything made or used by man.

ANYTHING? Yes, but you must interpret the artifact. Then it becomes an exhibit.

Many exhibits make a museum.

Many exhibits do indeed make a museum but you have to start somewhere, and that is just what the directors and members of the Historical Association of Southern Florida did. From 1940 when 23 founders and 90 charter members organized the association until 1953, everyone anticipated that one day there would be a museum where South Florida history would be interpreted and its literature preserved.

President Adam G. Adams remarked in a 1954 newsletter that "hopes for a suitable museum have never been brighter. An interesting plan is now under consideration."

At this time museum artifacts were stored in a fire-proof warehouse by Withers Van and Storage free of charge. Earlier they had been kept in a file cabinet at the University of Miami Library.

"When the museum becomes a reality, an experienced person will be needed to evaluate, list and catalogue its contents. Certainly no museum can be operated without the services of a salaried employee," Adams continued. "The limits of voluntary service have almost been reached."

Thomas W. Hagan succeeded Adams and reminded members that a book ordered through the HASF treasurer benefitted the museum building fund. Each **President's Newsletter** listed books available for purchase but no mention was made of where the books were stored awaiting orders. HASF had no office.

In November 1955 dues were raised from \$3 to \$5 to help the building fund. These funds were earning 2-1/2% interest.

Sponsor member Edwin A. Link, inventor of the Link Trainer, broke all attendance records at the February 1955 program meeting. Fourteen hundred people heard his discussion of his undersea research for Columbus's Santa Maria, illustrated with color film. Such programs were held at the Coral Gables High School.

By September 1956 the county Commissioners were considering making some county land available, and there appeared to be a possibility that state funds might be available. At this time no governmental assistance of any kind was given to HASF, so this was in a sense the pre-dawn of some recognition for these courageous members. By November Simpson Park on South Miami Ave. near Vizcaya was under consideration. The City of Miami offered to lease space for \$1 a year on which to build a museum.

In the beginning, the Greater Miami Council of Garden Clubs supported the museum but the newspapers registered objections, saying that any building would destroy the natural beauty of the hammock. In September of the following year the board gave up on Simpson Park

because the association didn't have enough votes on the city commission. (Simpson Park survives and is used for flower shows.)

On June 6, 1960, Earnest G. Gearhart Jr., chairman of the building committee, presented to the board a detailed report on the property on North Bayshore Drive which became the first museum. It was a residence which the owner had been using as a boarding house for tourists, across the street from the Miami Museum of Modern Art.

The site consisted of two lots 105 front feet on N. Bayshore Dr. and 100 feet deep. There were two apartments, one of which could be used by the museum director and his family, thereby saving \$1,500 on his salary and eliminating the need for a night watchman. An anonymous donor would pay the director's salary for the first year - about \$5,000 to \$6,000 including living quarters.

Gearhart suggested charging admission of 25c per person and estimated that 6,800 visitors would bring in \$1,700. Schoolchildren would pay a dime. A closely guarded secret was that Edwin Link assumed the mortgage at 6% interest.

The first meeting of the board of directors at the new building was held Sunday, Feb. 19, 1961. Now the hunt began for a director. By May 1962 Jack E. Porter had been hired. Porter, wrote President Wayne E. Withers, "is a professional historian ... who was assistant curator of anthropology ... at the University of Arkansas museum. He also has had an extensive business background in our state."

The newsletter carried the new address: 2010 N. Bayshore Dr., Miami, 37. Prior to this the mailing address for HASF had been the office at the Dupont Building of Gaines R. Wilson, vice-president and secretary of the Woodlawn Park Cemetery Company. In July of 1962 Vice-President Charlton Tebeau thanked Wilson for this valuable service and thanked President Withers and his associates for providing fully protected storage for a growing collection over 15 years. He also thanked Roland A. Saye, Jr., who arranged for the donation of a GE radar burglar alarm system by the Perrine-Cutler Ridge Bank for the new museum building.

Porter reported to the board that most of the materials on hand were documents and photographs and not many artifacts for exhibits. He was trying to get donations and loans of artifacts. This raised the philosophical question of what items should be accepted. For example, should a collection of tree snails and other "natural history" items be accepted? The consensus was to avoid the area of another local museum although it was felt that HASF's own specialized area was sometimes encroached upon by other groups. Porter's criterion was that an artifact was anything made or used by man.

Donations were set at 50c adults, 25c children, with lower rates for groups. Members in good standing, professional museum people and qualified researchers would be admitted free. The library was a reference facility and books would not circulate. Porter would train volunteer guides.

Saye suggested a sales desk as a money-raiser; the publicity committee suggested a preview party for the press on the Sunday before the opening; and Robert J.

► Continues on page 4

Dykes questioned whether there was enough exhibit material on hand. Porter said that there were enough artifacts for a case on marine archeology; a nautical room could be made ready as well as a doll collection and a collection of old cartoons; and he would lend his own wooden artifact collection.

The museum opened Sunday, Dec. 2, 1962.

At the dedication Minor Wine Thomas, chief curator and director of collections of the Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village of Dearborn, MI., gave an address. Earnest G. Gearhart, Jr., presided, and Eunice Peacock Merrick unveiled the museum marker. Her late husband, George E. Merrick, had been the first president of HASF. Following a ribbon cutting by County Commissioner Alex S. Gordon and President Wayne Withers, the museum was opened to the public and members conducted guided tours of the exhibits.

The opening of the museum added to the financial burdens of the association because everything was needed: office furniture and equipment, filing cases, library catalogue files, map storage cabinets, and even a pickup truck. Donations helped: Maurice S. Brody of Mr. Foster's Store donated files and file folders; the First National Bank of Miami gave a substantial amount of filing equipment. Robert M. McKey donated a library card catalogue cabinet as well as 21 titles in the facsimile and reprint series of the University of Florida Press. These volumes covered many essential phases in the history of Florida from Pedro Menendez de Aviles to the Civil War and Reconstruction.

Artifact donations increased also: a US Navy life ring and plaque from the USS Caloosahatchee, a glass comote from the Royal Palm Hotel, a photostat of a Spanish map of Florida and Mexico ca. 1586, ladies' clothing and accessories from 1860-1870, an Ais Indian archeological collection, and Indian Key artifacts and photographs. Later, a 1928 Atwater Kent table-model radio and speaker in working order were donated. If some of these donations seem less than earth-shaking in their significance, please remember that the museum began with very little to exhibit and nowhere to display it. The museum was the magnet needed to attract the artifacts of local history, and each gift attracted others in years to come.

Problems developed with the plan to have the director live on the premises. It meant that he was never off duty. Without meaning to, members brought too many problems to him. A museum operations committee was set up to relieve this burden and things ran more smoothly until midsummer 1963. At that time the director resigned to resume his academic career although the board urged him to stay and offered to raise his salary. He had made a fine start against many obstacles and HASF was grateful to him for sorting things out and teaching members the limits of what should be expected from administrators. Though his fabrication skills were highly valued and needed desperately in the beginning, the board realized that the new director should be more of a fund-raiser and community activist than a fabricator.

David T. Alexander assumed the duties of acting curator and eventually became the director.

At the end of the first year, the museum was still not attracting the numbers of visitors needed to cover operating expenses, although the program meetings continued to be well attended at Gables High School. The museum was hard to find and parking was always a problem.

Omitting all of the presidents and members of the board of directors over two decades, the following people contributed their time and talents to the operation of the museum in the early years: Wayne Wellman, museum librarian; Jack Stecke, curator of military and naval history;

Mrs. William L. Freeland and Mrs. Herbert O. Vance, coordinators of museum volunteers, who included Mrs. Nils Anderson, Mrs. Andrew J. Moulds, and Mrs. Roland A. Saye, Jr. Mrs. Walter C. Gibson, volunteer registrar and charter member, catalogued the growing collection. Miss Marie Neff handled secretarial and correspondence duties. John L. Alexander and Kenneth N. Sellati helped with exhibit preparation, heavy hauling and preparation of the library.

Eunice Merrick set a precedent that was to become a lifesaver when she donated a limited number of copies of Rex Beach's long out-of-print classic, **The Miracle of Coral Gables**, with the proceeds from sales to benefit the museum mortgage fund.

The Carl G. Fisher exhibit opened at the end of the museum's first year. By September 1964 the exhibits had increased from 21 in five rooms to over 50 in eight rooms. Director Alexander began touring schools, giving lectures on pioneering in South Florida; student tours of the museum increased.

In November Adm. I. J. Stephens, commander of the Seventh Naval District Coast Guard, and more than 60 officers and personnel attended the opening of the Coast Guard exhibit. Highlight of the occasion was the Fresnel light from Carysfort Reef lighthouse. This huge, 107-year-old, 3500 first-order lens was presented to HASF by Admiral Stephens — unassembled! The director and two volunteers (probably John Alexander and Kenneth Sellati) spent countless hours putting 50 parts of heavy glass together without a blueprint.

Following Mrs. Merrick's example, John G. Dupuis, Jr., gave HASF a limited number of his father's book, Dr. John G. Dupuis, **Early Medicine, Public Schools and Agriculture in Dade County**, with proceeds from the sales going to help retire the mortgage.

When the Ed and Marion Link exhibit opened Feb. 28, 1965, the crowds broke all records and both newspapers covered the opening in their Sunday editions. Sixteen hundred visitors came during the first week. On display were marine artifacts from Port Royal, Caesarea and the Sea of Galilee, including the actual equipment used in a 432-foot-deep dive featured in the April issue of the **National Geographic Magazine**.

This surge of interest encouraged everyone, but another surge soon dampened this enthusiasm: Hurricane Betsy blew into the ground floor of the museum and the mop and bucket brigade foreshadowed the 1981 roof failures in the second museum. Undaunted, Alexander continued his educational program, joined now by the Junior League of Greater Miami. League members traveled to 15 schools giving the pioneering lecture and a new presentation, "Florida Boom and Bust." Twenty-five hundred students heard the lectures and 1500 students toured the museum, many from black schools.

Museum attendance crept upward but was never enough to pay expenses. To the director's credit, he understood that the museum needed to attract community attention and he pursued this goal in every way he could think of: creating a meeting room within the gallery to house cultural group meetings — the Junior League provisionals, the Laramore-Rader Poetry Group, the South Florida Chapter of Florida Anthropologists — and, relieved of his school visits by the Junior League volunteers, he made himself available to address the Kiwanis, Rotary, Lions, Soroptimists and more.

Of great significance to the future of HASF was the coordination of the Junior League with the association. Among many League volunteers, the following were singled out in the **Director's Newsletter** and later became

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Museum I's first director, Jack Porter, is looking at a model of Miami's first industry — a coontie starch mill restored by Arthur Berke. The model became a victim of Museum II's 1981 summer flooding.



Rooms of the Spanish-style home that became Museum I were not designed for exhibits but effective presentations were mounted.



Fresnel lens from the Carysfort Reef Lighthouse arrived in 50 unassembled pieces but was put together in time for a Coast Guard exhibit opening in November 1964.



A dictionary, some tape-recording equipment, two bookcases and two tables made up the library, which was supervised by volunteers.

active in HASF: Mrs. Finlay J. Matheson, Mrs. Edward Grafton, Mrs. William N. Hoeveler, Mrs. Leon D. Black, Jr., Mrs. Jack G. Admire, Mrs. Thomas Guyton, and Mrs. Nathaniel G. Harrison.

By 1966 museum exhibits totaled 60 in nine areas. The John W. Newman collection of rare Calusa Indian silver and gold work resulted from the finds of some hunters in the Belle Glade area. They gave these artifacts to Newman, who was at that time an engineer on the Everglades drainage project. In the collection were some Indian pendants made from treasure fleet coins as well as several 18th century European artifacts. Miss Margaret Newman donated this remarkable material to the museum.

In September 1966, Dr. Tebeau announced that the association in cooperation with Mrs. Vincent Gilpin, Mrs. William R. Catlow, and Wirth Munroe would shortly be distributing facsimile reprints of *The Commodore's Story* by Ralph M. Munroe and Vincent Gilpin. The association would be the sole owner and beneficiary of the project.

In the same newsletter, Dr. Tebeau remarked that he was going to propose to the board that we seek more adequate quarters for the museum.

"We acquired the Bayshore property as a temporary home... We have outgrown its capacity and recognize its shortcomings as a museum site. We have had several inquiries about the property. It appears that the time has



Second director David Alexander is holding ribbon for Adm. I.J. Stephens, Seventh Naval District commander, to cut at opening of Coast Guard exhibit. Stephens became a president of HASF.

come to start looking for a suitable site on which to construct the first unit of a museum building, at the same time offering the present property for sale or trade."

There were many reasons for the decision to make the move. The operating costs were a drain on HASF's finances and the board felt that the only way they could cope would be to cut museum hours and operate without the services of a full-time director, thereby accumulating the money saved toward a new museum. But this was misinterpreted in the press and other media as a way of going out of the museum business.

Dr. Tebeau was distressed at the lack of understanding by the media—that plans were to expand, not contract. Members of the board had been exploring other sites for some time, among them the Vizcaya complex. But the problem remained: what to do in the interim? It was decided to limp along until the general meeting in April when new officers and directors would be elected. Although the board wanted to operate with part-time and volunteer help, this was not feasible because no one could be found who would take on the responsibility. The money from the sale of *The Commodore's Story* helped to keep the museum operating during these hard-pressed days, as had the gifts of Eunice Merrick and John Dupuis earlier.

So everyone tried harder. Alexander kept trying different strategies to improve attendance, and one worked very well. In place of the sign at the entrance "Suggested Donation" he put a basket at the exit marked "Help Build a New Museum." The revenue was the same but attendance improved 300%. By July, however, the museum had only two months of operating funds left. The board made a special drive just for operating funds, asking personal friends for contributions of \$100.

The Villagers and the Antique Bottle Collectors asked to become affiliates with HASF and were welcomed enthusiastically. Another important liaison was announced in June: HASF became affiliated with the Museum of Science. The immediate result was that the program meetings could be held in the Museum of Science auditorium instead of at Gables High.

Following this good fortune came a new acquisition which raised the spirits of the historians. Thanks to Wade Stiles, the nine-and-one-half-foot cannon from the British vessel *HMS Winchester* which sank in 1695 on Carysfort Reef was acquired. And Mrs. Harry Tuttle, widow of Julia Tuttle's grandson, donated photographs, clippings, post cards, Tequesta artifacts, documents and correspondence between Mrs. Tuttle and Henry Flagler and others. This made possible the Julia Tuttle exhibit which opened Dec. 1, 1968 along with an entirely new Caribbean Room.

Hopes were raised in 1969 when the Dade County budget for the next fiscal year contained an appropriation of \$189,000 for expansion of the Museum of Science, including an allocation of 4,000 square feet which would house HASF's museum and library. But state officials intervened with drastic cutbacks in funding for Dade County so there was no addition to the Museum of Science and no new HASF museum.

That, however, was the last setback. On July 14, 1970 at 2 p.m. HASF members appeared at a hearing on the county budget and convinced the county commission that the association deserved funding.

Tuesday, Oct. 12, 1971, ground-breaking ceremonies were held using a thousand-year-old Tequesta Indian whelk shell.

The *Miami News* reported that HASF's Bayshore building would be taken in trade and resold, valued at \$45,000.

So ends the story of HASF's decade on N. Bayshore Drive.

MUSEUM II: A Moving Experience

BY THELMA PETERS

It is 1972 and the historical museum is moving. We are leaving a crumbling bayfront mansion without airconditioning for a brand new building in the old Vizcaya fruit grove adjacent to the Museum of Science. The historical marker is gone from the front lawn, the books are in boxes and the conntie plants out of the patio are in cans. Fulfillment at last, after all of the planning and knocking on doors to raise money.

A prelude was the groundbreaking eight months ago, fittingly on Columbus Day, October 12. In morning

sun and breeze, heels teetering over rocks and weeds, we gathered to watch the president, John C. Harrison, the executive vice-president, Marty Grafton, and former president, Adam G. Adams make symbolic and ineffective digs into the earth with a genuine Seminole conchshell hoe. It was a milestone.

Now more than ten years later one looks back and remembers the excitement of moving day. To us, after the bayside house, the gallery with its 2,500 square feet of space and high ceiling seemed enormous. Our chal-

lenge was to make it a meaningful reflection of South Florida history.

At that time, June 1972, HASF had only two paid employees: David Alexander, the director, and India Sue Barbee, a part-time assistant. But many volunteers came forth to help with the move and the re-settling. Withers Moving and Storage provided trucks — Wayne E. Withers was a former president and faithful booster — and the giant French cannons miraculously came down from the heavens via a huge crane. The old Carysfort Lighthouse light, two tons of bronze, wrought iron and crystal, was inched into place as the focal point of the new gallery. John Harrison and an engineer friend devised machinery to slowly and silently revolve the light in its glittering splendor.

Some of the volunteers were members of the Junior League of Miami who elected museum service as their work project for the year. During that summer of '72 the League also became involved in local history in another way: it financed and produced a 27-minute film, "Ours Is a Tropic Land," about the history of South Florida prior to 1926. The script was written by Arva Moore Parks, Nancy Mank, and Irene Shiverick.

One of the most active volunteers was the executive-vice president, Marty Grafton, who was at the museum almost every day that summer and fall. As David Alexander converted some secondhand store display cases to make them suitable for a museum Marty painted them. She printed signs, arranged artifacts on shelves, hung pictures, and kept everyone on a time schedule. Among the pictures hung were framed photos of all the lighthouses of Florida, past and present, a collection to complement our impressive Carysfort Light.

The marine wall was fun to plan and execute. On the wall were pictures and artifacts pertaining to pirates and wrecking. Marty painted a large map of Florida and the Caribbean area for this wall. Below the wall was a beach scene created by piling sand on the floor. On the sand went an old cannon, glass floats, wreckage and seashells. The beach was viewed from a twenty-foot wooden ramp, like a dock, which arched slightly, and was to prove irresistible to children for running up, over and down. The top of the ramp was a good spot for an overview of the entire gallery, and on occasion, was used as a podium.

I was one of those volunteers of 1972, packing up library books at the old museum, unpacking them at the new. But not until we had shelves. The Junior League paid for shelves



Museum II, vast in comparison with Museum I, could display the 60-some exhibits to advantage, from the starch mill model to the Fresnel lens.



Opening reception filled the area. Picture was taken from the wooden ramp that separated the beach and marinescape from the rest of the exhibits. The ramp was useful as a podium and delighted grade-school visitors.

and filing cabinets for the library but the shelves came knocked down. Sue Barbee and I spent many hours sitting on the empty library floor with our screw drivers. When we got a set of shelves tight enough to stop wobbling we rejoiced.

The Junior League joined HASF in a preview champagne reception in the gallery November 1, 1972 - a jam of people congratulating one another, enjoying refreshments, music and a premier showing of "Ours Is a Tropic Land." Five days later the museum opened for good and has remained open every day of the year since except Christmas Day.

The board of directors, once we were settled in the museum, began a drive to publicize it and make the community welcome there. In addition to monthly programs on local history, held in the auditorium of the Museum of Science, we had a number of informal events in the gallery. One of these was Lemon City Day. On display was the actual interior, counter and mailboxes, of the original post office of Lemon City which dated from 1889. Our honor guest was Louibelle Goode Mathers, the only living Lemon City postmistress. Also on display was the rifle of William Mettair of Lemon City, Dade County's colorful sheriff of the 1880s.

In the spring of 1973 Arva Parks became president of HASF and one of the events she sponsored was a salute to Miss Julia Harris, the long-time beloved headmistress of a private school. Miss Harris, in her 90s and living in Stuart, was unable to be present in person, but Arva paid her a visit and came back with a portrait of her, furniture from the school, and memorabilia including all the school's yearbooks. Many alumnae of the school attended the reunion in our gallery. The portrait hangs among those of other distinguished pioneer Miamians.

Another event was a quilt show, the modest beginning of what has become an annual display at the Harvest Festival. Members brought in cherished old quilts for display and one quilt, ready for quilting, was set up on a frame in the gallery and left there for several weeks - an open invitation for anyone who wanted to don a thimble, take a needle and try a hand.

In July, 1974, by decree from the mayor of Miami, HASF was official host for Miami's 78th birthday party. Many rare photos supplied by pioneers were on display and our honor guest was Maude Richards Black, born in the Miami area in 1879.

In the spring of 1973 Arva appointed Irene Shiverick to chair a pub-



A gift shop was established in the corner, just outside the director's office. Besides the director, David Alexander, there was a part-time assistant, India Sue Barbee.



Landing of Pedro Menendez de Aviles at the mouth of the Miami River, the first of five paintings re-creating historic moments in Miami's history, was unveiled at the opening. Artist Ken Hughes, left, shares picture with Director David Alexander and President Arva Moore Parks.

lication committee. Some out-of-print books important to Miami's history were reprinted for sale in our book shop. These included the Miami Directory of 1904, Ralph M. Munroe's *The Commodore's Story*, Charles Brookfield's *They All Called It Tropical*, and that long-ago true story of a shipwrecked Spanish youth, *Fontaneda. Tequesta*, the scholarly annual of the association, continued as it had under the editorship of Dr. Charlton W. Tebeau. Back numbers were bound and offered for sale, an opportunity for new libraries and history buffs to obtain a complete set of this valuable resource.

In 1973 a second publication was added - *Update*, a bi-monthly magazine in a more popular style, history with photos, eye-witness stories of historical events and *The Director's Desk*, a page for informing

members about museum activities. Leonard G. Pardue and Kenneth N. Sellati were co-editors.

By the close of Arva's administration in 1974 the museum had a new director, Randy Nimnicht, brimming with new ideas and enthusiasm. Patsy West had become curator and Becky Smith installed as a full-time librarian. Our membership had doubled, the photo collection was zooming, museum attendance had multiplied.

The trend continued. We have done too well. The library walls have closed in, the gallery is inadequate, storage space filled, workspace crowded. Like the Chambered Nautilus we have outgrown our shell. Still, I shall miss those friendly sapodilla trees which occasionally gifted the hood of my car with a fragrant brown fruit.

MUSEUM II: A Dress Rehearsal

BY LINDA WILLIAMS

In a few weeks the curtain will go up for the premiere of one of the finest regional history museums in the country. The components making up the production guarantee a long run: a Philip Johnson-designed building, exhibits based on the best scholarly research, educational pro-



"Then there was man..." is the opening exhibit in the gallery renovation that opened in Museum II in January 1978. For the first time a chronological tracing of man in South Florida was presented.



Exhibits were all made in the museum. Jennifer Old and Randy Gaitor, two CETA employees, prepare a silk-screened panel.

grams, tours and demonstrations, and a dedicated cast of trustees, volunteers and staff.

It is a given fact that most of the thousands of visitors to the new museum will think that it just materialized as if by magic. Few will have ever seen the Historical Museum which existed from 1962 to 1972 in a converted residence on North Bayshore Drive. But the accomplishments in that first facility fulfilled two major goals of the Historical Association: to **collect** information and materials relating to South Florida history and to **share** that history with the community.

A few more people will be familiar with the Historical Museum when it was located adjacent to the Museum of Science on South Miami Avenue. Within a few short years of moving to that location, however, the Board of Trustees accepted an invitation from Dade County to become part of the new Cultural Complex in downtown Miami. This was a major decision, an ambitious decision, but one seen as a way to further the goals of the organization. Yet under the leadership of Executive Director Randy E. Nimnicht, the museum would be well rehearsed and prepared. "Having the goal out there of literally trying to build the best regional history facility in the country forced us at the same time to do a lot of other things, like earning accreditation from the American Association of Museums, building a professional staff, organizing the volunteers, providing a wide variety of educational activities, and implementing a solid development program," Nimnicht explained.

The new Museum still had to be designed and built, so a decision was made to renovate the current exhibits. "Jack Admire (HASF president, 1976) had a whole lot to do with that," Nimnicht said. "He always wanted us to upgrade the existing facility and helped us get a \$6,000 design grant from the Rosenberg Foundation. Linda Williams had joined the staff in 1975 to do the research and the CETA program provided the manpower. I always look upon that as a trial run for what we knew we were going to do downtown." The renovated gallery, presenting for the first time exhibits tracing man's historic experiences in South Florida, opened in January, 1978.

Between 1975 and 1980 many of the people working at the Historical Museum were funded through CETA. Historians researched text for exhibits and historical markers. Curatorial assistants accessioned artifacts. Dark-room technicians made archival prints and negatives. Office workers manned the telephones and typed letters. The Historical Museum was one user of CETA funds that was often proudly acknowledged by the program's defenders.

In 1977 President Layton Mank authorized the Museum to begin what would turn out to be a two-year project: Accreditation. To be accredited by the American Association of Museums, every aspect of museum operations must be examined, adjusted, organized and improved to meet professional standards. Along the way, firm collection policies were passed by the Board of Trustees as each artifact was accessioned and unwanted loans returned. A new security system was installed to protect the museum against not only theft but, perhaps more importantly, the threat of fire. On December 11, 1979,

President Steve Lynch received the official notification that the Historical Museum of Southern Florida was accredited by the American Association of Museums. Even today the museum is one of only a handful of Florida museums to have achieved this mark of excellence.

The contributions of the Tequestans, HASF's volunteer organization, are essential to the museum. At one time volunteers did everything from collecting membership dues to building exhibits. Those tasks are now handled by paid staff members. As the Museum has developed its professional staff, however, the role of volunteers has expanded and become more defined. 1976 was an organizational year for the Tequestans and specific categories were identified, including the docents, museum services volunteers, benefit committee, and the Harvest.

A crafts festival with quilting, candle-dipping, and soap-making held at the museum was the forerunner to the Harvest, now the major fund-raising project of the Tequestans. The first Harvest at the Youth Fairgrounds was held in November, 1976, attracting 4500 and making \$6,000 for the Museum. Each year the event has grown and developed. Perhaps the most cherished moment of the 1981 Harvest was the birth of a baby calf, named "Harvest" of course. That year around 10,000 people attended the fair and nearly \$35,000 was raised. It is impossible to put a dollar amount on the impact the Harvest has on the community or a value on how the event forwards the association's goal of communicating local history.

During the past decade over a million people have visited the Historical Museum. In 1979 Wit Ostrenko joined the staff as the Education Director, supporting the philosophy that, like the Harvest, educational activities could be developed to expand the museum beyond its walls. Two major programs were developed, "In Search of Old South Florida" comprised of canoe trips, bus tours, classes, and excursions to places from Sarasota to the Dry Tortugas, and an expanded school program incorporating trips to historic sites such as Cape Florida Lighthouse and the Barnacle with tours of the museum. The 1982 statistics speak for the success of the education program: over 6500 schoolchildren participated in the school activities,

and "In Search of Old South Florida" attracted 3800 people.

Essential to everything is development. "Now it's called institutional management," Nimnicht stated, "but basically it's fund raising." The Historical Museum has had several major successes over the past several years, beginning with a \$375,000 challenge grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. "One of the things we did with that money was hire the firm of Thompson and Pendell to do a development study. I think it was quite useful. The trustees began to realize that this is a business, a very good business." Nimnicht is quick to praise those trustees with whom he has worked, especially the presidents, Arva Moore Parks (1973), Rear Adm. Irving J. Stephens (1974), George B. Hardie, Jr. (1975), Jack G. Admire (1976), R. Layton Mank (1977-78), Stephen A. Lynch III (1979), Dr. Joseph H. Fitzgerald (1980-1982), and current president James Apthorp. He is also proud of the growing membership, which was around 800 when he became the director and now numbers over 2000.

"I think one of the key reasons for success," Nimnicht stated, "is a consensus of feeling I perceive from trustees, volunteers, and definitely from the staff that it's more important to have steady, continual growth aimed at very specific goals as opposed to any flash in the pan. The future of the organization is the big question now. In the future I think we should concentrate increasingly on what the organization exists for: the association of a group of people interested in South Florida history. In addition, the future needs to be built around the financial stability to see HASF move in the direction of a research institution, of an organization capable of continuing to question man's historic experience in South Florida."

The new Historical Museum of Southern Florida, with its 14,000 square feet of exhibits, the Charlton W. Tebeau Library of Florida History, collection storage and work areas, museum store, classrooms, and offices, will soon be in the spotlight. The years of preparation will have paid off as the South Florida community uses and enjoys this Historical Resource facility. From here the Historical Association will find new ways to further its goal: to research, collect, preserve, and interpret local history.



An expanded staff, financed mostly by federal CETA funds, performed museum duties, many of which had not been done before, and achieved accreditation in 1979. From left: Leslie Rivera, curatorial assistant; Arnold Matteson, development director; Mary Dodd Russell, volunteer coordinator; Richard Stroh, research historian; Linda Williams, curator of collections; Rebecca Smith, librarian; Octavio Perez, curatorial assistant; Robert Burke, curator of exhibits; Randy Nimnicht, executive director (seated front); Tom Sutherland, shop foreman; Debbie Jablon, secretary; Jason Rose, shop assistant; Consuelo Maingot, business manager; Horace Gill, darkroom technician; Ann Truby, receptionist.



Map of the Miami River from the bay to the Everglades drawn in 1849 shows several buildings near river's mouth. Arrow shows Tuttle house, which was one of the English buildings. Compute approximate cultural complex for your own diversion.

MUSEUM III: Tracking the Tract

BY MARGOT AMMIDOWN

Even though the site of Dade County's Cultural Complex has long been a prime piece of real estate its historical connections are relegated to the ne'er-do-well category. Research and archeological excavations have proved that the Miami land closest to water, i.e. the river or the bay, was the most desirable to Indians and early settlers. Although the Cultural Complex tract is near the Miami River, it was only close enough to make it a neighbor to some of Miami's major historical events before the arrival of Henry Flagler's railroad and the incorporation of the city of Miami in 1896.

The tract is first recorded in the Dade County deed books as part of the much larger James Hagen Donation, a Spanish land grant of 640 acres on the north bank of the Miami River. It was confirmed by the United States commission established to review citizens' claims in 1821, when Florida became a US territory. The conditions for US certification of the Spanish grants stipulated that the petitioner shall have lived on the land for ten years and have made some improvements, most likely in the form of structures and agricultural cultivation. Since James Hagen's claim was confirmed, it might be assumed that he fulfilled those requirements; however, the commission rarely sent inspectors to confirm the grantees' claims in South Florida and, so far, documents have not been found that detail or map the specific improvements on these grants.

In the 1830s the James Hagen grant and others along the bayfront were bought by Richard Fitzpatrick of Key West. At the mouth of the Miami River he established a large slave-operated plantation which within a few years' time had several hundred acres under cultivation. Bananas, sugar cane, corn, pumpkins, sweet potatoes, and coconuts were included in his crop, but, again, no map delineating the use of Fitzpatrick's land exists to tell exactly where his farm land was. The Cultural Complex property may have been converted from its original pine flat topography to agricultural use during Fitzpatrick's ownership. A roughly sketched coast survey map of the Miami River in 1849, discovered by Arva Parks in the National Archives, does indicate that it was used as farm land by its subsequent owner, William English.

Col. English had big plans for his property in Dade County. Conceived a good 50 years before the Flagler/Tuttle enterprise of 1896, they even included a subdivided "Village of Miami" south of the Miami River. The times were not in favor of English, though; the Seminole Wars

prohibited him from achieving much success in Dade County. In 1849 he turned over the use of his property to federal troops as his uncle, Richard Fitzpatrick, had done for a brief period a few years before. The troops stationed at Fort Dallas, first established on the Fitzpatrick land north of the Miami River in 1838, were generally few in number. During the intermittent occupations of the fort between 1838 and 1850, barracks, additional buildings, and military activity were pretty much confined to the immediate vicinity of the bay and the riverfronts.

When Fort Dallas was reopened in 1855 during the final phase of the Indian wars, the largest number of troops yet was stationed there, and the fort compound itself was significantly enlarged. New buildings and landscaping were added. Although the main fort complex was still probably not extended far enough westward to include the Culture Center tract, it may have been used as camp grounds by soldiers and their families who could not be accommodated in the regular barracks.

Fort Dallas closed for the final time in 1858, having secured the few settlers in the area. After the Civil War, Dade County moved into the beginning of its homesteading era. Any part of the large English tract would have been prime homestead land, but for obvious reasons was not available. William English was not able to fulfill his ambitions for the Miami area because he died in California in 1855, before the end of the Indian wars. For several decades his Dade County property remained in the hands of his heirs, a refined Southern family who lived in South Carolina and showed no inclination towards moving to so remote or rough-hewn a place as South Florida.

In 1893 Julia Sturtevant Tuttle acquired the 640-acre piece of property that would soon become the City of Miami from an intermediate owner and set about convincing Henry Flagler to extend his railroad to her front door. By 1896 she had succeeded. The tracks were laid, and led to the new, grand Royal Palm Hotel. While these two projects were being completed, one of Flagler's land surveyors, A.L. Knowlton, was drawing up a map entitled "City of Miami," now recorded in book B, page 41, of the Dade County plat books. Between what he demarcated as 12th St. (now Flagler), 11th St. (NW First St.), Ave. F (NW First Ave.), and Ave. G (NW Second Ave.), immediately west of the railroad tracks, was block 114n, the future home of the Metro-Dade Cultural Complex.

Again, what was now block 114n was just west of the

major activity in the area. As businesses began opening downtown, Ave. D (Miami Ave.) became Miami's main street, but by about 1904, with the construction of a new courthouse and other buildings more substantial than the early wood-frame structures, 12th St. (Flagler) became the business center of the city. For many years the commercial district ended on Flagler St. at the courthouse, east of the railroad tracks. Former Mayor of Miami Frank Wharton's daughter, Mrs. I.D. MacVicar, who was born in downtown Miami in 1898, recalls that Flagler St. just west of the tracks in the earliest days of her memory was mostly private homes. Early insurance maps and city directories tend to bear this out. The 1899 Sanborn Company insurance map shows about a dozen wood-frame houses on block 114n, a "printing office," and a masonry home labeled "Smith." The names of other residents recorded as living on 12th St. between Avenues F and G a few years after the turn of the century include: John Lassester, who was employed by the Dade Grocery Company, and his wife Susie; David Griffith, a harnessmaker, and his wife Sarah; James Hart, a single man, who was a conductor for the FEC Railway; Alfred Chapman, at that time the proprietor of the Miami Club Bar, and his wife Gussie; and William and Antonica Fuzzard. William Fuzzard was a pioneer of Cutler. He originally came to South Dade in the early 1880s with Dr. William Cutler. It was Fuzzard who applied for and received permission to open the first post office there, which he named for his friend Dr. Cutler. As the population of the village of Cutler waned, he moved downtown and became a bookkeeper for the Bank of Bay Biscayne.

The homes of the working class of this period in Miami were generally fine, sturdy two- or three-story wooden structures with front porches facing the street. They were large, attractive, and quite comfortable by today's standards, but not as spacious or ornate as the homes east of downtown on Flagler St., which reflected their more desirable bay-view location. Their owners were lawyers, bankers, and other professional men and their families, and they had a taste for the Victorian embellishments that were the style at the time.

In 1906 the Tatum brothers, early Miami real estate developers, began a trolley car service downtown. It originally terminated at 12th St. and the railroad tracks, but later in 1906 was extended further down 12th St., making a left turn at Ave. G and continuing to the Miami River, connecting the residents of 12th St. with the suburbs north of the city and the business district a few blocks away. This first attempt at local mass transportation failed after a year and was shut down. It reopened in 1915 and survived five years before its final demise in 1920.

The sequence of available insurance maps from 1899 to the boom years of the 1920s indicates a slow but steady conversion of the Cultural Complex site to more commercial use. In 1906 the Miami Bottling Works was located on the corner of 12th St. and Ave. F. Four years later the building is labeled "Pepsi Cola Bottling Works." There was also a bicycle shop, a livery stable, and a "road yard." By 1925 the block was almost entirely commercial with the exception of a few apartment houses. The Hotel McBride was located on Ave. G (by that time renamed NW Second Ave.), a large auto garage was on NW First St. where the livery stable used to be, and the Armour Fertilizer Company was on NW First Ave. With the passage of a few more years the site of the Pepsi Cola Bottling Works became the W.C. Dorsey Motors, Inc., selling DeSotos and Plymouths. In the following years business establishments came and went, but there was no real change in the use of the property until construction began on the Cultural Complex in 1980.

It becomes apparent while perusing documents and research material for early downtown that the most culturally significant use of block 114n is currently in the making. That determination is made with a limited degree of certainty, however, because the state's required Development of Regional Impact Study did not include a historical or archeological survey of the site.

"It's ironic," says Bob Carr, archeologist with Dade County's Historic Preservation Division, "that that is the case for the site of our Cultural Center." Carr claims that, despite the irony, the land was not in an area of primary concern because of the inland location. Its main interest probably would have been for the study of material from early downtown Miami, particularly since those tracts are so rarely exposed. Some artifacts were turned up by construction workers, and while Carr has received a few phone calls asking for appraisals of particular items, mostly old bottles, he has not yet had a chance to examine anything recovered from the site.

Regardless of what artifactual material has been lost to posterity, the site has never received so much public attention as it has in the last few years; first with its selection as the location for the Cultural Complex, and then with the ongoing debate concerning architect Philip Johnson's post-modernist design for the building. Whether one is pro or con the architectural concept and expression, the chance to discuss a local building by an internationally recognized architect as a valid or invalid progenitor of a new trend in architecture heralds a change for Miami's culturally interested community. Hopefully the piazzas, galleries, and loggias of Johnson's neo-Mediterranean complex will be the home of many more such arguments.



1905 landscape shows dome of early courthouse looming large. West of that were the railroad tracks and then houses where the present cultural complex is located.



'74 Ransom School.

THE PAST REVISITED: 10 February UPDATES

BY LEE ABERMAN



'83 New Museum.

The first February issue of *Update* appeared in 1974. So new and untried was the periodical that the Editors hastened to reassure readers that it was "here to stay ... at least for an issue at a time." It was thought necessary to publish a list of the mechanical requirements for an article to be submitted. The result was a model of concise information for hopeful contributors, and included the beguiling tip that "Insiders like to use the symbol ### at the end of the article to signal 'that's all'."

The lead article by Giulio Blanc dealt with the life and work of Paul Carlton Ransom, who founded the Ransom School in Coconut Grove. Ransom, afflicted with poor health, came to South Florida in the early 1890's in search of a more benign climate than that of his native New York State. Over the years until his death in 1907 he created the Ransom School on land purchased from Kirk Munroe. For many years the school, originally called the Adirondack-Florida School, had an unusual "migratory" feature: winters were spent at the Coconut Grove campus, and spring and fall terms were spent at the Adirondack campus. In the late 1940s the northern campus was sold, and the southern campus in Coconut Grove was renamed the Ransom School. In 1973 the Florida Department of State placed the Pagoda, one of the original buildings, and the school itself on the National Register of Historic Places.

Updating *Update*: Since Giulio Blanc's article appeared, momentous events have occurred at Ransom. In 1975 it merged with the Everglades School for Girls to form the Ransom-Everglades School. James B. Young became headmaster in 1978, the latest in a distinguished line of headmasters that has included the redoubtable D. Pierre G. "Pete" Cameron and Robert Walker. On a sadder note, Betty Smith, the much-loved librarian for 19 years, died in the last year. Giulio Blanc, after finishing at Harvard, worked in New York, and is expected to return to South Florida soon to head the new branch of Sotheby-Parke Bernet.

By the February 1975 issue, HASF had a new director, Randy F. Nimnicht, who took over the Director's Desk column. The exciting news in his column was the Malt plan recommendation to the County Commissioners that the five old Vizcaya buildings at the north end of the Science-Historical Museum complex be renovated for the use of HASF. In the same issue, Dorothy Fields announced

the establishment of a Local Black Pioneers Archives and Manuscript Collection.

Three articles in the February 1975 issue told the story of the bad old days of rumrunning in the 1920s. Stories by Dr. Charlton W. Tebeau, Captain Victor Bullock (as told to Thelma Peters), and an anonymous rumrunner who spoke to Jerry Pardue related the tale from both the Coast Guard's and the bootleggers' point of view in fascinating detail. Among many interesting bits of information was the fate of the "hams" — burlap sacks containing six bottles of whiskey — dropped overboard by the rumrunners, sometimes to be retrieved by them, sometimes by the law-enforcement agents!

The February 1976 issue was devoted to early tourism in South Florida, and a nostalgic issue it was. In a charming and often hilarious article, Stella Tuttle Chapman described her childhood holidays at Julia Tuttle's elegant boarding house on the Miami River at the foot of what is now Southeast First Avenue. Daly Highleyman, in another article, wrote about the perils and adventures in being "the first complete family to drive from Jacksonville to Miami in an automobile." In "Budget Fun-in-the-Sun — Circa 1905" Thelma Peters told how folks from the north could stay at the Green Tree Inn for \$2.50 a day, including meals, swim after hours at the Royal Palm for a quarter, fish, hike, enjoy the band concerts and go to the fair. In a delightful coda Dorothy Fields reprinted items from the column "The Colored People Here and Elsewhere," which appeared in the *Miami Metropolis* in 1904 and 1905. Among social notes containing familiar Miami names like Bethune and Dorsey, we read a suggestion that Colored Town should have its own fire department, and that despite the best efforts of "Dr. J.A. Butler, the senior doctor in colored town," Mrs. Emiline Jones "is not improving very much." One closes the issue with more than a slight regret for the passing of a gentle way of life.

The February 1977 issue was chiefly concerned with the history of Miami's postal service. From its primitive beginnings at the turn of the century the postal service grew to accommodate the swelling population. Joseph M. Cheetham, a former president of HASF, began his career in 1909 in Miami's first post office on South Miami Avenue, when he was hired at \$66 a month plus a \$2.50 allowance

► Continues on page 16



'75 Rumrunners; '76 Tourism; '77 Postal Service; '78 The Season; '79 The Ox Woman; '80 Cermak Shooting; '81 Henry Flagler; '82 Reminiscences;

OUT OF THE TRUNK

In the foreground of this Dec. 8, 1927, picture plucked Out of the Trunk is a building with three arches. Three arches are a design motif used frequently by Phillip Johnson, architect for the Cultural Complex. The entrance to HASF's new museum is three arches. They appear in other places in the building and the other buildings in the complex. An interesting continuity.

On Nov. 9, 1982, several thousand people attended a Plaza Party at the complex. Hasty landscaping had been done around the entrance ramp but construction was still going on around the perimeter streets, and walking was not easy. Picking her way west on Flagler St. to Second Ave. HASF Trustee Vivian Smith commented on the beautiful mosaic sidewalk in circles and swirls laid out long ago. Reconstructed, it would be handsome around the new complex, but labor costs would be exorbitant.

Does anyone know about its original construction? The design is worked in a tan-colored tile.

AROUND THE MUSEUM

A small child is lifted by her father to reach the guest book and she intently writes KATIE. An older couple sign their names with the postscript MIAMI NATIVES! Two teenagers giggle as they write E.T. And when all of the signatures are tabulated, the guests represent every continent but Antarctica and every one of the 50 United States.

During the past twelve months, almost 7,000 people registered. A breakdown of the numbers reflects many things. In summer, the South American snowbirds from Brazil and Peru were as numerous as those coming from Venezuela and Colombia. Europeans came from most Western European countries as well as Finland, Poland and the United Kingdom. From Africa came Gambians, Libyans, and Rhodesians.

Visitors from Canada, New Zealand and Australia came year round as did Asians from Israel, Turkey, Kuwait, and the Oriental countries of China, Taiwan, Japan and Korea.



December 8, 1927 photo of still unfinished courthouse shows the part of the new cultural complex that includes the new HASF museum and the art gallery. Most of the new library would be off to the left.

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES

Zannie May Shipley, who told about the new museum in the November Update, now tells about HASF's first museum.

Dr. Theima Peters adds to her 21 other Update articles a personal account of the move into the present museum.

Linda Williams, a Clearwater girl who became a CETA trainee at the museum ten years ago, is now its assistant director.

Margot Ammidown, Miami native and former historian for the Dade County Preservation Board, is a historical research consultant.

Lee Aberman, one of Update's advisers, is launching in this issue a year-long trip through past Updates.

In winter the American snowbirds flocked mostly from New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio. Yearly, California and Texas are high in numbers. From Central America and the Caribbean, Nicaraguans and Puerto Ricans sign most often.

News events often reflect themselves. During the Orange Bowl Festival, young people who played in marching bands from all over the U.S. stopped in the Gallery. The Orange Bowl game brought visitors from Gainesville and Nebraska. The Falkland Islanders came in the spring, as did natives from the Conch Republic (Key West when not seceded) for a short time. Students from local colleges designated their homes in Iran, Pakistan, Canada and Malaysia, as well as their schools.

Many visitors do not sign individually. Groups who come through during the week are registered by the teachers or group guides. On weekends, Boy and Girl Scouts come with their leaders to work on merit badges and fulfill field trip requirements. Children from local hotels that

have sitter services and young people from Hope School and Variety Children's Hospital make their way through the museum with their counselors and families.

At Harvest time, teachers, parents and students spend time going through to absorb all the information needed for the History Bee, and often note their schools rather than their residences. Adults from continuing education classes and the colleges offering courses in Florida history also give credit to their educational institutions. On occasion, directors and staff from other museums from all over the world add gracious and favorable remarks to their signatures.

Across from the guest book, the audio states, "You have just been through the Historical Museum... If you have been in Florida for the day, or if you have been here all of your life, you are a part of its history and its history is part of you."

Last year these visitors became part of history and took Florida history around the world.

Alice P. Willey

for his bicycle to deliver the mail. Women and blacks also had opportunities for advancement in the post office, among them Josephine Daniels, a feisty lady who's a mine of information, and Edward J. Bryant, a 30-year employee who came to Miami about 1907 and rose from janitor to mail handler.

The longest article in the issue deals with the New Deal murals in Florida post offices. The Treasury Department's Section of Painting and Sculpture held open competitions before awarding commissions. In Florida, fourteen murals were completed between 1938 and 1942. The story of the commissioning of the murals for the Miami Post Office and Court House is long and tortuous. Sketches were first submitted by artist Denman Fink as early as 1935, but changes in the rules and bureaucratic in-fighting delayed the awarding of the commission for years. It was not until February 28, 1941, that the mural was finally installed, somewhat altered from Fink's original sketches.

The sketches submitted by Charles Hardman for the Miami Post Office and Court House were so impressive that he was invited to enter the mural competition for the Miami Beach Post Office. Again there were many delays, and changes were required in the designs, so that Hardman's murals were not installed until January 14, 1941. Regrettably, all 14 of Florida's murals, although still hanging, have been neglected and have fallen into disrepair.

Updating Update: The Miami Design Preservation League has included the marvelous Art Deco Miami Beach Post Office on Washington Avenue in the itinerary of its Saturday morning Deco District Walking Tours. Anyone interested in viewing it in the company of a docent may get in touch with the MDPL offices, 672-1836.

In February 1978 **UPDATE** concentrated on The Season. What it is and when it begins and ends are questions so indeterminate that any dozen people asked are likely to give a dozen different answers. But as Alice Pitman-Willey remarked in her column, "One can only assume that future history will record that South Florida is a place and has a time for the opening of all seasons." Thelma Peters wrote about the New Year's Swim of 1920 and 1921, three miles from Plaza Venetia to Miami Beach north of Belle Isle. Exciting races they were. Interestingly, of the nine swimmers in the 1920 race, three were women, and the winner was a Miss Frances Bilsbarrow, whose time was one hour, 36-1/2 minutes. There is no record of the 1922 race. By then Biscayne Bay was beginning to succumb to the pollution generated by the sewage flowing into it.

An article by Jean C. Taylor re-creates vividly the development of Camp Biscayne, the pioneering effort of Ralph Middleton Munroe and others to create a winter resort on Biscayne Bay. From 1882, when he persuaded Charles and Isabella Peacock to build the Peacock Inn, to 1903, when he organized Camp Biscayne for himself and his friends, his was the driving force behind the creation of the resort.

In another of her perceptive articles, Dorothy Fields chronicles the parallel black society in Dade County, which had its own Season, its own cultural and entertainment activities, virtually unnoticed by the white society. In 1951 a black publication in Kansas City, Missouri, featured Miami in a ten-page article focused on visiting black celebrities. Highlighted was Georgette's Tea Room. Mrs. Fields writes that "this spacious structure provided elaborate lodging for black entertainers who were booked to perform in the hotels across town but were not allowed to live on the premises because of their race."

The February 1979 issue opened on a sad note with a tribute to Gwen Cherry, the first black woman elected to

THE FINAL WORD

The space normally occupied by The Final Word will be given throughout the year to Lee Aberman's perusal of past **Updates** in commemoration of the publication's Tenth Anniversary.

the Florida Legislature, who was killed most untimely in a motor accident. Mrs. Cherry, a deeply loved and admired figure in South Florida, had long been a member of HASE and was a former board member.

An article on George Merrick, the creator of Coral Gables, revealed the interesting information that he was the nephew of Denman Fink, the artist and architect who designed and painted the murals for the Miami Post Office (see the February 1977 article).

A fascinating story by Jean C. Taylor discussed the life of the Widow McClain, the 6-foot, 4-inch, Amazon known as the Ox Woman. This gentle eccentric, one of four giant Smith sisters, befriended many South Florida settlers. After her husband was hanged in Georgia for killing a man, the Ox Woman eventually settled at Long Key in what is now the Everglades National Park.

The longest and most important story in the issue recounted the successful attempt of Josiah Frederick Chaille to have his 4-sector plan for numbering the streets of Miami adopted. The past 60 years have proved the flexibility and foresight of the Chaille plan for a growing city. Almost all of Dade County is now covered by the elaboration of the Chaille plan, and all of us who must get from one place to another are indebted to Josiah Chaille for the rationality of his concept.

The February 1980 issue of **UPDATE** appeared in its brand-new guise, with a two-color cover, varying stocks, sophisticated layout and typography, and a smashing cover story on the attempted assassination of Franklin D. Roosevelt, the president-elect, by Giuseppe Zangara on February 15, 1933. In the attack, Anton Cermak, mayor of Chicago, was killed. A well-researched article by Richard D. Simpson gives an hour-by-hour account. A remarkable photograph, reprinted from a contemporary crime magazine, shows the assassin peering over the head of Mrs. Lillian Cross an instant before he fired the shot.

Articles about Henry Flagler, Booker T. Washington Senior High School, and Bea Hines's story on Dorothy Fields' struggle to launch the Black Archives, are featured in the February 1981 issue. Exceptional photographs highlight the first two articles, as does a handy chronology of Flagler's life in the first. Flagler's life (1830-1913) spanned much of the American Industrial Revolution, an era of which he was an important part, as much for his creation of the "American Riviera" as for his role in the organization of Standard Oil.

Of Booker T. Washington Senior High, Michael Kesselman says, it "had a uniquely profound effect on the Miami black community. It was a symbol of pride, unity, and educational excellence ... Its graduates include ... Theodore Gibson ... Athalie Range, University of Miami history professor Whittington Johnson, and actress Esther Rolle. Its closing left an intellectual and cultural void."

And here we are. It's February 1982 and **UPDATE** has personal reminiscences by Dean Miller, Billee Peeler Pearce, and Charlie Brookfield, as well as a valuable article on restoring old photographs by Steven Brooke. On the inside cover one finds an announcement of HASE's acquisition of the Audubon Double-Elephant Folio. Downtown the new Museum building is approaching completion. It's been a busy, productive decade, and **UPDATE**, suave and sophisticated now, has long since proved that, like HASE, it's here to stay.

VOLUNTEERS GIVE FREELY
BE A HASF VOLUNTEER



There Are Times When Some Training Would Help

DOCENT & MUSEUM AIDES

- Demonstration Leaders
- Visitor Assistants
- Tour Conductors
- Handypeople

ARTIFACTS AIDES

- Subject Catalogers
- Textile Conservators
- Photographers
- Accessioners

RESEARCH MATERIALS AIDES

- Primarily to staff Research Center information desk ½ day (4 hrs.) a week. Some archival projects done at desk.

Kathy Pierie
Education Director

Daniel Markus
Curator/Artifacts

Rebecca Smith
Curator/Research Materials

ADMINISTRATIVE AIDES needed by all of the above
and by Grants Officer Judith Fornes and
Development Secretary June Rosengarten.



Volunteer Orientation Day

Members • Tequestans • Non-Members
Saturday, February 19, 1983
10 a.m. HASF Museum
3280 South Miami Avenue
Miami, FL 33129

Training starts Tuesday, March 1, 1983

Call: Kathy Pierie 854-3289
Education Director

Update
Historical Association
of Southern Florida
3280 S. Miami Avenue
Miami, FL 33129

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ANYTHING? Yes, but you must interpret the artifact. Then it