

*10th Anniversary Year*

**A Remembrance: The '26 Storm**  
**Beginnings: The Unitarian Church**  
**Beginnings: The Mental Health Society**  
**Beginnings: Founders & Patriots Daughters**

The Historical Association of Southern Florida

# UPDATE

Volume 10, Number 2

May 1983

\$1.00



# Just Lying Around This Summer?



Beguiling 1920s beach beauty picture by Claude C. Maffack is from the HASF collection

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Historical Association of Southern Florida

101 West Flagler Street  
Miami, FL 33130

The Historical Association of Southern Florida

# UPDATE

Published quarterly by  
**The Historical Association of  
 Southern Florida**  
 101 West Flagler Street  
 Miami, Florida 33130

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**Update** is the magazine of popular history published quarterly by the Historical Association of Southern Florida.

**Receipt of Update** is a privilege of membership in the Historical Association, a non-profit cultural, educational and humanistic organization dedicated to providing information about the history of South Florida and the Caribbean and to the collection and preservation of material relating to that history. Association programs and publications are made possible by membership dues, gifts from private sources and grants from federal, state, and local government agencies.

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**Typography** by Supertype, Inc.; mechanical preparation by Peggy S. Fisher; printing by Haff-Daugherty Graphics, Inc.

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A community tends to respond to the felt needs of its citizens. In the 1930s two entirely different groups established themselves in Miami. At the end of World War II a need was felt in yet another area.

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Agneta Heldt, who is writing a history of the Unitarian Church in Miami, has excerpted some of the early efforts to establish a church.

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Patricia McIntosh compiled a history of mental health advocacy for the 35th anniversary celebration of The Mental Health Society in May 1982. She shared part of her first draft with **Update**.

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In compiling a chapter history, Eleanor Ratelle turned up the fact that one of the oldest patriotic groups in the country organized its first Florida chapter in one of the youngest cities in the state, Miami. She developed an article for **Update** from the chapter history.

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Lee Aberman continues her trip through ten years of **Update** with "A Miniature Palimpsest of History," which begins on page 14.

**On the cover:** This is the joyous beginning of a project that never really fulfilled expectations. It is Friday, March 13, 1925, and ground is being broken for the Biltmore Hotel in Coral Gables. Now, almost 60 years later, hopes are again high for a grand hotel.

**Photo credits:** pp 3-5 sketches, HASF volunteer; p 6 Mayfair Theater, Miami Herald; First Unitarian Church, Miami News; pp 7-8 Miami Herald; p 9 Lois Parks; p 10-13 Miami Herald; all others, HASF.



No identifications yet on this *Out of the Trunk* picture run in February 1980, but Norma Davis True has contributed further information. See Letters.

## LETTERS

### FROLIC GIRLS

Re an "Out of the Trunk" picture in *Update* (Vol. 7, No. 1) of "Frolic Girls Orange Dance" by Claude C. Matlack:

I remember Mr. Matlack very well from my cub days on the old Miami Metropolis, forerunner of The Miami Daily News and, now, The Miami News. He used to run his own photographic studio and used to be around the Metropolis often. I suppose he supplied photos; the paper did not have a photo department then. He died in the late 1920s, when I was writing for The Miami Daily News and had obits as one of my regular assignments.

I wonder if the "Frolic Girls" picture was not from the 1920 Palm Fete the city celebrated for a week in midwinter. It probably was sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce, but every Miamian took part, and those with cars decorated them and rode in the Palm Fete Parade. (I rode with Violet Stephens, later Barker, society editor of the Metropolis, I recall.)

I suspect the "Frolic Girls" were part of the nighttime entertainment. The idea "fits," but in this long time since the *Update* publication (February 1980) of the picture someone could easily have said I was wrong and I'd not argue. But I DO remember Mr. Matlack and that he was a busy and important photographer in Miami around 1920.

Norma Davis True  
2532 Goldenrod St.  
Sarasota FL 33579

Norma Davis True had worked several years on the *Metropolis* under S. Bobo Dean, who watched his staff

with a parental eye, when Dean sold the paper in 1923 to Gov. James M. Cox, who tended to survey female staffers with a roving eye. She remained several years more before going to New York to work for the Sun. Her *Tropic Cook Book* published in the '20s was compiled from recipes gleaned from the chefs of the popular boomtime hotels, who tried to outdo each other in extravagant concoctions.

### BILTMORE HOTEL

Since I published my second book of poems I have been working at intervals on a book for my grandchildren which will include amusing incidents when my three sons were young. I belong to a writing group of the Pen Women. Our topic was "New Horizons," and I wrote the enclosed. It was suggested I send it to you since the Biltmore is so much written up recently.

Maylen Newby Pierce  
300 Mendoza Ave., Apt. 4  
Coral Gables FL 33134

Mrs. Pierce's New Horizon back in 1926 was the Biltmore Hotel, which had been built on property two blocks from her home. *Update* is interested in other recollections of this landmark for a future issue.

### LETTERS POLICY

Letters relevant to previous issues as well as appropriate historical topics should be addressed to: Update Editor, Historical Association of Southern Florida, 101 West Flagler Street, Miami, FL 33130. Letters should be signed. Letters may be edited to meet space restrictions.

## AROUND THE MUSEUM

### L'ENVOI

The gallery supervisor walked quietly through the museum reminding visitors: "This gallery closes at five o'clock, thank you." While waiting by the gate for the last person to leave, the supervisor found her mind wandering to the words on the Charlton Tebeau plaque in the library: "History is more than information - it is the story of people at work."

The visitors left and the gate was lowered with an ominous clang. The museum was closed. The final gallery check began. The silk screen at the entrance reinforced Dr. T's philosophy: "THEN THERE WAS MAN."

Then came the slow walk toward the empty space where the cannons once stood. Memory brought back the sight of children climbing over the cannons as they fantasized the adventures of pirates. For a moment a flashback of photographers' bulbs seemed to light the area.

As a piece of litter was picked up from the carpet, the stains revived the days of the "deluge": the huge pieces of plastic protecting the exhibits, the constant monotonous dripping of the water into the assortment of containers while the staff and volunteers worked tirelessly to save the exhibits and artifacts.

Further along, where the Fresnel lens had hummed quietly as it rotated and projected kaleidoscopic patterns on the ceiling and the Indian dugout hanging there, the empty space contained a terse sign: "This exhibit has been moved to the new museum."

A carelessly dropped audiophone was picked up. The sounds of the Dade massacre and the Indian attack on the lighthouse seemed to emanate from the Ken Hughes murals.

The figure of the Seminole woman in her Everglades chickee looked to be placidly waiting to be moved to her new location.

Before removing the electrical connection of the player piano, the gallery supervisor could have been deceived into hearing the visitors singing along with the piano rolls and the children clapping and dancing to the "Happy Wanderer" to the delight of all.

A check of the board room was next. Crowded on occasions with people as Arva Parks autographed *Forgotten Frontier*, Marjory Stone-

► Continues on page 15

## "We Went Through Quite an Ordeal"

BY HELEN FRANK

"Have fun and don't stay up too late" said Mother as they all went off to Temple for the Rosh Hashanah (Jewish New Year) service. It was September 18, 1926, and my two cousins had just arrived from Georgia to make their home in Miami. Our apartment being too small, their parents, my aunt and uncle, had taken a room downtown at the Fort Dallas Hotel while the two children spent the night

with me. We lined our beds up on the screened front porch because my tiny bedroom would not hold all three of us.

For a while we played and talked on the porch in the beautiful moonlight. Finally we fell asleep. It seemed but a minute afterwards that I awakened to thunder and lightning and rain pouring down all over us. I quickly awakened my cousins, by

now drenched as I was, and we scrambled into the house.

My parents, just home from Temple Israel, helped us into dry pajamas as they told us about a strange thing that happened during services. A beautiful white dove had flown in the window, perched on the altar, and stayed there throughout the services. When they were over and it was time to close the sanctuary the

► Continues on page 4



"... dressed in bathing suits, with shoes and socks and hats on! All night long they kept it up..."



dove wouldn't move. It stayed right there. At the time we all thought this was strange. As my mother and father talked the thunder grew more menacing, the rain grew heavier, and lightning kept flashing. Suddenly a window in Mother's room burst and a tiny stream of water ran down the wall.

Dad ran into the hall of our apartment building to find out what the trouble was. As he started upstairs, other families were running down, and a man yelled, "Get your family out of there, the roof is gone!" Hearing that, we all grabbed up our clothes and rushed for the stairs. Mother, the practical one, picked up a flashlight and a loaf of bread. We teased her about that in later years, but no one was laughing that night. The bread proved to be our mainstay for thirty-six hours.

Downstairs we found most of the other families from the two upper floors. There were about twelve children, assorted grandmothers, several dogs, and a set of parakeets in a cage. Luckily the hall of the building was wide and long, dividing eight apartments, four on either side. Men were pulling furniture up to the doors at either end of the hall, piling one piece upon another, bracing brooms and ironing boards against them. "What's going on?" Dad yelled against the roar of the wind. "Haven't you heard?" belted a neighbor. "That's a real Florida hurricane out there, and we've got to brace the doors so the wind won't blow them in."

The people on the first floor opened their doors and invited us to

come in and be comfortable. Grateful mothers pulled their frightened and excited children into corners and onto sofas, trying to get them to settle down and go to sleep. The dogs ran nervously sniffing from one to another, and babies screamed and clung to their mothers. Meanwhile the men were gathered in groups, deciding how to handle this novel emergency. Wives anxiously watched as their husbands divided into groups of three and went upstairs to begin sweeping down the weight of water as it poured in, in order to keep the floor from caving in above us. I shall never forget how they looked, dressed in bathing suits, with shoes and socks and hats on! All night long they kept it up, with brooms and mops and buckets. When one gave out, another took his place.

When the electricity went, plunging us into darkness, one tenant went searching for candles. She found enough to place one in each apartment, and except for the intermittent lightning, that was all we had to see by all night. Soon those of us who were older found we had no choice but to settle down next to our mothers, and even though we could not sleep we stayed put.

Though the din of the storm was so great we couldn't even hear the babies crying, once in a while it would ease off for a few minutes, at which times we could hear people banging on our doors and crying to be allowed in. The men would rush to a door, several of them holding it open just enough to let the people in, and then slam and brace it again. This hap-

**"...far up the street we spotted a taxi. A man kept getting out of it and picking up debris and moving wires as the taxi slowly came toward us."**

pened over and over, all night long, till there were a hundred people in the downstairs area. Our apartment building was one of three exactly alike, and we were lucky to be in the middle, because before morning the other two were gone and most of the people as well as neighbors from homes in the area were with us.

Shortly after the electricity went off, the water mains broke. Then we had no refrigerators, no lights, no working toilets, and no water. With all of those people to use just eight toilets the lines were constant all night, and the men had to form teams to go upstairs with pots and pans to catch water, bring it down, and put it into the toilets so they would flush. The odors and the humidity were terrible as the night progressed. Most of the windows had blown out and were covered with sheets and blankets to keep out the rain. Daylight finally arrived, but wind and rain were still all around us and we couldn't see out.

Then as suddenly as it had hit us the storm stopped. There was utter stillness... everyone looked at everyone else... and with whoops we headed for the doors. After our men unblocked the doors we rushed out, then stopped dead still in horror.

Nothing but devastation met our eyes in every direction. The Miami sun was out, the heat was back, but nothing else was the same. All the trees, the beautiful palms in people's yards, were stripped and destroyed. Cars, which had been neatly lining our sidewalks, were piled up like junk, one upon another, some caught up in the forks of broken trees, others hanging from skeletal roofs.

Electric wires were down and dancing all over the street, sparking and sputtering as they touched one another and danced away. Even the sidewalks were torn up, and we counted five roofs in our backyard. There were pieces of furniture and chunks of concrete and stucco everywhere, as well as huge twisted metal signs and spilled garbage. Families were frantically trying to keep their children away from the dangerous wires, and the men were talking about how they would make it down four blocks to the grocery store, break a window if necessary, and get some food for the children.

Somewhere a horn blew, and as we looked to where the sound came from, far up the street, we spotted a taxi. A man kept getting out of it and picking up debris and moving wires as the taxi slowly came toward us. About a block away its doors flew open, and my aunt and uncle jumped out and started running toward us. "Go inside! Get back inside!" they yelled as they ran toward us. "Hurry, hurry! The storm is coming back, get inside!" They pushed us inside as they kept shouting to everyone,

"Don't you know this is just the 'eye' of the hurricane? The other side will hit in a minute! Get all the children inside!" And they managed to get us all inside safely just a few minutes before the storm broke again.

The winds roared, the rains came down in gusts and torrents, and the noise was again deafening. The humidity returned in full force. The men once again barricaded both doors and returned to the debilitating chore of sweeping the rains down the stairs.

We had thought it impossible to be more miserable than we had been all night, but we were mistaken. Now everyone was exhausted, hungry, thirsty, and sore all over from sitting and lying on the hard floor all night. The terrible smells from the bathrooms, the dampness, the sneezing and coughing of many people in a small space, all of it was multiplied in our tired minds to enormous proportions.

The mothers, now very much afraid the upper floor might collapse, spent the whole day with flashlights trained on the ceilings, going from room to room, inspecting for cracks and telltale dribbles of water. I don't know when the hurricane went out to sea, for I finally fell asleep for the first time.

The second morning, with quiet at last returned, the rains went on and on. Finally, all of us went outside; we could stand the crowding no longer. By now our whole street was gone. Not a house was standing, and we were all very awed by what we saw.

What a miracle that our one building, crowded with so much humanity, was still there!

A dear, familiar noise assailed us, and as we looked down the street there was the old horse that pulled our milk wagon clogging toward us, picking his way on first one side and then the other, stepping lightly over the debris. Our milkman! We couldn't believe it.

While the mothers were hugging him and the fathers were patting and punching him in the back, the children swarmed over the old wagon, drinking milk from the bottles, laughing and shouting. Smiles appeared all around for the first time in many hours. The milkman told us he had been trying to get to us for eight hours, going all around the blocks, coming back, crossing yards, knowing that there were so many children and babies in the complex that he had to get to us.

Our parents somehow got our little family down to the Fort Dallas Hotel, where we all stayed in one room for days until a train was once again running North. Dad got us on the first train out, and we all went back to Georgia for three months. I don't know whatever happened to our milkman or whether he ever got the recognition he should have got. But as the years went by I used to hear my mother tell the story of his arrival that morning, and she always ended with, "We gave him money, as did all the families in the building, but none of us could ever have given him enough."

**"Nothing but devastation met our eyes in every direction. The Miami sun was out, the heat was back, but nothing else was the same."**



## A Different Church, A Different Drummer

BY AGNETA HELDT

John Proctor was a laconic, sober New Englander, a successful businessman from New Hampshire of a family traditionally Unitarian in all its puritanical and socially conscious facets. He wanted to enjoy his winter vacations at his home deep in Coconut Grove. He occasionally became impatient with the northerners his wife Lucy filled their house with for meetings, study groups, and social affairs in her committed work of organizing a Unitarian congregation in Miami.

"Damn it, Lucy, why are you getting yourself so worked up? There are entirely too many churches already."

There were indeed many churches of nearly every kind in Miami in the early thirties. About a hundred and fifty were listed on the newspaper's church page, which did not mention any black churches. There were Trinitarian Protestant, mostly Methodist and Baptist, with a few Lutheran, Episcopalian, and Presbyterian; eight spiritualist; four Catholic; and four synagogues. On the editorial page of **The Miami Herald** where Westbrook Pegler or Heywood Brown expounded their prejudices during the week the central space on Sundays was occupied by a Sunday sermon.

But there was no church founded on the principle of each participant searching out his own philosophical and intellectual approach without dogma or required belief, no church where northern Unitarians, as subject to frostbite as anyone else and part of the winter colony, could find a comfortable church home.

Miami in the thirties was a southern town, except with palms and hibiscus instead of water oaks and crepe myrtle, and separated in mood and spirit from the more cosmopolitan, glittering Miami Beach. The year-round community seemed to be almost at the end of the world, certainly at the end of the road until the Overseas Highway to Key West opened in 1938. It was struggling to pull itself up from the economic catastrophes of the collapse of the real estate boom and the big hurricane of 1926. It had suffered a depression all its own before the rest of the country collapsed after the '29 stock market crash. There was no mental climate for experimentation and social reform except from the New Deal, which came from outside.

A group of "serious people," 24 of them, mostly New England Unitarians with a sprinkling of others from the midwest, had tried to form a church in 1931 with a series of lectures at the Urmev Hotel and the Woman's Club. But so small a group could not carry the load and was obliged to abandon it. Then in February 1938 an enterprising young dentist, Dr. A. Harold Klock, with some help from a member of Florida's oldest Unitarian church, in Orlando, and significant support from a young rabbi, Jacob Kaplan, decided it was time to go ahead with a 'liberal' church in Miami.

Rabbi Kaplan was predisposed favorably toward Unitarians. Tending his flock in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and having to deal with the usual American small-town antagonisms toward Jews, he had been helped in a Ku Klux Klan vigilante situation by a Unitarian. When he came to Miami in 1936 to serve the Temple Israel congregation, he and George Klock (a lawyer), two or three liberal ministers, George Merrick, a Mr. Harrison, and Ernest Coe (one of the fathers of



The Wometco corporation allowed the new organization to hold services in the Mayfair Theater at 1605 Biscayne Blvd.



In October 1949 first service was held in new church on US 1 and 29 Rd; site cleared in 1960s for Rickenbacker flyover.





Everglades National Park) formed a philosophy club. It was to this club that Dr. Harold Klock applied for help.

How do you start a church?

In this case it was done by placing a prominent ad on the church page of *The Miami Herald*. Rabbi Kaplan granted a meeting room in Temple Israel, though he was pessimistic and had commented that he didn't "believe there were enough intelligent people in Miami to have a Unitarian church." Sixty-five people, however, came to the meeting.

What they heard was from Dr. Robert Dexter, who had been sent down from the Boston headquarters of the denomination and who had been in charge of the Unitarian Service Committee's relief work with refugees in Czechoslovakia. He spoke feelingly about that but not a word about what Unitarianism was or how it differed from other religious approaches. Dr. Klock wrote in his account of the founding of the congregation:

"In an attempt to retrieve the situation, I got Rabbi Kaplan in the rear of the pulpit and told him, 'For Christ's sake, get out there and tell them what Unitarianism is.' This he did, and most skillfully, and I must give him credit for preaching the first Unitarian sermon in our church. . . . The contents of his remarks still linger, though many years have elapsed. After telling them that he considered a Unitarian church as essential to a cultured city as a police or fire department, he went on to say that he felt safer living in a city where there was a Unitarian church because it meant that the community would be less emotional and less subject to racial and religious hatreds."

Through Rabbi Kaplan's good offices, the Wometco Corporation allowed the new organization to hold services in the Mayfair Theater at 1605 Biscayne Blvd. There on Sunday, May 1, 1938, the second emissary from Boston, Dr. Everett Moore Baker, a vice-president of the American Unitarian Association, spoke, and after the service the congregation was formally organized.

April 17 of that year had been Easter Sunday. A week later, April 25, the Ku Klux Klan paraded through downtown Miami ignoring traffic lights, their cars' license plates covered. The group then parked on city-owned property and burned three seven-foot crosses. No non-robed persons were allowed to join the parade. Records did not show a parade permit. Police officers were "conspicuous by the absence" (*Miami Herald*). There were 200 Klansmen and women in 60 cars. In an editorial on April 27 of that year *The Herald* sharply denounced the brazen effrontery of the Klan and the unwillingness of the police to do anything.

**If the Unitarian church had been strongly organized at the time the Ku Klux Klan paraded through downtown Miami, April 25, 1938, it would have joined its voice with *The Miami Herald*, which denounced the effrontery of the Klan and the negligence of the police. The congregation was not formally organized until May 1, 1938.**

Police chief Leslie Quigg refused to answer if he were a member. If the Unitarian church had been strongly organized at the time it would have joined its voice with **The Herald**.

In the following winter season of 1938, services were conducted by the Rev. Arthur Harmon Winn, a minister emeritus from Dallas, Texas, who preached from a movable podium in front of the Mayfair Theater movie screen. The congregation had to be sure to vacate the building in time for it to be set up for a 1 p.m. show. But there was also a one-room Sunday school available, and an adult discussion group met each Sunday. The discussion group later became the Miami Community Forum that won a national award as a Town Meeting in the days before the popularity of TV panel shows. Classes on comparative religion met in private homes during the week.

Arthur Winn was fully able to present the mystery of the Free Mind Principle, but he also was, according to Lucy Proctor, "The right man for these times... his kindly and gently manner was a great help to our group of Unitarians in this city of many Evangelical churches of various creeds."

The first annual meeting was held downtown at the Gralynn Hotel with 43 people present, and the dinner cost 75 cents. "And it was a good dinner," reported Mrs. Proctor. After officials of the Boston headquarters again visited the fledgling congregation on January 22, 1939, Dr. Frederick May Eliot, president of the denomination, allowed that the group should consider a permanent minister, "someone on the left but who would not go too fast."

He had in mind a young man named Joseph Barth. Barth, then 33 years old, had already served at several churches, the latest being Channing Unitarian Church at Newton, Massachusetts, where, the story went, he was in trouble because of a sermon on venereal disease in which he had used the word syphilis from the pulpit.

For his first sermon at the Miami church, Barth preached on a good Unitarian text, Luke 17:21: "... for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you."

In 1940 he was formally installed at a black-tie dinner on the Alcazar Hotel roof, with representatives of the three dominant faiths of America represented. The keynote sermon was by the Rev. John Haynes Holmes of Community Church of New York. And so began an era of ferment, bubbling up from the imaginative, scholarly, charismatic, even puckish personality of Joseph Barth.

In the decade and a half of his leadership before he went on to King's Chapel in Boston, he originated community enterprises such as the often noisy and always lively Friday night Community Forum, with speakers such as Scholem Asch, Philip Wylie, Judge Stanley Milledge, and Sen. Claude Pepper; therapy groups in a city with little or no help available for the psychologically troubled; the first inter-racial parent cooperative nursery school; a drama wagon that presented plays performed by inter-racial casts at schools and community centers. He also dared to sponsor a radio panel, on which a black man participated for the first time as an expert, to establish temporary headquarters in the Miami area for Dr. Alfred C. Kinsey in his researches on human sexuality, and to campaign for investigation of police brutality, especially toward blacks. Being willing to chair a rally for Henry A. Wallace in his Progressive Party campaign brought a threat of being shot if Joe Barth did not leave town. There were crosses burned more than once.

It was a rough road to traverse. It is exciting to recall. This was a different church, listening to a different drummer.

**"... someone on the left but who would not go too fast," was the way Joseph Barth was characterized by the president of the Unitarian denomination. He was installed in 1940 as the first minister of the Miami church and remained 15 years, "an era of ferment, bubbling up from the imaginative, scholarly, charismatic, even puckish personality of Joseph Barth."**



Stanley Milledge



Scholem Asche



Claude Pepper



Philip Wylie



Lois Parks, MHS executive director, broke ground for Florida's first regional mental hospital in March 1955 with Gov. LeRoy Collins's help. John Burwell, William Frates and Broward commissioner Tony Salvino were onlookers. William Gilroy, among those in background, designed the SW Broward center, the first in the country planned with help from psychiatrists who treated the mentally ill.

## Civic TLC for Fragile Minds

BY PATRICIA McINTOSH

On May 15, 1947, a group of Dade County residents pledged themselves to: 1. Promote the study of current problems of community life which might or could affect mental health; 2. Strive for the development and improvement of all established or needed facilities and programs that would improve mental health; 3. Endeavor to increase awareness and knowledge of the general public about mental health and its problems; 4. Seek cooperation among all public and private agencies on understanding the needs of the mentally ill in order to secure better treatment for this segment of the population. Thus was chartered the Mental Health Society of Southeastern Florida.

About forty years had passed since Clifford Beers wrote *A Mind That Finds Itself* and began his crusade

resulting in the creation of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene in 1919.

Until 1877 the mentally ill of Florida were shipped to asylums in Georgia and North Carolina or cared for in private homes within the state. From 1878 through 1952 Florida citizens received only custodial care, with the use of barred windows and mechanical restraints accepted practices even into the 1940s.

Progress was slow, but the returning World War II veterans with their emotional stresses and battle-fatigue symptoms helped bring mental health problems out of the closet. Mary Jane Ward's *The Snake Pit*, in 1946, successful both as a book and as a movie, vividly portrayed the pitiful state of our mental health institutions and the inadequate treatment techniques in use. Then Congress

► Continues on page 10

enacted the Mental Health Act of 1946, which began the reorganization of state hospitals, increasing operating budgets and providing federal monies for research and training.

All these events spurred the Council of Social Agencies, later known as the Dade County Welfare Planning Council, to act. It instituted a mental health committee to develop citizen awareness and sensitivity to the needs of these misunderstood, underserved residents. Its members concluded that the Florida State Hospital in Chattahoochee, nestled over five hundred miles to the north close to the border of Georgia, was not the answer they wanted for family or neighbors experiencing mental health difficulties. At this same time local treatment facilities were private and few in number.

A small group of dynamic volunteers met early in 1947 with a representative of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene. Emmett Choate agreed to effect an incorporation, and Marie Enterline enlisted a band of civic-minded women who wrote community leaders, clubs, and organizations.

One hundred and fifty-four stalwarts finally signed as charter members following an organizational meeting in the Sunshine Room, Florida Power & Light headquarters, Ingraham Building, 25 S.E. 2 Avenue, Miami. On May 15, 1947, Judge Stanley Milledge approved the nonprofit corporate charter in which Chester M. Wright, Marie B. Enterline, Carlotta Lewis, Rosabel R. Quillian, and Florence Mahoney were designated as members of the charter board. The Junior League and the Miami Women's Club each gave a one-time gift of \$1,000 for operating budget. The organization's first office, obtained through Pres. Chester Wright's help and consisting of two rooms on the ground floor of the Visiting Nurses Association, 700 S.W. 12 Avenue, Miami, opened its doors on Jan. 15, 1948. Zonta Club and the National Council of Jewish Women soon offered their endorsements with gifts of \$500 and \$400 respectively.

As with any institution, the Society is the product of the efforts involved in its operation and growth to fulfill the desires and goals of dedicated citizens trying to improve community life.

The first board of directors began the agency's long-term commitment of serving as advocates for the rights of

the mentally ill, this neglected segment of society. There were 42 members on the first full board, a roster of outstanding civic leaders including three dynamic husband-wife teams - Garland and Rita Budd, Francis J. and Helen Riordan, and Thurman and Ellen Whiteside.

Board members active in the early years recall many significant accomplishments. They feel the redesigning of plans for the proposed addition to Jackson Memorial Hospital to include a 100-bed psychiatric unit effected a new era in mental health for Dade County. Commissioner Preston Bird responded to citizen lobbying and led the way in 1949 for county acquisition of land from the city of Miami, using federal hospital funding through the Hill-Burton Act. The consequent five-story facility opened in March 1952.

March of 1948 heralded the appearance of Mike Gorman, author of *Oklahoma Attacks Its Snake Pits*. Mrs. Daniel Mahoney and Mrs. Alfred Lasker, both active in the national mental health movement, joined with *The Miami Daily News* in sponsoring a three-week whirlwind tour of Florida for crusader Gorman, who had done so much to improve conditions, first in Oklahoma and eventually all over the United States. He even took the time to write as guest editor for the Society's April 1949 news bulletin, one of many prominent persons who did, including governors, psychiatrists, and reporters.

A dramatic increase in public awareness of mental health was engineered by the agency's use of its monthly news bulletin. Two national sororities assumed the printing and distribution of this educational tool, first, Beta Sigma Phi (Alpha Sigma Chapter) in 1948 and later, Kappa Alpha Theta.

In November 1948 Don Petit, staff writer for *The Miami Daily News*, used agency background materials to write a series of five articles citing the lack of local or state mental health treatment facilities. This was followed in February 1949 with a series, "Florida's Shadowland," that depicted Florida's "snake pits" and was written by Steve Trumbull for *The Miami Herald*. Mr. Trumbull's experience turned him into a long-term advocate for the mentally ill.

These developments prepared the society's volunteers to assume a vital role in the creation of a Florida Mental Health Society in November 1950, coinciding with the formation of a strong National Association for Mental



Emmett Choate



Marie Enterline



Rosabel Quillian



Chester Wright



**Don Petit**



**Mary Lasker**



**Mike Gorman**

Health through the merger of the American Psychiatric Foundation, the Mental Health Foundation, and the National Committee for Mental Hygiene.

To coordinate all this activity the board of directors was fortunate to secure, as its first permanent executive director, Lois Parks, a graduate social worker from Michigan. Originally on loan from the Council of Social Agencies for only three months beginning February 1, 1949, Miss Parks led the society's volunteer advocacy thrust for sixteen years until her resignation on October 10, 1963. The monthly bulletin introduced her as "Lois—the gal who rolls up her sleeves and gets things done." Lulu Riker as secretary completed the first office staff.

However small, this staff successfully assisted the eager board of directors in initiating a volunteer structure of ten active standing committees by 1955, not counting the in-house budget, personnel, and executive committees. From a \$12,000 total budget in 1949 the society required over \$27,000 in 1959 to carry out its ambitious programs.

The Mental Health Society of Southeast Florida joined the Community Chest's twenty-one affiliate agencies in 1948, was active immediately in encouraging volunteer solicitors from its membership and in 1957 continued commitment to it when it was renamed the United Fund and its roster of participants had grown to sixty-six agencies.

Volunteer membership dues have always produced about a quarter of the society's income. Special fund-

raisers within the membership were always encouraged, and this attitude sparked the 1951 "Mistake Sale" of Mrs. Will Lindsley and the 1955 luau of Edwin Christianson, which were followed by other successful social gatherings to raise funds.

Important as the financial matters were in dictating agency focus, it was the generous volunteer hours that nurtured the society's image and stimulated a new awareness and acceptance of mental health needs in the people of the Miami area. Whenever a need developed, committed volunteers offered themselves to meet it. When community lack of knowledge dictated that the public's education become a major thrust, educational programming, a speakers' bureau, a library, and the production of a film were all quickly implemented.

Mental Health Week has been observed since 1949, but the highly successful Mental Health Fair, instituted in 1953, has coordinated all the above activities into a one-day citizen-participation forum. By the spring of 1958, with Mrs. Richard Stover as chairman, almost one thousand persons attended it, and there were 137 professionals offering themselves as program participants.

By May 1982 the organization, now called the Mental Health Association, had realized thirty-five years of service in Dade County. A celebration of the event honored the volunteers who contributed to the association's growth. Also, recognition was given to the seven agencies created as a result of the dedicated advocacy efforts made by these volunteers.



**Garland and Rita Budd**



**Ellen and Thurman Whiteside**

## Miamians Trace Ancestors to 1600s

BY ELEANOR RATELLE



Mrs. J. Raymond Graves took the DFPA charter in 1934 to Manila to get the signature of her sister, who had left Miami before the signing the previous year.

In 1898 when Eugenia Washington (great-granddaughter of Col. Samuel, brother of George Washington) was busy forming the patriotic genealogical society, Daughters of Founders and Patriots of America (DFPA), in the nation's capital, she envisioned a group of perhaps two hundred nationwide. (Miss Washington was well versed in genealogical organization. She had been one of the founders of the Daughters of the American Revolution [DAR] eight years earlier.)

DFPA's first national president "thought that two hundred would be as large as our society could possibly become due to our strict eligibility requirements," said Betty Davis Wallace of West Des Moines, Iowa, a former national president. But despite the rigid requirements — documented proof of an unbroken line of descent from father or mother from an ancestor settling in the colonies from 1607 to 1687, with an intermediate ancestor (same surname) serving during the Revolutionary Period, 1775-1784 — the society has flourished. Today

there are fifty-five chapters in the United States, with a membership of 2,369.

Feminists will probably find it offensive that DFPA founders (who also included Helen M. Boynton and Pella H. Mason) first asked the already existing men's society, Order of Founders and Patriots of America, to add women to their membership. But the gentlemen said no, so the ladies formed their own, patterned in general after the men's order. The DAR, organized in October 1890, had a similar experience with the SAR, Sons of the American Revolution, which had been founded the previous spring.

Thirty-four years after the birth of DFPA, Mrs. Arthur W. Mann, who lived on North Bayshore Drive in Miami, organized the Florida chapter. Miami, incorporated in 1896, was but a fledgling town. Yet Florida DFPA roots were planted there rather than in the much older historical sites of St. Augustine, Pensacola, Tallahassee, or Jacksonville, and well you might ask why.

Very probably Mrs. Mann was one of the few members, perhaps the only DFPA member, in Florida at the time. She had become affiliated in 1915 in Iowa, and the national society had appointed her organizing president of the Florida Chapter in 1928.

A great many of Florida's 35 charter members were members of the DAR, whose first Miami chapter, Everglades, had been active since 1909. Shortly before the thirtieth annual state DAR conference, held March 8, 1932, in Fort Myers, Miami DARs had received invitations from Mrs. Mann to attend a luncheon in her home. The DFPA chapter was organized there March 18, 1932, and signatures of national officers were affixed to the charter April 14.

In 1934 the Florida charter traveled around the world. According to the May 5, 1934, minutes, Mrs. J. Raymond Graves, wife of a Miami physician and hostess of the meeting in her Di Lido Island home, asked to take the charter with her on a forthcoming trip. Her purpose was to obtain the signature of her sister, Mrs. John W. Shannon, a charter member who had moved to Manila before the members' signing of Nov. 4, 1933. Permission was granted, and that summer Mrs. Graves carried the



Mrs. Paul C. Taylor, pictured in 1948 with Mr. Taylor, was among the original 35 charter members.

charter to the Philippines as well as to all the stops on her global circuit.

The Florida Chapter's early beginnings are replete with the names of community leaders of the period, among them: Mrs. Murray F. Wittichen, Mrs. Willard I. Caler, Mrs. William L. Freedland, Mrs. Henry J. Egger, Mrs. Paul C. Taylor, Mrs. Luther M. Davenport, Mrs. Charles L. Sykes.

Today the chapter has more than sixty members, and there are three other chapters throughout the state: Essex Beville in the North Central area, Florida Poinciana in Palm Beach and Florida Royal Palm in Fort Myers. State membership is approximately a hundred and thirty.

What do the Daughters do other than meet, discuss historical subjects and socialize? They are dedicated to discovering, restoring, and preserving family records and history otherwise unwritten or unknown of early colonists, their ancestors and descendants; and inculcating patriotism in present and succeeding generations, with particular emphasis on military education in colleges and universities through the DFPA ROTC medal program.

"For the past ten years, the Florida Chapter has been outstanding in its participation in presenting medals to noteworthy ROTC students in the state under the guidance of Chairman Barbara Smith Wiler, formerly of Miami Beach," said Florida President Ethel F. Smith of Boynton Beach.

Two medals are presented each year at the University of Miami to the Army and Air Force ROTCs. Others have been awarded at the Universities of Florida, Tampa, Jacksonville, and West Florida, as well as Florida State, Florida Southern, Florida Technical Institute in Melbourne, Florida A and M, Stetson, Florida Technical University in Orlando, Embry Riddle at Daytona Beach, and Admiral Farragut at St. Petersburg.

The national society directs itself toward the major military academies at West Point, Annapolis, King's Point, New York (Merchant Marine), and that of the Coast Guard.

DFPA is also concerned with obtaining and forwarding supplies for Army and Navy hospitals in wartime. Past examples, according to the Florida chapter's archives, include money sent to troops at Chickamauga, Georgia; preparing to go to Cuba during the Spanish-American War in July 1898; maintenance of beds in the American Hospital in Paris during World War I; contributions to the National Society War Fund in World War II; donating hours of service (3,250) and blood to the Red

Cross as well as war-bond purchases (\$2,000) among members.

Highlight of 1982 for the Florida Chapter was the fiftieth birthday celebration at Miami Shores Country Club. The national president-elect, Mrs. Louis Joseph Bahin of College Park, Georgia, was speaker of the day.

The names of the 35 charter members are: Carrie Foote Mann, Anna Louise Jamieson, Helen Bourne Joy Taylor, Alice Benjamin Vail, Margaret Francis Stevens, Harried Lyon Leonard, Alice Hubbard Breed Benton, Dorothy Lincoln Barnes Davenport, Allys C. Todd Bailey, Clara Melinda Morse Johnson, Olive C. Waterman Jackman, Blanche Jackman Schumann, Mary Irene Johnson Tresher, Emma Amelia Bowker Irwin, Sarah Lucas Hawkes, Mildred Dorsey Egger, Myrtille Pierce Frissell, Jessie Cornelia Kemp Caler, Bessie Smith Clarkson, Mary Waldo Harriss, Lucile Thomas Keyes, Caroline Frances Baker Church, Nell Brewster Avery Daugherty, Mary Avery Graves, Clella Avery Shannon, Sarah Holdredge Hawkes, Bertha Todd Abberger, Caroline Harriss Martin, Helen Comstock Freeland, Grace Comstock Davis, Clara Furlong Waller, Eleanor Pudor Sykes, Annie Sanford Root, and Elizabeth Anne Moody Root.



Another charter member, Dorothy Davenport (1949 picture), moved with her husband Luther out of the state in the 1950s.



Eleanor Sykes, pictured in 1957 with her husband Charles, was also a charter member. The chapter presently has 60 members.

## Update's Decade

## A Miniature Palimpsest Of History

BY LEE ABERMAN



April 1974



May 1983

Leafing through ten years of **Update** is a curious experience. The old issues are by now themselves historical documents: history about history. One reads for example in the April 1974 issue about the doughty ladies of Coconut Grove who launched the first Audubon Society. Among their chief concerns was "the ravaging of egret and heron populations by the hat-plumage industry." A few years later, in the June 1976 issue, we learn that the famous Barefoot Mailman, E. R. Bradley, was the father of Guy Bradley, the Monroe County game warden whose murder at the hands of egret hunters was a precipitating factor in the establishment of the Audubon Society. Such unexpected linkages are part of the enduring fascination and delight of the study of history. An article by Patsy West in the June 1974 issue reports on the efforts of archeologists to recover from a tiny control area part of the palimpsest of history buried under downtown Miami, all that is left of the great Tequesta mound which was greatly destroyed in 1896 to make way for the Royal Palm Hotel.

Yet that same Royal Palm Hotel is the subject of Thelma Peters' article in April 1975, in an issue devoted to Grand Openings. The openings of the wooden Collins Bridge, forerunner of the Venetian Causeway, and of rail service to Miami and Key West were both historic turning points in the modern development of South Florida. So, in their different ways, were the openings of Hialeah Race Course, the first primitively "air conditioned" movie house, the Capitol Theatre, and the glamorous Biltmore Hotel.

► Continues on page 16

## BOOK REVIEW

Metropolitan Dade County - Historic Preservation Division, **From Wilderness To Metropolis, The History and Architecture of Dade County (1825-1940)**, Miami: Metropolitan Dade County, 1982. Introduction, appendices, footnotes, bibliography, and index, 152 pp. of text. \$10.95.

In his introduction to **From Wilderness To Metropolis** Bogue Wallin states that "This book... is intended to increase an awareness of South Florida's historic architecture among South Floridians."

Wallin is the assistant director of the Historic Preservation division of Dade County's office of Community and Economic Development. Two other members of the division, Director Ivan Rodrigues and Research Historian Margot Ammidown, provided the text for this book, which has been in the works since 1977 when the county's survey of historic sites began.

It has been worth the wait. The authors have provided the community with a book that will give any reader an understanding of the area's architecture and how it developed from 1825 to 1940.

Each chapter presents a period in Dade County's history from "The Pioneer Era" through "The Great De-

pression." Important individuals and events are described but the emphasis is on the architecture of the period. The evolution of local building styles is delineated not only in words but also by many excellent photographs.



The four appendices contain some of the most interesting and useful information in this work. "Architectural Styles" is made up of short, easily understood descriptions of each style mentioned in the main text. Every description is accompanied by a line drawing with all of the salient features identified. This section and the glossary section allow readers to familiarize themselves with architectural terms that they may not recognize.

"Selected List of Significant Sites" picks out "some of Dade County's more historically and architecturally significant structures." This section lets readers use their new-found knowledge. They can go out into the community and view some of the best representations of each style and then pick out other examples not listed in the book. Learning to recognize local architectural styles should enhance South Floridians' appreciation of their surroundings and give residents a broader range of sites to show out-of-town guests.

Except for some editorial oversights and some incorrect photo credits, this book is very well done. It is written in a flowing style that is easily read. It is a comprehensive unit and the perfect introduction to Dade County's architecture.

The number of local histories about the Miami area published in recent years is a good sign. This awareness of how events in the past have shaped the present can only help local preservation efforts. Bogue Wallin contends that through "the recognition that older buildings may be worthy of preservation, a community is tacitly admitting that it has a history significant to its future." This book should increase the ranks of those people who acknowledge this significance and actively attempt to save South Florida's architectural heritage.

— DANIEL MARKUS



Around the Museum  
 ▶ Continued from page 2

man Douglas her updated **River of Grass**, and Thelma Peters inscribed her **Lemon City and Biscayne Country**, it now only echoed Ralph Renick on film as he reinforced the fact that "Ours IS a Tropic Land" followed by Joseph Cotten as he opened the sequel with "They called Miami the Magic City..."

As the museum shop lights were turned off, the gallery supervisor visualized Patty Munroe Catlow (born at the Barnacle in 1900) as she visited on Sundays, making history come alive for the children and answering the excited questions of the young adults who listened while she exchanged reminiscences with the "pioneers" about the early days and the '26 storm.

Quickly now, past the Dade wall, where the portraits of the early residents looked down upon the memories and memorabilia of the gallery. The final check was finished, the visitor count recorded and the lights were turned off. In the dimness of the night light the historically dated code was punched into the security computer. The red light flashed on. There remained 90 seconds to close the door. The time had come to enter the era of the new historical museum. The light in the pylon was off, but the gallery supervisor could read the words: "What is past is prologue."

**VALE ET ATQUE**

During the era of population expansion people moved from multi-family dwellings in the city to single-family homes in the suburbs. HASF, with its own kind of explosion in increased museum visitors, membership, and artifacts, needed more space but has reversed the flight to the suburbs and is moving to its own home in the city.

As in any move there is a bittersweet undertone. For a decade the museum abutted the Museum of Science. They have grown up together. They have borrowed each other's facilities and equipment and shared friendships. But the time has come for each museum to make room for its own kind of expansion.

For HASF this will mean beginning a new neighborhood in downtown Miami. The Center for the Fine Arts is a brand-new concept for Miami and it will be exciting watching the traveling exhibits that come into it. The Miami-Dade Public Library will move later into the third building.

It will be a short step across the plaza for HASF to continue its equivalent of a neighborly borrowing of sugar and sharing a cup of tea.

Alice P. Willey



**OUT OF THE TRUNK**

The gentlemen above and the ladies below were all part of the crowd pictured on the cover of **Update** who were watching the straw-hatted gentlemen defy superstition and break ground for the Miami Biltmore Hotel on a Friday the 13th. It was March 1925. All these people were obviously VIPs. Can anyone identify anyone? If so, write **Update**, Historical Association of Southern Florida, 101 West Flagler, Miami FL 33130.



**AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES**

**Helen Frank** is a columnist and book reviewer for the **Macon Telegram**. She was 12 years old when the '26 hurricane hit Miami and, as she writes, "We went through quite an ordeal."

**Agneta Heldt**, widow of **Miami Daily News** political writer Henning Heldt, is writing a history of the Unitarian Church in Miami.

**Patricia McIntosh**, at age ten, became a Miami "winter colonist" with the rest of the Middleton family of McKeesport, PA. They soon were residents. Pat, mother of five, has volunteered for many community tasks, one being a history of mental health services in Miami, from which **Update's** article is excerpted.

**Eleanor Ratelle**, former newspaper columnist Eleanor Hart, contributed the DFPA article before departing for Columbus, OH, to live with her brother.

**Lee Aberman**, member of **Update's** advisory board, continues her journey through ten years of **Update** with the spring issues.

►Continues from page 14

The June 1975 issue dealt with the many ways in which man and sea have interacted in South Florida since the United States Naval Station was established in Key West in 1822 during James Monroe's administration. More than fifty years passed before the five houses of refuge were built along the lower east coast of Florida to shelter shipwrecked sailors. Number 5, the Biscayne House of Refuge, which lasted until the Great Hurricane of 1926, was located on the beach near what is now Surfside. An article by Rear Admiral Irwin J. Stephens relates the development of the Port of Miami from its sleepy beginnings to its current colossal size; and an article by Dorothy Fields discusses the important role played by black stevedores.

The big news in 1976 was the Bicentennial. **Update** celebrated with stories about early man in South Florida (by Dan Laxson), the surprising Loyalist sentiment in East Florida during the War of Independence (by Linda Williams), the development of the Florida court system (by Hugh Wood), and the long history of many kinds of religious experience South Florida has known since the Spaniards brought the Cross to Biscayne Bay in 1567 (by Thelma Peters). Dr. Charlton Tebeau contributed a thoughtful article on the availability of material for the enterprising historical researcher. Of outstanding interest was an article on South Dade's black pioneers by Jean C. Taylor. These sturdy men and women endured through hardships, educated their children, and left lasting contributions to our community.

The April 1977 issue dealt charmingly with some of the many service clubs that worked manfully (but mostly womanfully) to cope with the social problems that arose in the early years. The Woman's Relief Association, the Sociedad Cuba, the Young Women's Christian Association, and the Housekeepers' Club of Coconut Grove are just a few of the clubs that tried to meet the needs of a community that was virtually on the frontier.

The June 1977 issue celebrated the Munroe family and its historic house, the Barnacle. Patty Munroe Catlow described for Jean Taylor the simple, hardworking life of the Munroes, their boats, the children's schooling, and their friends. Other articles told about Commodore Mun-



From top left: Vol 1, June '74; Vol 2, April '75, June '75; Vol 3, April '76, June '76; Vol 4, April '77, June '77; Vol 5, April '78, June '78; Vol 6, no spring issues; Vol 7, May '80; Vol 8, May '81; Vol 9, May '82.

## 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.

roe, Patty's father, about the boat he built, **Micco**, and about the Biscayne Bay Yacht Club, which he helped to found. His son, Wirth Munroe, served two terms as president of HASF in 1945-46.

In April 1978, **Update** devoted most of its pages to Miami Senior High School. As Layton Mank wrote in the Presidential Message, "... Miami High School... is significant in the history of this community for the contribution of those who have been a part of it... Miami High has been a significant part of our community for... 75 years, changing and evolving along with our community itself."

The June 1978 issue was all about the newspapers that have been enlivening our lives since the **Miami Metropolis** published its first edition on May 15, 1896. The **Miami Herald** emerged as a strong paper in 1910 after almost a decade of tribulations. But who remembers **The Miami Tribune** or **The Illustrated Daily Tab**? Nancy Hoffman writes about the checkered career of **The Miami News Tower**, whose story is not finished yet in 1983; and Garth Reeves talks to Dorothy Fields about the difficult challenges he met in creating **The Miami Times** in 1923, riding out the Depression and war years, and bringing it to its current eminence and stability. Finally, once and for all, Jane Reno in a warm and anecdotal article answers the question, "Why write for newspapers?"

Although the May 1980 issue was devoted mainly to various articles on sun and wind energy, for me the outstanding piece was the marvelous yarn by Charlie Brookfield about the "Mystery at Carysfort." Years ago it was Brookfield who introduced my husband and me to some of the mysteries of the wondrous and delicate South Florida ecology on an Audubon field trip, with the same deceptive simplicity. Besides, who can resist a ghost story? Not to be missed in this issue also is the announcement that the groundbreaking for the Museum's new house was about to take place.

The May 1981 issue dealt seriously with the complex mix of water, land, and people that make up our fragile South Florida environment. Jeanne Bellamy describes the difficulties encountered by the well-meaning people who, lacking precise and sophisticated information, have produced so much mismanagement in the name of water management. Raymond Lang contributes a fascinating reconstruction of the life of the vanished Tequesta Indians, whose artifacts were under the site of the Holiday Inn on Brickell and the James L. Knight Convention Center on the north bank of the Miami River adjacent to the old Royal Palm Hotel mentioned earlier. In this way the palimpsest of history is written on again and one wonders what some digger in the future might find on these sites.

Looking at the spectacular painting of the flamingo on the cover of the May 1982 issue, I thought, is it really a year since HASF acquired the Audubon Double Elephant Folio? In honor of this immense acquisition the issue is devoted to articles about John James Audubon in Florida in 1832. With its magnificent Audubon Folio and its beautiful new house, not to mention all the other exhibits painstakingly collected and preserved, HASF can look back with gratitude and forward with anticipation. And since the future seems to be speeding away from the past, **Update's** role in South Florida's history will become more valuable than ever.

# THEY ARE INDEED WORTH TWO CENTS



1791 one cent pieces

Among its 2100 members the Historical Association of Southern Florida has 54 in its senior citizens membership category, each of whom costs the association two cents. These members are worth both pennies, however, because of the support they give.

(For each member of the association HASF pays \$20.02 in membership benefits: **Tequesta** \$2.72, **Update** \$6.35, operating costs \$9.61 and special events \$2.34. Membership income above \$20.02 goes into preservation of iconographic collections, care of artifact collections and maintenance of the research archives.)

The time volunteered by the members and the services provided by them are priceless. HASF could never repay its members.

With the opening of the new museum, however, HASF has an opportunity to remunerate members in a small way for their services. The museum will have an admission fee: \$3 for adults, \$2 for children under 12.



## **A MEMBERSHIP CARD IS A PASS FOR FREE ADMISSION.**

This makes a membership more valuable, particularly for families. Current members may find that HASF memberships will make increasingly popular gifts to friends and family.

Further information may be obtained from

JUNE ROSENGARTEN  
HASF Membership Coordinator  
305-372-7747

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