
Dirigibles Filled the Sky

Manassa Mauler Ko'd by Gulf Stream

Charlie LeJeune's Heartbreak Lane

Memories of an Early Stewardess

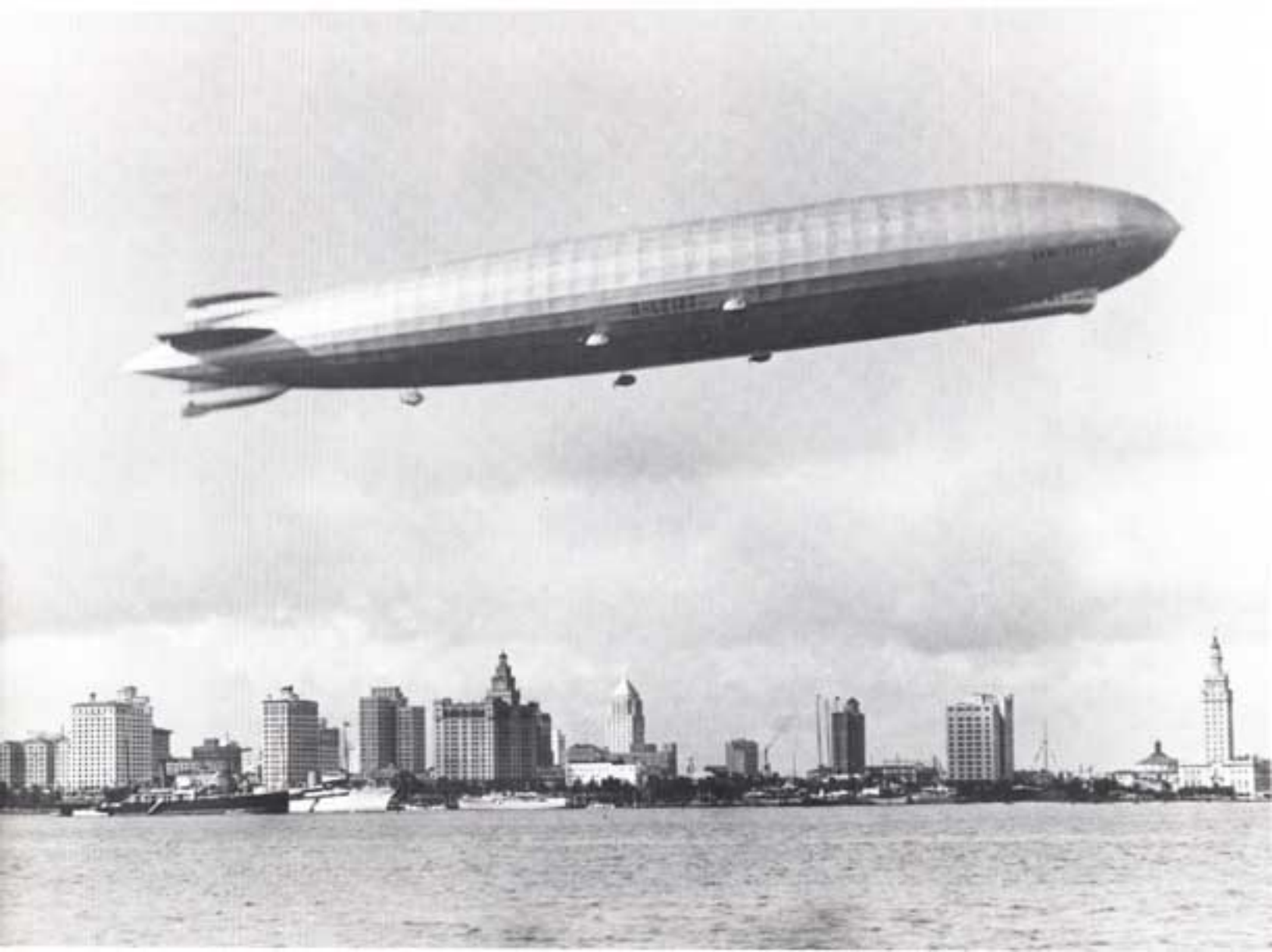
The Historical Association of Southern Florida

UPDATE

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The Historical Association of Southern Florida

UPDATE

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EDITORS
Stuart McIver
Tim Schmand

ADVISERS
Lee Aberman
Marie Anderson
Jeanne Bellamy
Dorothy J. Fields
Arva Parks
Thelma Peters, Ph.D.
Elizabeth Peeler
Yvonne Sanat-Maria
Zannie May Shipley

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Contents

Lighter Than Air Defenses	3
Beginning in 1918 and lasting through 1961 the US Navy experimented and utilized lighter-than-air technology in the south Florida skies.	
Boxing Great Suffers Defeat at Sea	6
Only Gene Tunney and the Gulfstream could do what many men had tried.	
The Little Frenchman	7
The story of a man who found his paradise and lost it all.	
An Air Hostess Remembers	9
Madeline Moon Sternberg relives the early days of commercial flight.	
Departments	
Around the Museum	2
Books	12
The Final Word	13

On the cover: German Airship the GRAF ZEPPLIN passing the Miami skyline. Story on page 3.



Early Eastern Airlines Stewardesses mugging for a public relations photograph. Story page 9.

AROUND THE MUSEUM

I was asked recently to be a part of a committee involved in the preparation of an exhibition scheduled to open in 1990. The exhibition, **MOSAIC: Jewish Life in Florida**, was conceived as part of the Columbus Quincentenary Jubilee in 1992. This occasion will celebrate the voyages of discovery, events in which Spanish and Portuguese Jews played a significant, some might even say a pivotal, role. The exhibition will not be confined to the Jewish sailors, mapmakers and bankers who contributed to the success of the voyages, but will examine the further waves of pioneering Jews who came to Florida in the ensuing five hundred years to make their fortune or, sometimes, simply to save their lives.

It occurred to me as I sat in the committee meeting that, although in this column we have encountered many of the people whose talents and functions are necessary elements in the complex operations of the museum, we have never watched them working together in what is one of their fundamental tasks: the preparation and presentation of an exhibition. So, from time to time in the next couple of years I will report on the progress of the **MOSAIC: Jewish Life in Florida** exhibition.

By the time I attended the first meeting of the Miami Task Force, the **MOSAIC** project was well under way. The name itself has multiple meanings: the Biblical association with Moses, reverberant with echoes of flights to freedom and the handing down of ethical precepts, and the tiny tiles that together make a picture. Both meanings apply, for **MOSAIC** is about flights to freedom, from fifteenth century Spain to contemporary Latin America and the Soviet Union. And it is also about tiles. Miami is one of nine "tiles" in the mosaic that will present a picture of Jewish life in Florida. The others are Broward County, Sarasota, Tallahassee, and Tampa. Each community has a task force; David Mesnekoff is chairing ours. The awesome job of coordinating all nine task forces belongs to a vibrant woman named Marcia Zerwitz, who hails from Altamonte Springs.



HASF representatives Marcia and Lew Kanner, Lee Aberman, and Dr. Howard Zwibel at MOSAIC's planning meeting in Miami.

MOSAIC is a joint project of the Central Agency for Jewish Education, the Samuel and Helene Soref Jewish Community Center, Perlman Campus, and the University of Miami, Judaic Studies Program. **MOSAIC** aims to create a visual and written legacy of Florida Jewish history. To accomplish this, it will employ a multi-media traveling exhibition reflecting a number of facets of the Jewish experience in Florida. The exhibition will be displayed in all the "tile" communities from 1990 to 1992, the year of the Columbus Quincentenary Jubilee. A series of monographs on community histories is planned in order to provide a portrait of the dual process of acculturation and ethnic distinctiveness characteristic of the Jewish experience. Each of the "tile" communities will host a variety of educational, cultural and gala events emphasizing uniqueness of each. Among the stated goals of the **MOSAIC** project is the hope that these

(continued on page 14)



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The USS Akron at mooring mast in Opa-locka, three days before it crashed in New Jersey, killing seventy three people.

AIRSHIPS OVER SOUTH FLORIDA

BY J. GORDON VAETH

Airships have been a part of the South Florida scene for seventy years. U.S. Navy B-type and C-type blimps began flying from Key West as early as 1918-19. The B-class, first of the Navy's operational airships, was little more than a single-engine airplane fuselage slung beneath a rubberized cotton bag filled with explosive hydrogen. Its volume of about 80,000 cubic feet was one-third that of today's Goodyear advertising blimp.

Blimp operations at the Naval Base, Key West, and also at Pensacola, were gradually phased out in the 1920s until there were only two blimps left in the Navy's aircraft inventory. These were both based at Lakehurst, New Jersey. The service had decided to concentrate on the much larger — and what it considered the much more promising — rigid-type airships. "Rigids," so called because they contained a rigid skeleton or framework (non-rigid airships, or blimps, do not) offered large payloads, long ranges, and extended endurances; in short, performance worthy of a naval scout. In particular, the Navy was focusing its lighter-than-air budgetary and manpower resources on the new twin airships, USS AKRON and USS MACON, which would take to the air in 1931 and 1933.

It was expected that these rigid airships, each 785 feet long, 132 feet wide, and with a volume of 6,500,000 cubic feet of fireproof helium gas, would participate in Fleet exercises in the Caribbean. To support them in these operations, the Navy erected a mooring mast at the Naval Aviation Reserve Base, Opa-locka, northwest of Miami. The existence of this mast inevitably brought both airships to South Florida.

The AKRON arrived in January 1933, mooring while en route between Lakehurst and Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. March of the same year saw the AKRON use Opa-locka again for a stopover each way between Lakehurst and Panama. That time, the AKRON operated for almost a week from the Reserve Base, giving the local citizenry a chance to see her in the air as well as on the ground. They would never see the ship again. The next month she crashed at sea in a storm off New Jersey taking seventy three lives.

Her sister, the MACON, flew from her home base, the Naval Air Station, Sunnyvale, California (now Moffret Field), to Opa-locka in April 1934. Over the Southwest, she encountered severe turbulence and suffered structural damage.



The cockpit of the USS Macon, moored in Opa-locka, 1934.

J. Gordon Vaeth is Director of Satellite Operations, National Environmental Satellite and Data Information Service. More importantly, he is a former blimp pilot stationed at Richmond Airbase.



Crowds flocked to see these massive airships.

The damage to the MACON was repaired while she rode to the mast at Opa-locka. However, sudden and violent wind shifts, thunderstorms, and heavy rains made the ship's behavior on the field uncertain and difficult to control. Things were not helped at all by the mosquitoes and snakes that inhabited the terrain. Not so personally threatening to the crew, but potentially dangerous to the ship's gas cells, were the local owls. Seeking shelter, they found their way into the MACON's interior and took up residence in the grid-work inside. Operating out of Opa-locka, the MACON, after freeing its last owl over Jamaica, engaged in maneuvers between that island and the Canal Zone and off of Puerto Rico in May. She returned to California later that month. In February 1935, she would structurally collapse in flight and go down in the Pacific at the cost of two lives.

Another rigid airship to use Opa-locka was Germany's globe-trotting GRAF ZEPPELIN. On a "triangle flight" from Germany to Brazil to the United States and back to Germany — a flight saluted by commemorative stamps issued by the U.S. Post Office — the famous airship sat down on the Florida field for about 13 hours. Its commander, Dr. Hugo Eckener, talked about initiating an airship service between Miami and Europe.

While at Opa-locka, the GRAF ZEPPELIN gave Floridians a look at an ominous symbol from overseas: the NAZI swastika. It was emblazoned on one side of the airship's vertical fins. Eckener, an anti-NAZI who considered his ship profaned by having to carry the swastika, went out of his way to keep "the hooked cross" in shadow or shade while flying in American skies.

The commercial Zeppelin service between Germany and Florida never materialized. The fiery destruction in 1937 at Lakehurst, New Jersey, of the hydrogen-filled HINDENBURG, follow-up to the GRAF, ended all prospects. The HINDENBURG operated into and out of Lakehurst under the terms of a Navy permit which also provided for the use of Opa-locka as a back-up landing site. Had the HINDENBURG needed to use Opa-locka, it would have cost its operators \$100 for each day it was moored there.

With the loss of the AKRON and MACON, the U.S. Navy became interested again in the less controversial and smaller nonrigid airship, the blimp. While the Navy had been

pursuing "rigids," the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company had been busy building and flying "nonrigids." In the 1920s and 1930s, Goodyear had developed a fleet of company blimps and given them names of yachts that had defended America's possession of the America's Cup. Goodyear's MAYFLOWER, PURITAN, RELIANCE, and VIGILANT wintered in Florida, ranging all over the State, and visiting Havana. St. Petersburg built a municipal hangar, 140' x 60' x 80', for them. The city of Miami purchased and relocated another, 250' x 120' x 70', from the Navy at Key West.

Goodyear's experience in designing and building blimps was put to good use by the Navy in the late 1930s when the threat represented by Hitler was recognized and Germany's reconstitution of its U-Boat arm became known. Blimps had served valuably in World War II for antisubmarine patrol and convoy escorts. As the NAZI U-Boat flotillas were formed, the United States began its buildup of forces to counter them.

The Navy's Bureau of Aeronautics contracted with Goodyear to build a prototype antisubmarine airship. This proved to be the K-ship — Navy designation ZPK — 250 feet long, containing 400,000 cubic feet of helium, and carrying a crew of 10. Its range was 1,500 miles or better, its speed around 65 knots. A sturdy, forgiving, and reliable airship — said by many to have been the best ever — the "K" was adopted and more than 130 were built as America's naval strength grew before and after the war with Germany.



Airship controls, ca. 1930.



The Blimp hangar at the Naval Air Station, Richmond, was destroyed in a fire that raged during the 1945 hurricane.

Pilots and air crewmen had to be trained and operating bases established. Because of the shipping in the Straits of Florida, that area was considered a potential "happy hunting ground" for enemy submarines. This led to the establishment of a major airship base southwest of Miami at Richmond, Florida. There were other major airship bases along the Eastern and Gulf Coasts. Except for Lakehurst, hub of the Navy's lighter-than-air activity, the Naval Air Station, Richmond, was the most important. Home port

for Blimp Squadron 21 and Fleet Airship Wing 2, it was the overhaul base for blimp squadrons in the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean. Its importance was reflected by the fact that it had three 1,000-foot-long hangars instead of the customary two.

The waters off Florida proved to be a hotbed of German U-boat activity. The K-ship of Squadron 21, supplemented by a couple of half-gallon larger-in-volume M-type blimps, were continuously on patrol in the 1943-45 period. On July 18, 1943, these patrols resulted in one of the most unusual battles of World War II. Richmond's K-74 came upon a surfaced U-boat, U-134, and attacked it to prevent it from torpedoing two nearby merchant ships. The ensuing nighttime running gun battle, unique in naval history, between blimp and U-boat ended when the K-74 was shot down and the submarine had to return to base owing to machine gun damage to its Quick-diving tanks. Had the K-74's depth bombs not hung up

as the airship passed directly over the submarine's deck, the encounter might have had a different ending.

During those war years, blimps operating out of Richmond, proceeding to and from their patrol areas, were a common sight. Not all were on antisubmarine missions, some were merely passing through, as they were ferried to or from U.S. Navy airship bases in the Caribbean or as far south as Brazil. Key West's Meacham Field, today its International Airport, was home at the time to BLIMPASTRALANT (Blimp Antisubmarine Training Detachment, Atlantic Fleet) which operated with "friendly" submarines in the area to give airshipmen practice in using their radar, magnetic detection equipment, and sonobuoys in submarine detection and tracking. BLIMPASTRALANT was housed in the adjoining Martello Towers and pictures of it are on display in the Towers.

When the war was over, the period of intensive U.S. Navy airship activity in Southern Florida ended. As if to write a conclusive finish, at the Naval Air Station, Richmond, all three hangars, its airships, and a large number of airplanes that had sought refuge there, were destroyed by a hurricane in 1945. Even so, airship operations of an experimental or research and development nature continued in the Key West area at the Naval Air Station, Boca Chica. But in 1961, the Navy's airship program was terminated in its entirety.

Now, after seventy years only advertising airships remain in south Florida's skies.



This view of the Graf Zeppelin includes the swastikas which were located on the port side of the ship's vertical fins.



The rear lower vertical fin of both the USS Macon and the USS Akron contained a cabin area. This view of the Macon shows the cabin area and the small car on which it rested.

THE YOUNG MAN AND THE SEA

BY ROSE CONNETT RICHARDS

The first boxer to draw a five million dollar gate, young Jack Dempsey had finally lost the world heavyweight title. It was September 1926 in Philadelphia when the ten-round decision went to a younger Gene Tunney. The Manassa Mauler (Dempsey was born in Manassa, Colorado) had been center stage front to an adoring nation since he had knocked out Jess Willard in 1919. Now he was tired of all the hoopla. The elegant new Roney Plaza Hotel had recently opened in Miami Beach. What better place to rest than by the soothing ocean - the very same sea that was soon to lay him lower than Tunney. So he packed his wind-up Victrola, some favorite records and headed down to Miami.

Dick Peacock was a prize fight fanatic who never missed an important bout if he could help it. In the 1920s that meant a long, tiring train or car ride to a distant city from his home in Coconut Grove but he didn't mind. He was kin of the pioneer Peacocks who settled along Biscayne Bay in

The Roney Plaza, an ideal place for the former Heavy Weight Champion of the World to rest after a gruelling fight.



Jack Dempsey posing with fishing companions after a day on the water. (From left to right) front row: Fred Pine, unknown, Judge Frank Blanton, Judge Tom Norfleet, Jack Dempsey, unknown, Dick Rice, Dick Peacock. Back row: George Roberts, Captain Jim Thompson, Charles Veber.

1875, and one of his closest friends was colorful Miami attorney Fred Pine. Many afternoons they gathered with friends in the local Grove Bar, where the day's happenings were sorted out and numerous fishing trips planned while they tossed back a few. It was inevitable that one fall day in 1926 Dempsey's name came up. Dick Peacock knew his idol was in town - it was in all the newspapers - and he'd give anything to meet him. As they talked over the plans for a deep-sea fishing trip, Dick wished out loud that he

could ask Dempsey to go with them. But he reasoned that the celebrity was here to get away from it all and of course it would be imposing on his privacy to bother him. The lawyer in Fred Pine, warmed by some 80-proof, spoke up, "Hey, I don't have any problem with calling him. All he can do is say 'No!'" And so he did and the champ said why yes he'd love to go fishing but to keep it quiet. He wanted to avoid the press and he admonished them, "Don't tell anyone!"

(continued on page 13)



THE RONEY PLAZA HOTEL
Miami Beach, Florida

LeJeune Road is one of Dade County's busiest North-South thoroughfares, beginning at the north end of Old Cutler Road and extending through Coral Gables, Miami, past the airport and ending somewhere in the far reaches of Hialeah. According to the State Department of Transportation, approximately 36,991 vehicles cross Eighth Street and LeJeune Road each day. It is unlikely that many of these drivers are aware of the road's namesake, Charles A. LeJeune, who was also known as:

THE LITTLE FRENCHMAN

BY HELEN SPACH

Charles A. LeJeune was born of well-to-do French parents on March 14, 1878, in Verviers in eastern Belgium. He was educated at the best schools in Europe, attending colleges in Paris, Bonne and Heidelberg, where he majored in horticulture. To complete his education he spent several years traveling around the world. During those years he learned to speak several languages, among them English, which he learned in Ireland. Years later he still spoke English with a delightful French and Irish accent.

LeJeune was keenly interested in the agriculture and soils of every country he visited. The tropical climate and vegetation of the South Sea Islands and Borneo opened a whole new world to him. After landing in Vancouver, Washington, he decided to make his home in the United States if he could find the climate suitable for his horticultural work. The climate nearest to that of the South Sea Is-

lands seemed to be on the southern tip of Florida. He learned all he could about the state, then, in 1901, came to see for himself.

South Florida was even more than he had hoped. He moved into a downtown Miami hotel and spent his days visiting orange and grapefruit groves, truck-gardens, tomato and strawberry fields. He talked with nurserymen and fruit-growers, studied the soils of the sandy pinelands and the hammocks, searching always for acreage to purchase. This, he decided was where he wanted to live. He bought 140 acres of high sandy pineland four miles west of Coconut Grove. A log house on the property faced a narrow dirt road. This dirt road, now LeJeune, marked the eastern boundary of his property. The south boundary was along what is now Bird Road, the west was Anderson Road, and Coral Way was the

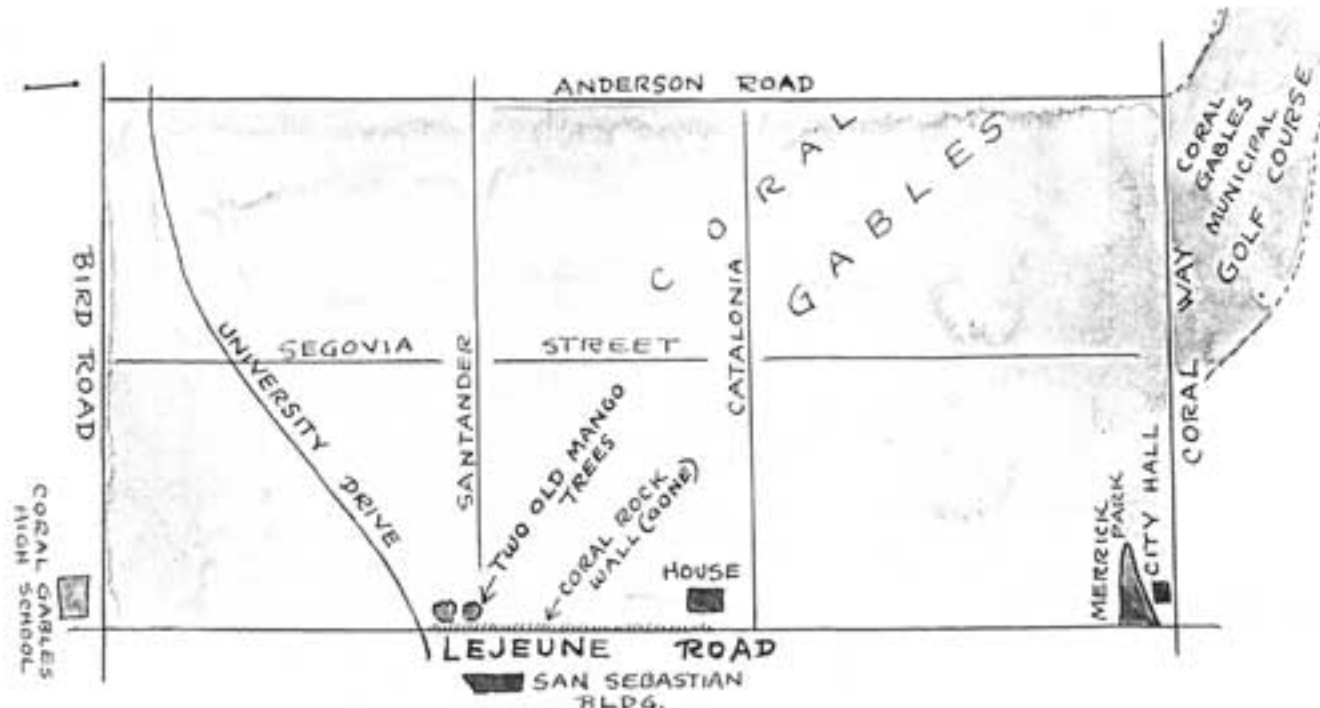
north. The Coral Gables City Hall now sits on the northeast corner of the property.

LeJeune's manager and a crew of Black laborers cleared the land for a citrus grove. He decided to plant most of the land in a variety of seedless pink-meat grapefruit which northern markets were demanding. He also planted King and Valencia oranges, tangerines, limes, lemons and some mangos.

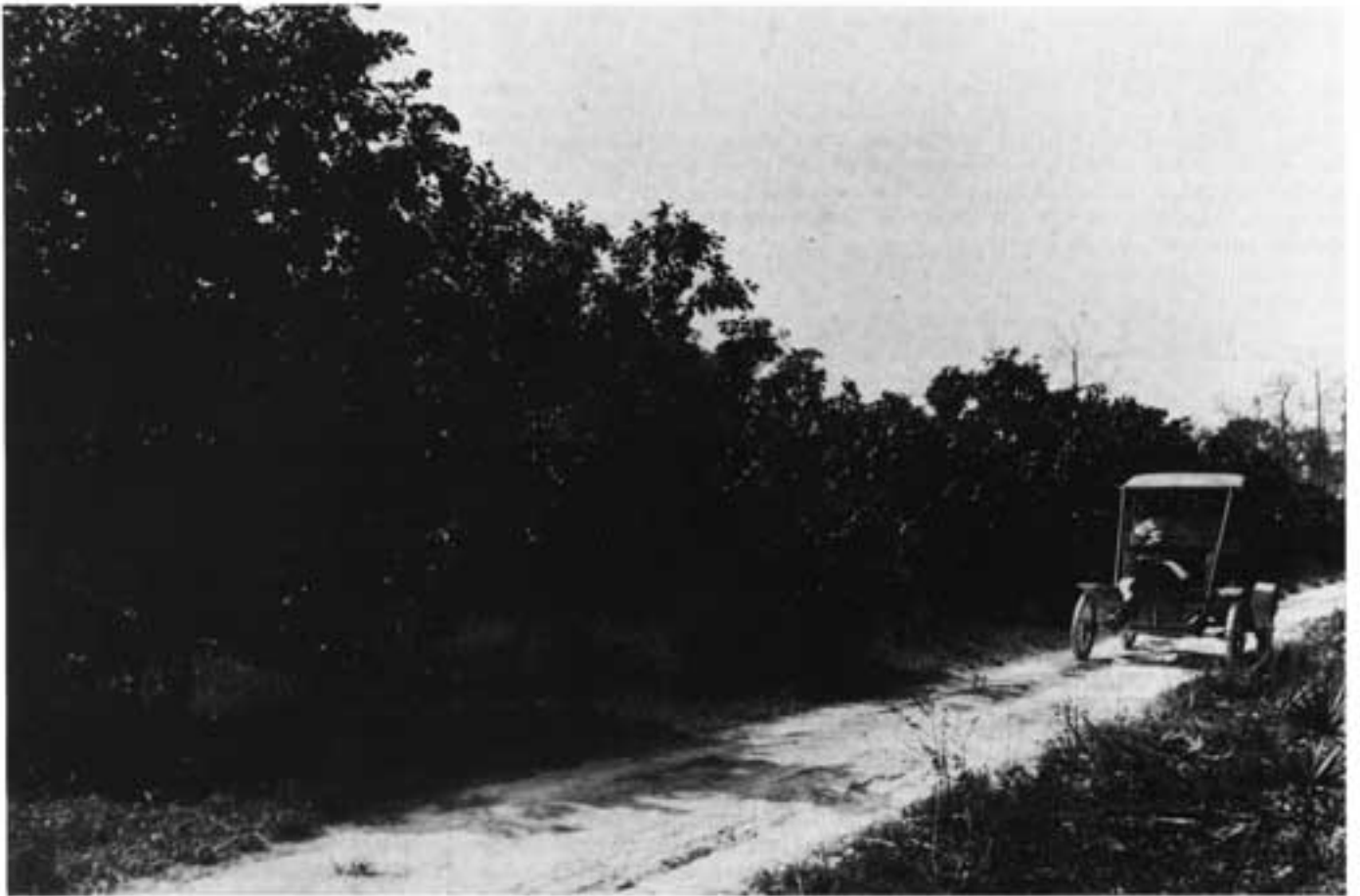
When the land was covered with long straight rows of tiny plants he became so excited about his grove that he moved out of his hotel into a two-story frame house he had built to replace the log house. He landscaped the grounds, planting tropical flowers and shrubs, vines and a row of mango trees along the front near the road. Two of these old mango trees have withstood the march of progress and many hurricanes to stand bravely in front of a modern apartment building near the corner of Santander. A coral rock wall, built from the rock on the property when it was cleared, stood in front of the row of mango trees and was torn down only a few years ago when it became a traffic hazard.

In 1918 he engaged a veteran of World War I, Mr. C. Stanley Toms, to act as general manager and supervisor of the grove. Since Mr. LeJeune

Helen Spach is a retired Dade County Public School teacher and long time Miami resident, who knew Charles LeJeune.



This hand-drawn map demonstrates the extent of LeJeune's land holdings.



Citrus Groves along Coral Way, the northern edge of LeJeune's property.

was a bachelor, he invited Mr. and Mrs. Toms to live with him and thus began a life-long friendship.

Charlie, as his friends called him, was a small man no more than five feet tall and he barely tipped the scales at 125 pounds. He had to have his

suits and shoes made to order for him. His hair was blond and wavy. His continental manners clung to him all his life. Charlie was a man of many interests, he loved pets and kept two or three bulldogs, several peacocks and turkeys around the place. He also

owned several fine riding horses which he kept stabled in Coconut Grove. He also enjoyed driving, and he once owned a Marmon: one of the high performance cars of the time. He

(continued on page 12)

D. C. 157—Merrick Park and City Hall, Coral Gables, Fla.



Coral Gables' City Hall stands on land that LeJeune had planted in citrus trees.

COFFEE, TEA OR MILK - THE EARLY YEARS

BY ROSE CONNETT RICHARDS

"Miss Madeline Moon report to Operations!" came the message.

The flight operations boss told the 25 year old flight hostess that Will Rogers was flying Eastern Air Transport's King Bird from Miami to Richmond. It was 1931 and the humorist had riled Eastern officials by agitating for parachutes beneath each passenger's seat as a safety measure. Madeline's job was to explain to him why it wasn't feasible. Once the plane was airborne she walked back and sat beside him. He listened thoughtfully as she went through her spiel, then he drawled, "Well, I can understand the company's viewpoint. It would be like asking a passenger for his name, address and where he wants the body sent!" Nonetheless, the parachute issue was dropped from Roger's future columns.



Eastern Air Transport stewardesses in their winter uniforms. Madeline Moon Sternberg is third from right.

Will Rogers was only one of the celebrities whom Madeline Moon Sternberg met during her tenure as one of Eastern's first stewardesses. There was handsome Prince Vo Lichtenstein of the tiny European principality, who came to learn American

business methods, and blind-deaf Helen Keller with her companion Polly Thompson. When they stopped in Baltimore and the engines were shut down, Miss Keller walked all around the outside of the plane feeling it with her hands. That wasn't too difficult as the bi-wing Curtiss Condor held only 18 passengers.

Miamian Bill Pawley was responsible for Sternberg's flight career. A close family friend, he was president of North American Aviation's Cuban division when he visited the Moons on an overnight trip from Cuba. He had to be in Washington on business the next day, and he asked Madeline and her sister Marion, "Wouldn't you girls like to take a trip to Washington tonight? We'll be back tomorrow." Madeline was enthusiastic. She'd never flown in a big plane before.

Marion didn't want to go. Her husband, Eugene Aldrin, had started the aviation division of Standard Oil. She had just accompanied him when he ferried one of the company planes to Europe by boat, then flew to 12 countries as a publicity stunt to show off the equipment.

Madeline's excitement over the proposed flight overwhelmed Marion's reluctance, so the two sisters flew to Washington with Pawley. The die was cast. Upon her return, Madeline



Marion Aldrin, Bill Pawley and Madeline Moon just prior to Madeline's first flight in a 'Condor.'

Rose Connett Richards regularly captures south Florida's diversity for the pages of Update.



The Curtiss Condor cruised at 2,000 feet, plodding along at 120 mph.

applied for a job as air hostess and was accepted.

Though the girls' father had been a different sort of sky pilot, taking young Madeline, Marion and brother Robert to live at his Lutheran ministry on Corregidor, the family was air oriented. Marion's son Buzz Aldrin was to become one of the astronauts on both Gemini 12 and Apollo 11 moon missions. Sternberg treasures a photo of Buzz on the moon inscribed, "To Aunt Mad with love and best wishes, Buzz." Before the Gemini mission he asked his aunt if she had something she would like to send to the moon. The only thing Madeline could come up with was a one dollar bill. The precious dollar went to the moon not only via Gemini, but again on Apollo 11. Now framed in her study, it is autographed by all of the crews.

When asked if the air hostesses of her day were chosen because they were pretty, 82 year old Sternberg explains that it was necessary to be slender because of the load factor, but physical beauty was not a pre-requisite. "Stewardesses then were hired to encourage more women to fly. Too many men wanted to fly on business trips but were held back by wives. We were selected for P.R. work. I spoke to women's clubs, high schools and on radio." Eastern also promoted the concept of air travel to resorts.



Comfort was a basic element of the Condor's smoking compartment.



This photograph promoted Atlantic City, New Jersey, as a vacation destination. All the models in this picture were early stewardesses.

Sternberg has publicity photos of the eight young flight hostesses in bathing suits and beach attire standing beside the Condor in Atlantic City.

"Coffee, Tea, or Milk?" The refreshment query began in those early days of commercial aviation. "Each girl, and there was only one to each aircraft, boarded with two thermoses of boiling water. Our galley was a small table in the pilot's compartment," recalls Sternberg.

The morning flights offered instant coffee and doughnuts. Afternoon flights served tea and cookies. Hostesses passed out cigarettes in the smoking "loge," visited with the nervous, held babies and made a fourth hand at bridge when needed.

The Condors plodded along at 120 miles per hour at a cruising altitude of 2,000 feet. Their route was from Newark, New Jersey, to Richmond, Virginia. There were two round trip flights daily to Washington. "I always felt totally safe in the Condors, though we did have two incidents that might have ended badly," Sternberg remembers.

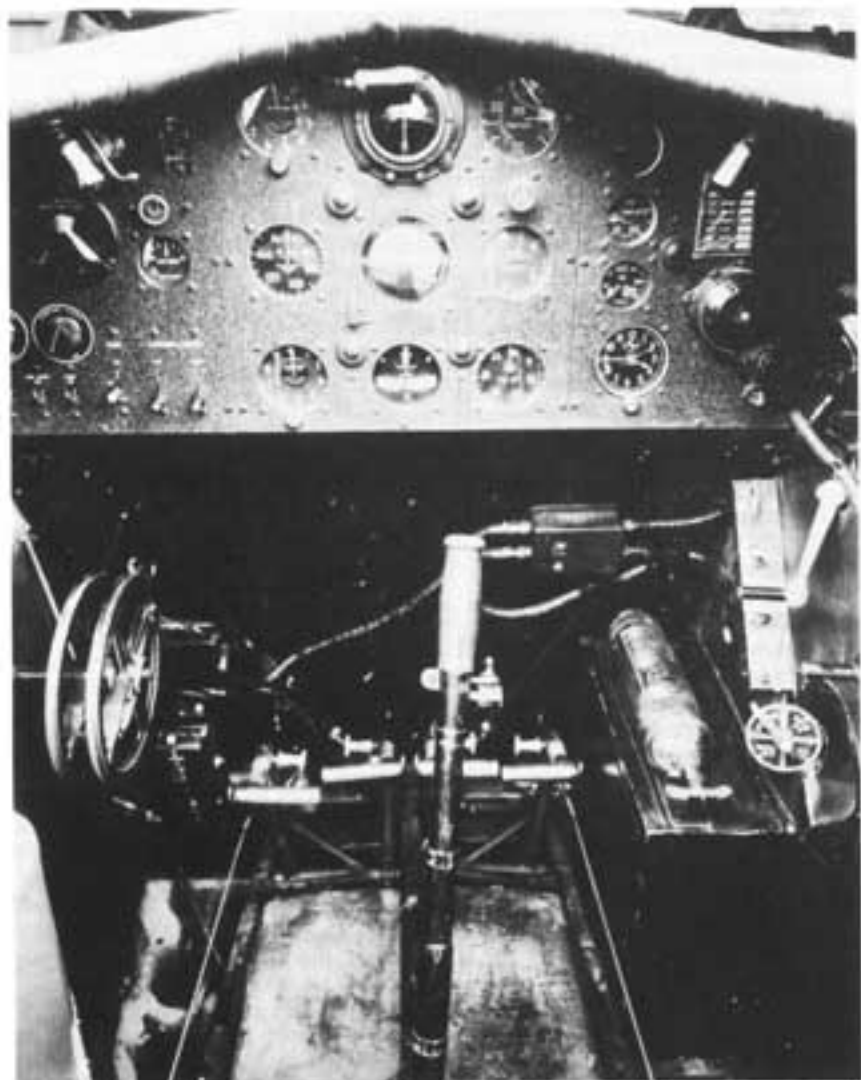
"As an oil economy measure the company was experimenting with the use of reclaimed oil and it was causing a lot of engine failures. One Sunday afternoon on a flight from Richmond to Washington, all the passengers were women except one. An engine failed and the plane shook. The male passenger looked back at me so I went up and he said, 'Isn't there something wrong with that engine?' and I replied, 'I think the pilot is going to make an emergency landing but don't worry, everything will be all right.'"

"The pilot climbed from 2,000 to 3,000 feet. This was before instrument flying. In fact they hired a man to train the pilots in instruments while I was there. When the pilot went to 3,000, the other engine went out and we glided. It had a ten-to-one gliding ratio and was like a kite. The country was very wooded around there but we came to two tobacco fields with just a fence in between, so he landed.

The passengers disembarked in the field and then the co-pilot removed the engine cowling and all these little greasy bits of "crankcase" fell to the ground and all the passengers delightedly picked up a piece for a souvenir to take home. We were driven to an emergency field. The pilot had radioed for another plane and it arrived by the time we got there to take us on to Washington."

Only the Condor's maneuverability and the pilot's expertise saved them when the economy oil caused both engines to fail on another occasion. The young hostess looked out of the

(continued on page 12)



The instrument panel and control stick of a Curtiss Condor.

Florida Historical Society Book Awards

BY ZANNIE MAY SHIPLEY

When the Florida Historical Society held its annual meeting in Miami in May 1988, two book awards were presented by the society: the Rembert W. Patrick Memorial Award for the best book published on Florida history was awarded posthumously to Dr. J. Leitch Wright, Jr., for *Creeks and Seminoles: Destruction and Regeneration of the Muscogulge People*; and Dr. Charlton W. Tebeau presented the Tebeau award for the best book for young and young adult readers to Robert Hawk for *Florida's Army: Militia, State Troops and National Guard, 1565 - 1985*.

The Patrick Award memorializes Professor Rembert W. Patrick, former editor of the *Florida Historical Quarterly*. The Tebeau award honors Dr. Charlton W. Tebeau, emeritus professor, University of Miami, editor of *Tequesta*, former president of the Florida Historical Society and charter member of HASF.

The first Patrick award was given to Polly Redford of Miami Beach for her book, *The Billion Dollar Sandbar* in 1970. The following year Dr. Tebeau won the Patrick award for his *History of Florida*. When presented the prize, Dr. Tebeau announced that he wished to return the check because he wanted to establish a prize for the author of a book on a Florida subject for young readers. The first award was given in 1973 to Marjory Bartlett Sanger for *Billy Bartram and His Green World*.

(continued from page 8)
loved good music, which he learned to appreciate in Europe, and had a large collection of phonograph records. He had Mr. Toms build a wine-cellar in which to store the fine wines he liked.

No man was happier than Charlie Lejeune. The grove needed a lot of care but with the help of Mr. Toms it was fertilized, sprayed, watered and protected against the winter freezes. It was so well-kept and beautiful that it attracted many visitors. When the trees began to bear, the crop was shipped north by train from the Coconut Grove Fruit Growers' packing house. This is what he had waited for.

Then came the Boom. Subdivi-

sions were springing up all around the Miami area. Coral Gables was planned and streets marked off for a new community. Lots were sold, homes built. The demand for property pushed to the very boundaries of Lejeune's grove. George Merrick, one of his friends and neighbors, was heading the corporation.

Lejeune wasn't worried. Surely the wild growth would move westward and southward around his grove, even though the blueprints showed streets already laid out through his property. He would price his land so high they wouldn't want it. His last fruit crop had netted \$50,000. He didn't need money and he LOVED his grove.

But the day came in 1925 when he was persuaded to give it up. The high-pressured arguments - "an obstacle to progress," "just a matter of time," "inevitable in the long run," had more effect than the \$1,250,000 offer. The deal was closed. He received a down payment of \$125,000 and would receive the balance in monthly payments.

The corporation began selling lots from the paper plans even before the bulldozer began cutting the way for the street. House foundations were dug as soon as the trees were cleared away. Lejeune could not bear to watch the destruction. Sick with grief he booked passage to Paris to visit his brother, a banker there, and his twin nieces.

During the summer of 1926 real estate sales slowed down and prices slumped. "Just a temporary lull" said the dealers. Then in September the "1926 Hurricane" struck. That did it!

When several months had passed without checks or explanations from Coral Gables, Mr. Lejeune made reservations to return. While in Paris he tried to forget his grove through lavish entertaining, buying expensive gifts and visiting relatives.

Two disasters confronted him upon his return to Miami: the devastation of the hurricane and his financial situation. The Coral Gables Corporation had no money to pay him any of the balance due.

Years of litigation followed. He would never get his grove back. Much of his money was spent on lawyers who finally arranged a settlement whereby he was deeded fifty lots. They are valuable today, but in the late twenties and early thirties no one would buy them.

His old friends, Mr. and Mrs. Toms, invited him to live with them in Miami near the Miami River where Mr. Toms ran a yacht basin. There he spent his days quietly, reading, writing or sometimes watching the

boats along the river from the yacht basin. Letters from Paris were returned unopened. He was a very proud man.

A serious illness sent Lejeune to Jackson Memorial Hospital. Months passed, but he grew weaker. He died on October 3, 1941, in the Charity Ward of the hospital. He was 63 years old.

Charles A. Lejeune never wanted the road by his grove to be named Lejeune Road. Perhaps it would have been more appropriately named Heart-break Lane.

(continued from page 11)



Loading the hot water, biscuits, instant coffee and tea that were served to passengers during the early flights.

window to see high tension wires above the aircraft as the approached to land in Washington. However, the pilot rolled them through and both engines died simultaneously as they hit the runway.

Eastern's Traffic Manager, Walter Stenberg, was stationed in the Columbus Hotel. It was 1932, his assistant was getting married and he needed a replacement. He and Madeline had met several months previously and the chemistry was there, so who better to replace the departing assistant than Madeline? He wired to ask if she'd like to apply for the job, she recalls, "I didn't go to my immediate boss, I went straight to the Vice President. I wanted to be sure I'd get to go." Five days after her arrival in Miami, she married her boss and changed careers.

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(continued from page 6)

Jack Dempsey engaged in a sport only half as dangerous as either fishing and boxing.



The next day, as they approached his door at the Roney Plaza to pick him up, they could hear the tinny strains of *Where Is My Wandering Boy Tonight?* wailed by a soulful contralto. Opening the door Dempsey seemed embarrassed that they heard his maudlin choice in music and sheepishly explained that he really liked that song.

Once aboard the boat they were a happy group savoring their coup in getting the champ to join them - and doubly so because he was a heck of a guy - a regular fellow. He immediately told them, "Don't call me Mr. Dempsey. Jack is fine." They had a hundred questions about the mechanics of the fight game. The fighter explained his technique. "You've gotta be a killer. Sitting in my corner I look as the other man and say to myself, 'I've gotta kill him!' If you don't have that spirit you won't make it in the prize fight ring!"

Dick's boat was in the capable hands of Captain Jim Thompson and his two man crew so the jubilant buddies partook of their usual sea-sick remedy, except for Dempsey who didn't drink, as they slowly trolled the Gulf Stream, wallowing from side to side in the swells. Their guest was given the honor of first in the fishing chair where he boated a mackerel, then a nice 'cuda. They thought nothing of it when about an hour later he handed the fishing rod to Captain Thompson saying, "It's time someone else had a turn." Such a sporting

fellow!

What they hadn't noticed in their jocularity was a pallor on the famous jaw that matched the green of the inner reef. They continued their kidding around and someone landed a sailfish when finally they noticed they hadn't seen their special guest for a while. Crewman Roberts said he'd seen him go below so Dick Peacock elected to check on him. In the cabin he came upon a sight that would have delighted his ring opponents. The great fighter was sprawled on a bunk, his face "the awfulest color I've ever seen," according to a very mellow Dick who punched an arm like a tree trunk and needled, "Put 'em up champ, I can whip you!" Eyes closed, the boxer mumbled, "Don't even touch me, I think I'm dying!" The poor fellow was so wretched and had suffered in silence for so long that they decided the only kind thing to do was to go in.

Once he was on solid ground a normal tan gradually replaced the anemic color on the boxer's face and he bravely lined up with his new friends for photos. Though he undoubtedly wished never to see another boat or a fish (except on a plate) the group felt he should have a special honor so he gamely held the stiffened sailfish as though he had caught it.

That tale of the mightiest fighter of his time K.O'd by the sea made the round of the Grove Bar and Grille for many a year.

THE FINAL WORD

THANK YOU MARIE

In October of 1979 an issue of *Update* came out that represented a great leap forward in the design and content of the magazine. The goal of the new design was to "provide dramatic visual portrayals" of south Florida's past. Looking back at it today, the cover is still exciting and the articles and photographs contain a freshness that best demonstrates the strengths of *Update's* then new Editor, Marie Anderson. Nine years and almost 36 issues later the magazine still strives to maintain the level of quality Marie set forth in her first issue. This past June Marie asked that someone else take over her responsibilities on the magazine. I look forward to the challenge of maintaining Marie's high standards.

A NEW LOOK

While the nation struggles with the decision between the two presidential candidates, a struggle that is engendering the same passion is currently going on in the graphics design and editorial departments in the Museum. We're looking to change the design and name of *Update*, and it has not proved to be an easy task. The name has been settled on, *South Florida History Magazine*. Among its goals will be to make the magazine more regional in nature, but the design has proved to be a stickler. The struggle continues. By the time one of the candidates has been inaugurated, the design will be completed - and in February a new magazine will arrive in your mail box.

The impetus for the new magazine stems from the Museum's recently acquired desk top publishing system. This issue of *Update* was typeset and designed on the system, perhaps this represents another great leap forward.

THE END OF A STORY

In the August *Update*, we ran an article about Edward "Doc" Dammers auctioneer for the Coral Gables Corporation. To tie up some of the loose details about Doc's life, and death in this case, Doc Dammers died on March 24, 1930, at his summer home in Massachusetts.

(continued from page 2) events will enhance the feeling of community within and between the "tiles."

The Project Team charged with bringing this ambitious program to fruition consists of J. Andrew Brian, HASF's Director of Exhibits, Exhibits Designer for **MOSAIC**; Dr. Abraham J. Gittelsohn, Associate Director of the Central Agency for Jewish Education, Education Director; Dr. Henry A. Green, Director of the Judaic Studies Program at the University of Miami, Project Director; Laura Hochman, JCC Director of Adult Services in Fort Lauderdale, Administrative Director; and Marcia Zerivitz, State Coordinator. On the Advisory Committee are some familiar names — Randy Nimnicht, HASF's Executive Director; Dr. Samuel Proctor, Julien C. Yonge Professor of Florida History at the University of Florida; Dr. Charlton Tebeau, Professor of History, Emeritus, at the University of Miami; Dr. Paul George, President of the Florida Historical Society; and Diane Lewis, Director of the Museum of Florida History. Interesting names that are new to me are Dr. Ormond Loomis, Director of the Bureau of Florida Folklife Programs, and Dr. Abraham Peck, Administrative Director of the American Jewish Archives. To this impressive list is added a clutch of legisla-



Marcia Zerivitz, MOSAIC's State Coordinator, chairing a meeting in Miami.

tors, including two U.S. Senators, Chiles and Graham, Congressman Larry Smith, and State Representative Fran Carlton.

Because our own Andy Brian is Exhibits Designer for **MOSAIC**, I asked him to explain the process involved in putting an exhibition together. We met in his immaculate suite of offices and workshops in the basement of the museum, and, as always, I was struck by the spare elegance of HASF's domestic economy. Andy's department, like all other departments I've seen, reminds me of the definition of a masterpiece I once read: it has everything it needs and nothing it doesn't need. In this curious mixture of high-tech computers and cameras, home-made benches and a wonderful tool chest Andy built himself, he works with an amazingly small production crew consisting of Jim Omahen, Shop Foreman; George Chillag, Museum Designer; and Dan Killian, Exhibits Preparator.

The two-year time frame for **MOSAIC** isn't at all unusual, I learned. HASF works on a fairly fixed one-year schedule, and has exhibits tentatively scheduled as far as 1992. What Andy told me was so fascinating it deserved an article in itself, so in the next issue of *UPDATE* I'll try to lead us through the process as Andy described it to me. We'll begin with the initial idea, and you'll learn about the Black Box. We'll discuss the Exhibits Committee and how it reaches a decision. We'll talk about primary objectives and basic research, design development and the importance of traffic patterns and lighting. We'll see how these and other factors affected the development of some of the museum's recent exhibitions. And as time moves along toward 1990, I'll be going back to Andy to keep me up-to-date on what's going on with **MOSAIC**. Stay tuned.

I'm sure I speak for everyone connected with the Historical Association of Southern Florida in expressing our deep delight at the arrival of Mary Jo and Randy Nimnicht's new little boy, Will. We wish then every happiness.

LEE ABERMAN

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Welcome to Downtown Miami!

When the *Della* sailed into the palm-fringed mouth of the Miami River on March 3, 1896, the captain proudly announced "Miami!"

"Where?" John Sewell asked, astounded. Miami was little more than a scraggly excuse for a village then. But Sewell had been sent by Henry Flagler to build a town, and build it he did. In 1933, Sewell retold Miami's wet-behind-the-ears years in his personal memoirs. He wrote, as he put it, "from the inside of the ring." *Miami Memoirs* is a new limited edition of Sewell's story and is now available with hundreds of rare and previously unpublished photos. The book has been compiled by noted historian Arva Parks. It has been commissioned by Professional Savings Bank of Miami with support of the Historical Association of Southern Florida.

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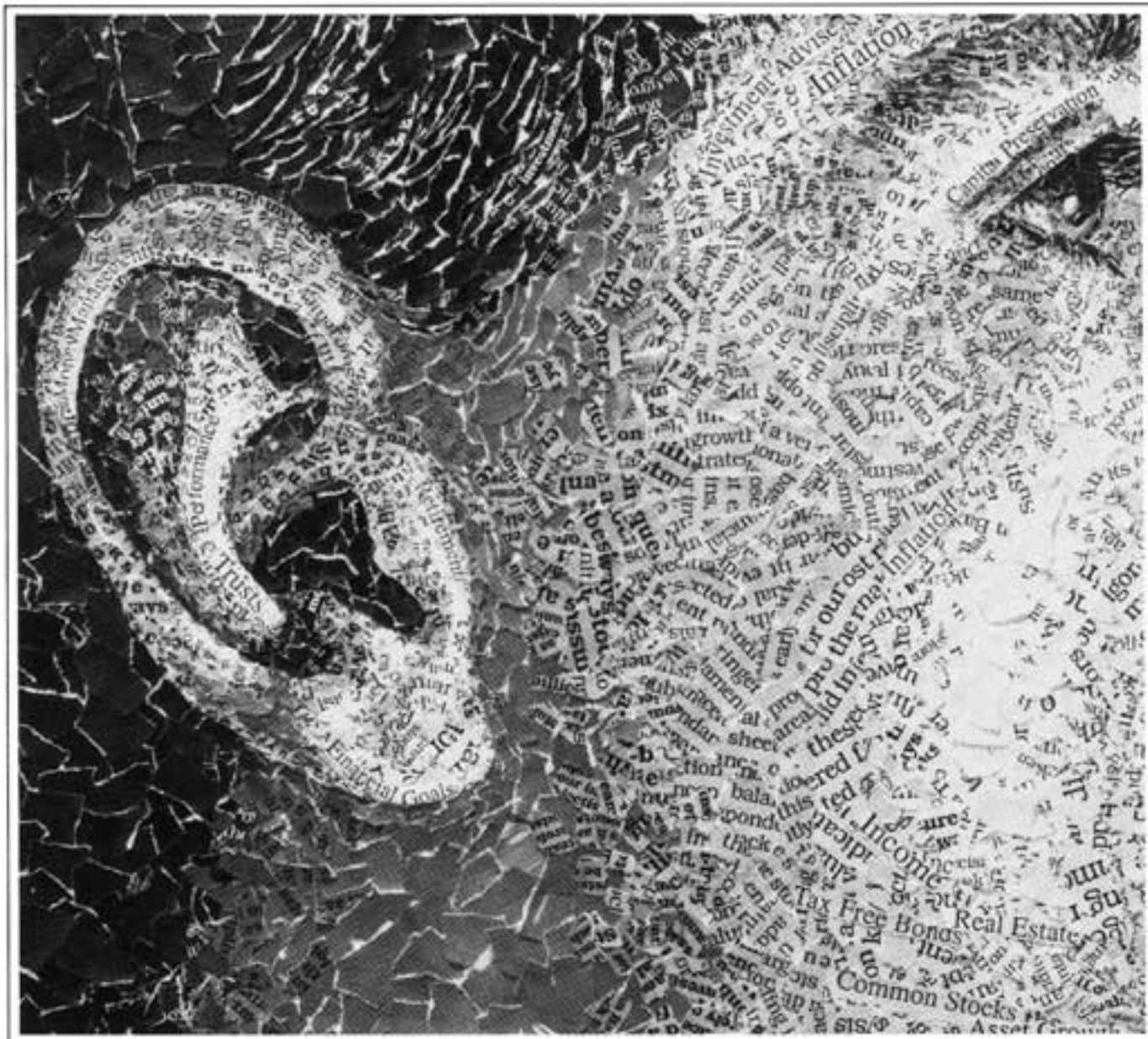
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THE EXHIBITION

Part I:
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Part II:
December 9 - January 29

On March 25, 1988, 186 photographers participated in documenting a typical day in South Florida. They ranged over an area running from the Palm Beaches to Key West, capturing the people, places and environment of our unique region.

Produced in conjunction with Color Lab of Miami, The South Florida Chapter of the American Society of Magazine Photographers/Picture South Florida, Inc. and Borders Gallery and Picture Framing, Inc.

The exhibition was made possible by the generous support of the Southeast Banking Corporation Foundation and the Dade County Cultural Affairs Council, Tourist Tax Program.



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