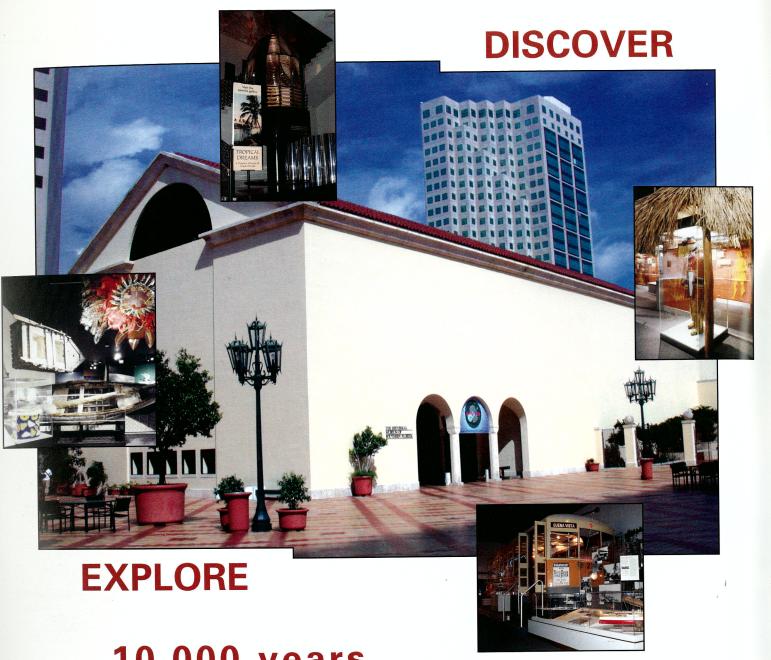
South Florida History





10,000 years of history in one afternoon!

Climb onto a 1920s trolley car, board a 19th century sailboat, defend a Spanish fort and see shipwreck gold and Native American clothing!



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South Florida History Volume 31, 2003

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Cover-Miami News Tower postcard, ca. 1930. HASF 1979-9-92.

Editor's notes



outh Florida History's mission is to recall, retell and O explore historic events, people, places and themes pertaining to southern Florida and the Caribbean. This issue fulfills this purpose by presenting a broad scope of articles, ranging from the development of Watson Island and the symbolic meaning behind the Freedom Tower to

the architecture and the history of the black churches of Fort Lauderdale.

Learn about the various ideas and plans that were proposed throughout the years for the development of Waston Island (page 14). Some plans were carried out, others, like the island being host to the Pan American center or the creation of a "Science City," failed to reach fruition.

Read on to explore the new significance the Freedom Tower, once the Miami News Building, acquired in its role as the processing center for Cuban émigrés in 1962 (page 20). Though its role as the Cuban Refugee Center ended in 1974, the Freedom Tower remains a powerful symbol of hope and freedom to this day.

And finally, read a brief architectural and historical essay on the first seven historically black churches of Fort Lauderdale (page 26). Each of these churches, serving as beacons of spiritual renewal and social sustenance for the city's black residents, tells part of the unique development and history of this city.

Enjoy!

Sara Muñoz

Note-If you or someone you know is interested in submitting an article or a book review, please contact me at publications@historical-museum.org or 305.375.1492. Submission deadlines for Vo. 32, No. 2, 2004 and Vo. 32, No. 2, 2004 are May 8 and August 3, respectivelly. Your time, energy and thoughtfulness in submitting a contribution are greatly appreciated as we strive to spread an understanding of our region's rich past. I look forward to receiving your submission.

South Florida History

Editor

Editorial Assistance

South Florida History is a journal of popular regional history published quarterly by the Historical Association of Southern Florida. Receipt of South Florida History is a privilege of membership in the Historical Museum, the Fort Myers Historical Museum, the Collier County Museum, the Clewiston Museum, the Boca Raton Historical Society and the Florida History Center & Museum.

The Historical Association of Southern

The Historical Association of Southern Florida is a nonprofit cultural, educational and humanistic institution dedicated to providing

humanistic institution dedicated to providing information about the history of southern Florida and the Caribbean, and to the collection and preservation of material relating to that history.

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opinion expressed by contributors.

This publication has been sponsored in part by the Thomas B. Haggard Fund for Publications, the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs, Florida Arts Council and Division of Historical Resources, the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs, the Cultural Department of Cultural Affairs, the Cultural Affairs Council, the Mayor and the Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners, and members of the Historical Museum of Southern Florida. The contents and opinions do not necessarily reflect the views and opinion of the editors of *South Florida History* or the Florida Department of State, nor does the mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation by the Department of State.

Development

Audubon Bird To Honor Pioneer Couple

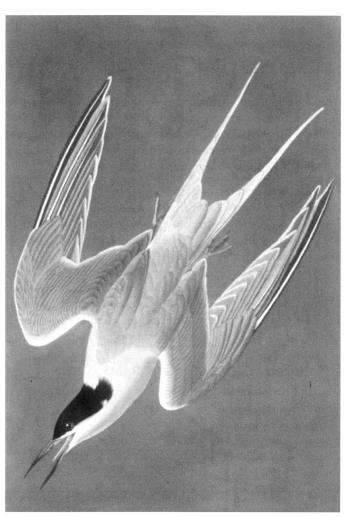
by Marcia Kanner

Sisters Faith Adams Young and Sue Adams Andrews of Tennessee, the latest members of *The Flock*, have dedicated Audubon's Roseate Tern to the memory of their parents, Faith and Adam G. (Lep) Adams.

Born in Nashville in 1887, Adam G. Adams graduated Vanderbilt University and came to Miami in 1924 where he pursued a career in real estate. Adams was a charter member of the Historical Association of Southern Florida and its president. An ardent historian, Adams chaired the Florida Civil War Centennial Commission, the board of the Florida Library and Historical Commission, and was a director of the Florida Historical Society. In a 1976 article for the *Miami Herald*, John Pennekamp called Adams" one of Dade County's foremost and ablest citizens."

Faith Adams survived her husband by 18 years and continued to live in Coral Gables where she and her husband built a home in the mid 1920s. It was there that their two daughters were reared. Faith shared her husband's passion in South Florida history and remained active as a museum Fellow until her death at 94 in 1994. Her first love, though, was the theater. Though her prominent Georgia parents disapproved, Faith performed with a Toronto summer stock company before she married and dreamed of appearing on the New York stage.

Raising children interrupted her acting career, but she returned to it as an amateur, performing at the University of Miami and community theaters. Faith Adams also shared her husband's con-



Roseate Tern by John James Audubon. HASE.

cern for the environment, and lifelong interest in Florida birds. She camped and bird-watched in the Everglades until the last years of her life.

Proceeds of the sponsorship of Audubon birds go to the Historical Museum's endowment.—SFH

To learn more about the Historical Museum's Audubon collection and how you can sponsor a bird and become a member of *The Flock*, please contact Marcia Kanner at 305.375.1492 or e-mail endowment@historical-museum.org.

HISTORICAL MUSEUM OF SOUTHERN FLORIDA

Miami-Dade Cultural Center, 101 West Flagler Street, Miami, 305.375.1492, www.historical-museum.org. Open seven days a week, Monday–Saturday from 10 am to 5 pm; Third Thursday 10 am to 9 pm; Sunday noon to 5 pm. Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day. Parking available at 50 N.W. 2nd Ave. Adults \$5; Children 6-12 \$2; HMSF members and children (5 and under) FREE.

SPECIAL EXHIBITIONS

Shipwrecks and Rescues, 1550-2000

February 27 to June 6

The first exhibition to explore specific shipwrecks and sea rescues around Florida's coasts from 1550 to 2000. This one-of-a-kind exhibit features fabulous artifacts salvaged from ships, maps, photographs and much more. Many activities for children including boarding a life size boat with actual movement.

Maggie Steber: Haitian Photographs

February 27 to June 6 (Lobby Exhibition)

Internationally known freelance photojournalist and former Director of Photography at The *Miami Herald*, Ms. Steber's award-winning photographs have been published in *National Geographic, Life, The New York Times, Newsweek, People* and many other American and European publications. As a tribute to Black History Month, the Historical Museum of Southern Florida is honored to display the powerful images captured by Maggie Steber during one of her many assignments in Haiti.

SPECIAL EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

Third Thursday Evenings

Third Thursdays, 6–8:30 pm FREE Historical Museum of Southern Florida

Join the Historical Museum for a fascinating series of panel discussions organized in conjunction with *Shipwrecks and Rescues*, 1550-2000.

March 18—Florida's Underground Railroad: Flight by Sea

Chair-Dinizulu Gene Tinnie (Co-Director of the Dos Amigos/ Fair Rosamond Slave Ship Replica Project)

Panelists–Joan Blank (local historian, author of Key Biscayne and Born of the Sun); Rosalyn Howard, PhD (author of Black Seminoles in the Bahamas; Professor of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Central Florida); Kristopher Smith (founder of the Florida Underground Railroad Project); Gail Swanson (Florida Keys historian, author of Documentation of the Indians of the Florida Keys and Miami, 1513-1765)

April 15—Underwater Archaeology: South Florida Shipwrecks

Chair-Christopher Eck (Broward County Historic Preservation Officer) Panelists-R. Duncan Mathewson III, PhD (author of *Treasure of the Atocha* and *Archaeological Treasure: The Search for the Nuestra Señora de Atocha*; Director of the National Center for Shipwreck

Research); Della Scott-Ireton (Underwater Archaeologist for Florida's Bureau of Archaeological Research); Brenda Lanzendorf (Archaeologist/Cultural Resources Manager at Biscayne National Park)

Second Saturdays—Family Fun Days

1-4 pm FREE

Historical Museum of Southern Florida

Fun programs and activities in conjunction with the Historical Museum's exhibitions. An experience the entire family will enjoy!

March 13—Weather or Knot

Hear a Hurricane Andrew survival story and learn the art of knot tying.

April 10—Gallery Hunt

Find clues during a scavenger hunt for the chance to win your very own compass.

May 8-Haiti Turns 200!

Celebrate the Haitian Bicentennial with artist in residence.

Discovery Days-Plan ahead for Teacher Planning Days!

Fun for the kids and peace of mind for the parents. Bring your kids to the Historical Museum for a fun-filled day of games, skits, arts and crafts, music and storytelling.

March 26—Blackbeard & Buccaneers

Ahoy mateys of all ages! Kids will have a great time exploring and learning about maritime legends and stories.

HISTORIC TOURS WITH DR. PAUL GEORGE

Miami River Boat Tour

Saturday, March 13, 10 am

A favorite among locals and tourists alike! Take a relaxing cruise along Miami's own working river and discover the historic site of a Tequesta village, three Spanish missions, slave plantations and much more! HMSF members \$32. Non-Members \$37. Advance reservations required.

Ocean Drive Art Deco Walking Tour

Saturday, March 20, 10 am

Experience South Beach as never before and discover the amazing collection of Art Deco architecture along Ocean Drive. Learn the history behind the trendy hotels and view the Wolfsonian's frozen fountain. HMSF members \$12. Non-members \$17.



COLLIER COUNTY MUSEUM, 3301 Tamiami Trail East, Naples—941.774.8476. The Collier County Museum explores the people, places and everyday events that have shaped Collier County's heritage. The museum and four-acre historical park are open Monday through Friday, 9. am–5 pm. Free.



BOCA RATON HISTORICAL SOCIETY TOWN HALL, 71 N. Federal Highway, Boca Raton—561.395.6766. The Boca Raton Historical Society operates a museum and gift shop at the old town hall. Hours of operation are Tuesday through Friday, 10 am—4 pm.



CLEWISTON MUSEUM, 112 South Commercio Street, Clewiston—863.983.2870. The Clewiston Museum, founded in 1984, is a growing museum, collecting and displaying items, large and small, important and trivial, which reflect the past of Clewiston and its surrounding area. The Clewiston Museum is open 1–5 pm Tuesday through Saturday, with seasonal adjustments. No admission fee is charged; however, donations are encouraged.



THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF PALM BEACH COUNTY, 139 North County Road, Suite 25, Palm Beach—561.832.4164. A nonprofit membership organization devoted to collecting and preserving archives and artifacts pertaining to the history of Palm Beach County and Florida. Make local history a part of your life and join as a member to help support this effort. You will enjoy lectures and special events, discounts on historical books and research fees. Office hours are Monday through Friday. from 9 am–5 pm. Research hours are by appointment Tuesday through Thursday from 10 am–3 pm.

The above institutions subscribe to South Florida History as a benefit for their members.

Yesterday's Visions for Sale at the Historical Museum

A treasure trove of revealing, dramatic and scenic photographs of South Florida's past are available to adorn the walls of your home or place of business.

With more than one million photographs and postcards, there's something for everyone.

Call 305.375.1492, or stop by the Historical Museum's Research Center for further details.



Assignment Miami: News Photographers

by Stephen Stuempfle

On June 19, 2003, the Historical Museum of Southern Florida opened *Assignment Miami: News Photographers*, an exhibition that will be on display through January 18, 2004. The exhibition is the first

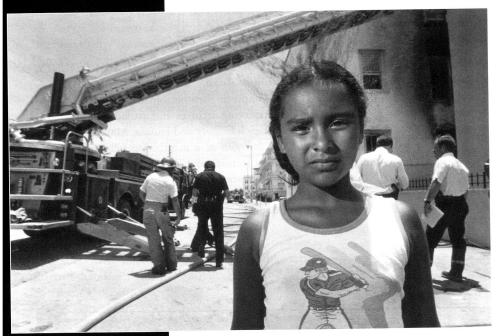
ever to explore the history of newspaper photography in Greater Miami. Since the early decades of the 20th century, news photographers have played a central role in documenting the life of the city and shaping its image for local, national, and international audiences. Though their photographs have circulated widely, most of the photojournalists themselves have received limited recognition. *Assignment Miami* pays tribute to several generations of these individuals by presenting examples of their best work.

Visitors to the exhibition will have an unparalleled opportunity to view the remarkable range of images created over the years by Miami's news photographers. Included are photographs of many of the most dramatic events in the city's history, such as the 1926 hurricane, the attempted assassination of President-elect Franklin Roosevelt in 1933, the aftermath of the

Roosevelt in 1933, the aftermath of the Cuban Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961, the riot and refugee crises of 1980 and the Presidential election and Elián González controversies of 2000. However, many of the images on display are of more commonplace events that are typical of Miami. There are children at the beach, teenagers dancing at a quinceñera party, senior citizens resting in a hotel lobby, ladies trying on Easter hats at a Coconut Grove church and a motorist waiting for a drawbridge to close over the Miami River. Some of the photographs capture moments of great tragedy: the family of a murdered man, screaming as they approach his body; or a nine-year old girl, her haunted eyes fixed on the photographer, soon after being rescued by fire-fighters from her apartment. Other images record split seconds of triumph and joy: a University of Miami cheerleader leaping in celebration of a football victory or ecstatic fans at a rock and roll concert

at Dinner Key Auditorium in 1956.

Work on *Assignment Miami* began in 2001, spearheaded by George Chillag, Exhibits Curator and staff photographer at the Historical Museum. The museum established an advisory committee of photojournalists and recruited two guest curators for the exhibition: Dr. Michael Carlebach, a



Mizzoidy Perez, age 9, after being rescued from her apartment by firefighters.
Randy Bazemore.
The Miami Herald.
1986. Courtesy of The Miami Herald.

University of Miami expert on the history of photojournalism, and Maggie Steber, an internationally acclaimed freelance photographer and past Director of Photography at *The Miami Herald.* A grant from the Florida Division of Historical Resources in 2002 enabled us to move ahead with the project.

The nucleus of the exhibition was the *Miami News* collection of photographs in the Historical Museum's Research Center. This unique collection of over a half million images suggested many possibilities for organizing an exhibition that would reveal

the development of newspaper photography in Miami. The curatorial team also obtained generous loans of photographs from several of the other oldest news organizations operating in the city, including *The Miami Herald, The Miami Times*, and the Associated Press.

By the time of the exhibition opening in June, the guest curators had selected over 300 photographs by more than 100 photographers. The curatorial team was constantly impressed by the exceptional quality of the photography that Miami has inspired. If space would have permitted, hundreds of other excellent photographs could have been chosen. The selected photographs are exhibited in four major categories of newspaper photography: spot news (breaking news), general news, features (daily life) and sports. In addition to the featured photographs, the exhibition includes images of photographers at work, examples of photographic equipment from the 1930s to the present and an interactive digital photo editing system from the Herald. This

supplementary material provides a glimpse of the occupational culture of news photographers.

Many themes run through the photographs displayed in Assignment Miami. One is the constant tension between order and disorder in the city. Some images portray the regularities of civic life: appearances of public officials, parades or citizens lining up to register to vote at the Dade County Courthouse (in a photograph by Don Wright). Other photographs focus on dramatic challenges to the civic order, such as Richard Johnson's shot of looters racing across a burning neighborhood during the McDuffie riot of 1980. Police officers appear frequently in the photographs, apprehending suspects or displaying caches of guns and drugs. Many photographs record accidents or breakdowns in the flow of urban life. For example, Brian Smith captures a street scene in which a victim is carried by her nephew, following the crash of a car into a cafeteria. In contrast, other images of street life reveal the city at ease. Albert Coya, for instance, shows Mohammad Ali

playfully sparring with bystanders outside the 5th Street Gym on Miami Beach.

Another theme in the exhibited photographs is the dynamism and hectic pace of the city. A number of photographs focus on people arriving in Miami by various means of transportation. There are images of dignitaries, such as Toby Massey's shot of President and Mrs. Kennedy walking away from a helicopter in 1962. Tourists appear, as well. A photograph by Michael O'Brien shows a couple from Ohio in their car, the husband resting in the

backseat. Some visitors to Miami are welcomed graciously, such as the elegant Brandford models, arriving by plane to visit the Lord Calvert Hotel in Overtown (in a photograph by Frank Johnson). Andrew Innearity, on the other hand, provides a view of Haitian refugees after they were intercepted by the U.S. Coast Guard.

Assignment Miami, as a whole, reflects the continuous change in Miami over the past 75 years. This is one of the great values of photographs—their capacity to serve as evidence of how a community appeared at specific points in time. By studying the more than 300 photographs in the exhibition, visitors will be able to obtain a broader perspective on their own location in the city at the beginning of the 21st century. In short, the images offer a multitude of opportunities for reflection and debate about the city that we have created.

In order to further encourage dialogue about Miami's history and its visual record, the Historical Museum is

presenting, through January 2004, a series of programs on photojournalism. Panel discussions on Third Thursdays (7:00 – 8:30 p.m.) feature leading photojournalists and other specialists on Miami's visual history. Photography programs for families are being held on Second Saturdays (1–4 pm). All of the programs are free and open to the public. Through both the programs and the exhibition itself, the Historical Museum hopes to stimulate an expansion in the practice of documentary photography in Miami and in the collection, study, and exhibition of documentary photographs. Such activities will sharpen our perceptions of Miami and help us to better understand the complexities of this constantly evolving city.–*SFH*



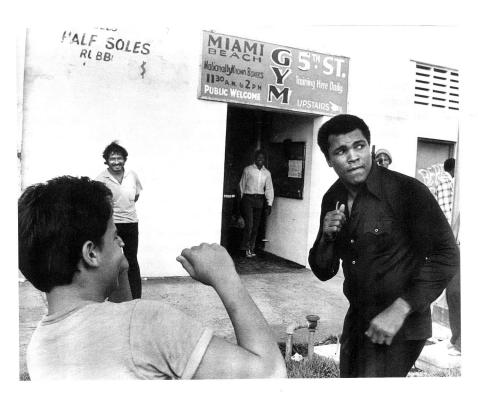
Miami Herald photographer Battle Vaughan and photojournalist Kathy Willens at the scene of a fire.

Photographer unknown. *The Miami Herald.* ca. 1980. Courtesy of Battle Vaughan.

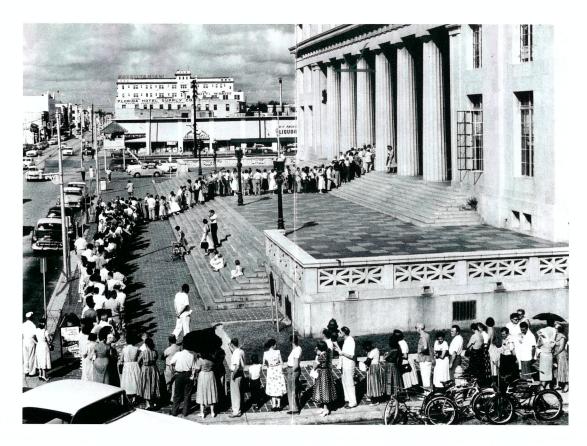
To order a copy of the catalog for *Assignment Miami*, contact the Historical Museum store at 305. 375.1492.



Raul Valdes carries his aunt, Carmen Medero, to an ambulance, after she was injured when a car crashed into a cafeteria at the corner of N.W. 36th Street and 2nd Avenue. Brian Smith. *The Miami Herald.* 1988. Courtesy of *The Miami Herald.*



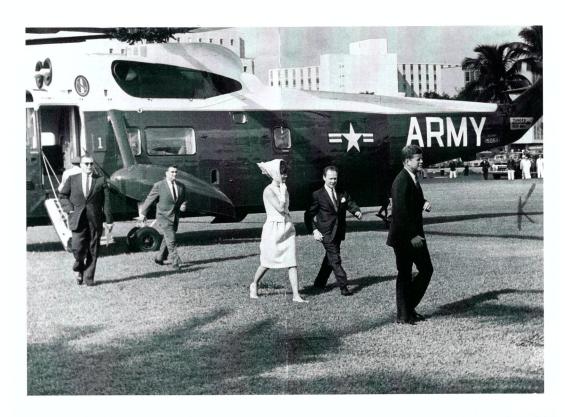
Mohammad Ali outside the 5th Street Gym on Miami Beach. Albert Coya. The Miami Herald. 1977. Courtesy of The Miami Herald.



A long line in front of the Dade County Courthouse on the last day of voter registration. Don Wright. The Miami News. 1956. Historical Museum of Southern Florida, Miami News Collection. 1995-277-5044.



Looters carrying furniture on N.W. 56th Street during the McDuffie riot. Richard Johnson. The Miami Herald. 1980. Courtesy of The Miami Herald.



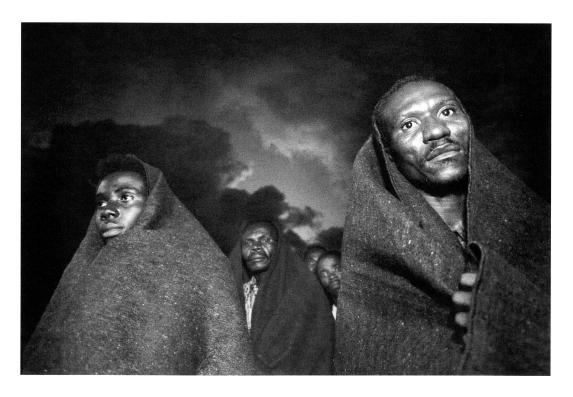
President John F. Kennedy walks away from an Army helicopter, followed by First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy, Press Secretary Pierre Salinger (left), and Miami Mayor Robert King High. Kennedy later addressed 20,000 spectators at the Orange Bowl in recognition of the 2506 Brigade, veterans of the Bay of Pigs invasion. Toby Massey. *The Miami News*. 1962. Historical Museum of Southern Florida, *Miami News* Collection. 1989-011-4469.



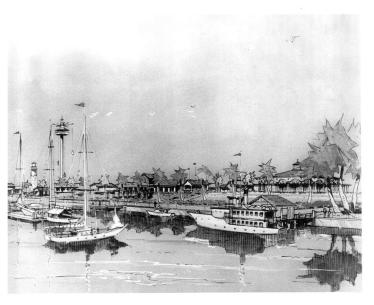
Ida Lower crochets while her husband, Richard Lower, sleeps in the back seat of their car. They are visiting Miami from Galion, Ohio. Michael O'Brien. The Miami News. 1970s. Historical Museum of Southern Florida, Miami News Collection. 1989-011-16354.



Brandford models arrive for a visit to the Lord Calvert Hotel in Overtown. Frank Johnson. The Miami Times. ca. 1960. Courtesy of The Miami Times.

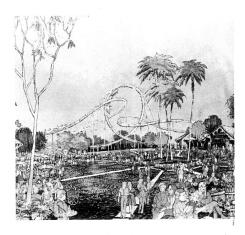


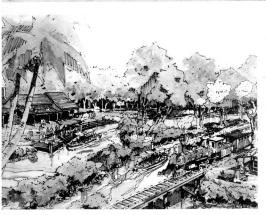
After a U.S. Coast Guard pre-dawn interception, these Haitians aboard a freighter were taken ashore and given blankets, before being sent to the Krome Detention Center. Andrew Innerarity. The Miami Herald. 1993. Courtesy of The Miami Herald.



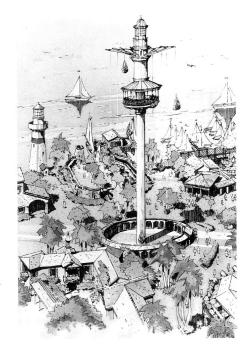








Conceptual drawings for a proposed Watson Island Park on Watson Island, 1978. Clockwise, top left to right-View of Watson Island Yacht Marina. HASF 95-277-9378. Northeast view of the "Old Florida" Amusement Area. HASF 1995-277-9382. Northwest view of the Caribbean International Village & Florida Lighthouse Tower. HASF 1993-277-9385. Section view of "Flagler Railroad and Old Florida Scenic Ride." HASF 1995-277-9384. Northwest view of Watson Island Park Main Entrance & Japanese Garden. HASF 1995-277-9380.



The many lives tson Island

by Dr. Paul George

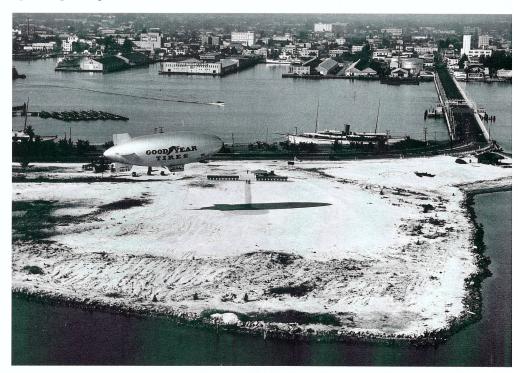
fter decades of dormancy, the 86 acre Watson Island, located in Biscayne Bay between the cities of Miami and Miami Beach, is booming. In 2003, both the Parrot Jungle Island, for decades one of the area's premier tourist attractions, along with the Miami Children's Museum, opened sparkling new facilities on the

island. Coming soon is a mega-yacht basin on the island's west flank, a nearby market, and, perhaps, two condominium towers.

Before there was a Watson Island, there was a City of Miami, which incorporated in July 1896; the nascent city's corporate borders on the east stretched more than one mile into Biscayne Bay. Three miles farther east stood the future Miami Beach, at the time a windswept peninsula virtually bereft of residents. The first bridge to cross the waters of beautiful Biscayne Bay and connect mainland Miami with today's city of Miami Beach was the Collins Bridge, completed in 1913. Billed as the "world's longest wooden bridge," the Collins Bridge stood less than one mile north of today's Watson Island where the right-of-way exists for today's Venetian Causeway.

Between 1916 and 1920, the County Causeway, also known as the "Million Dollar Causeway," (although its construction costs barely exceeded \$625,000), was completed. Later called the MacArthur

Causeway for the American World War II hero, General Douglas MacArthur, the span became the second link between Miami, the Magic City, and the newly incorporated municipality of Miami Beach. In the meantime, the city created, through federal



In the 1930s, Goodyear Tires blimp base, which operated on the western sector of the island, became Watson Island's most visible tenant, April 1934. HASE, Miami News Collection 89-011-2314.

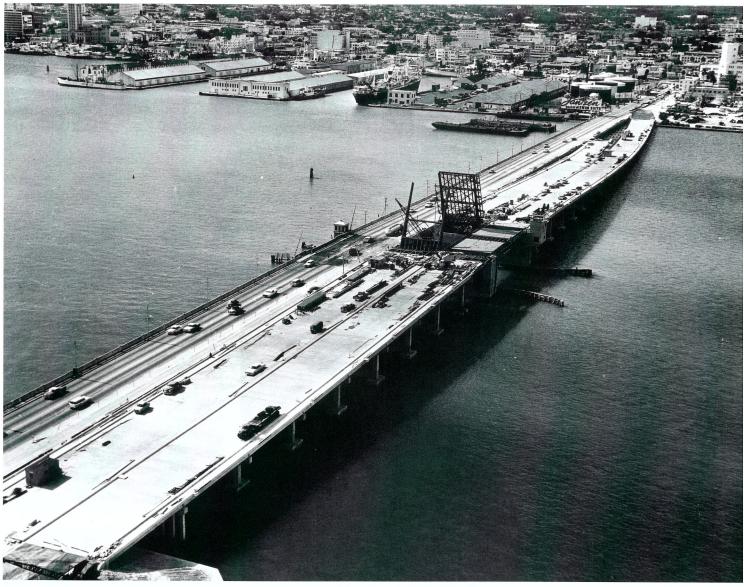
funding, a deep-water channel called the Government Cut, running from the Port of Miami, located along Miami's waterfront north of Northeast Sixth Street out to the deep waters of the Atlantic Ocean. In subsequent years, additional dredging of the deep-water channel led to the creation of several spoil islands known collectively as Dodge Islands. It was upon the enlarged versions of the Dodge Islands that a new Port of Miami opened in the 1960s.

In the summer of 1931, another episode of channel dredging, along with the deepening of the turn basin located northwest of the Dodge Islands, led to the creation of the future Watson Island from the pile of dirt dredged from the shallow bay bottom. Known initially as Causeway Island, the nascent island straddled both sides of the southern bend of the County Causeway. Its land mass represented only a portion of today's Watson Island.

After the island's creation, Miami officials considered using it as an exposition area where American manufacturers could display their products to Latin American visitors and businessmen, since the city was already welcoming many persons from the southern reaches of the hemisphere. This idea, however, came to naught; instead, in the 1930s, which mark the years of the Great Depression, the island hosted temporary visitors like a lion and tiger training act, as well as one long-term "resident," a Goodyear Tires blimp base. The Goodyear blimp, which operated from a base in the western sector of Causeway Island, became its most visible tenant until 1979, when the blimp departed Watson Island, following a lease dispute, for the friendlier confines of Pompano Beach. A few years later, the Chalk Seaplane base, founded by Papy Chalk in 1919 at the foot of East Flagler Street and Biscayne Bay, moved its operations to the southwestern edge of the island.



In 1948, the Miami Yacht Club became an occupant of the eastern sector of the island, pre-1974. HASF, Miami News Collection 89-011-18002.



In 1961, the Florida road department completed construction of new spans on the western and eastern ends of the MacArthur Causeway, 1961. HASF, Miami News Collection 89-011-2327.

After the conclusion of World War II in 1945, plans for the island centered again around the creation of a Pan American center. Again, however, the idea failed to reach fruition, although many other proposals for the island emerged. One Miami city commissioner proposed building a "sports palace" there, while the city's yacht basin director lobbied to move all of the charter boats, sightseeing craft and excursion boats away from the bay front and eastward to the island. Neither idea advanced beyond the discussion stage. In 1948, Causeway Island acquired two additional long term occupants: the Miami Yacht Club and the Miami Outboard Club, each of which signed lengthy leases for portions of the eastern sector of the island.

In 1949, the City of Miami received the deed to the island from the State of Florida, which had, until then, held bay bottom rights, with the stipulation that "said lands shall be used

solely for public purpose." Soon after, Watson Island became the new moniker for the Causeway Island. The name honored John Watson Sr., an early mayor of Miami, a member of the Florida State Legislature, and a leader of the first motorcade to cross the Collins Bridge upon its opening; it also honored John Watson's son, John Jr., a longtime city attorney who served 17 mayors and 11 city managers. Even with the name change, the schemes for the island's development, then consisting of about 45 acres, continued. In 1951, a group of investors proposed the creation of an aquarium, along with shops, restaurants and a tavern on the spit of former bay bottom. While this scheme went nowhere, the idea of creating an island park was gaining increasing support. One city commissioner even proposed planting a hibiscus garden throughout the island. His motion failed, but the proposal may have catalyzed a slight name

change for the island, since the land now became known as Watson Park.

On the heels of the failed aquarium idea came a new proposal calling for the creation of a "Science City," to be comprised of central exhibit buildings leased to large companies such as General Motors, for permanent exhibits of a scientific or industrial nature. While the city commission was strongly supportive of the concept, it failed because of the deed restrictions on the use of that public land.

By the mid-1950s, the city commission approved the construction of a helicopter port in the center of the island, while additional schemes continued to be unveiled. But it was the Florida road department's turn to alter the island/park, when, in 1956, it commenced construction (completed in 1961) of new spans on the western and eastern ends of the MacArthur Causeway. The construction of the new western bridge led to a re-routing of traffic through the island. Where traffic had

Aerial view of the Japanese Garden, pre 1974. HASF, Miami News Collection 89-011-18001.

formerly swept along the southwestern edges of Watson Park, as it was now commonly known, it was now routed over a new road running through its center (today, 88,000 cars race back and forth through the island each day!).

In the mid-1950s, the city unveiled a master plan for development of the park. The plan included a dockage area for cruise ships on its western edge, a large marina with six finger docks on the northern fringe, maritime shopping center, a public boat launching area on its eastern edge and a large park centrally located, in addition to the organizations already there. Although only a portion of the plan was implemented, another development in that era radically transformed the appearance of the eastern half

of the island. Kiyoshi Ichimura, a Tokyo industrialist, became enamored of Miami after a visit in the mid-1950s and created, with the enthusiastic support of the city, a San-Ai-An Japanese Garden on several acres on the barren eastern half of the island. Beginning in the late 1950s, Ichimura began sending dismantled objects and materials from Tokyo, along with six carpenters, three gardeners, and Kingo Sakamoto, Japan's premier landscape architect. Sakamoto designed the garden and supervised nearly 100 city workers who helped construct it. The park included an eight-ton granite statue of Hotei, the smiling, chubby Japanese god of prosperity and longevity, a lagoon with water cascading into it from irregular rocks placed above, a 13-tier stone pagoda weighing almost five tons, and an ornate ceremonial teahouse made of flawless bamboo, cedar and pine. Standing out from the many trees studding the garden were beautiful Hong Kong orchids imported from the East. Dedicated in 1961, the gardens represented the loveliest portion of Watson Island in the ensuing

two decades before falling into disrepair and closing.

In the meantime, plans continued to be unveiled for Watson Island. None, however, was implemented. Among the bevy of schemes were those calling for a theme park with a performance hall, restaurants and shops; an 850-foot space needle; a 300 slip marina and a 300 room resort hotel; huge marine exposition center; statue of Christopher Columbus to stand one foot taller than the Statue of Liberty; performing arts center; and additional hotels, restaurants, theme parks and marinas. As Miami Herald columnist Geoffrey Tomb noted in 1996, Watson Island "has been the focus of more plans than any other single piece of land in South Florida. Scores of ideas have been drummed up. Some happened and died. Most never happened. Many are still being proposed."

Today, Watson Island is finally fulfilling its rich potential as a premier water-oriented venue with a stunning 360 degree view of the magical waters and municipalities of

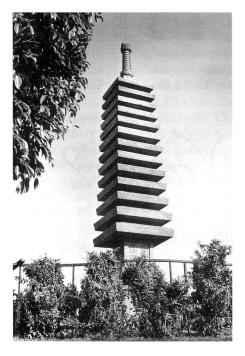
Miami-Dade County. Along with other elements of the center city, abandoned decades ago by the rush to suburbia, Watson Island, the Omni area, and other portions of the city's attractive bay front are making a notable comeback. The Miami of tomorrow has begun to emerge, and as this process continues, it will result in a significantly different city from that of the recent past. The redevelopment of Watson Island, a critical link between two notable municipalities, represents a key component of this picture.—*SFH*

Dr. Paul S. George, a professor at Miami Dade College, is the Historical Museum of Southern Florida's historian.

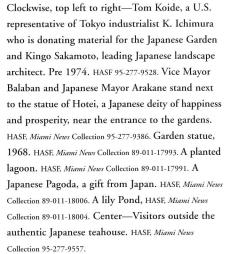






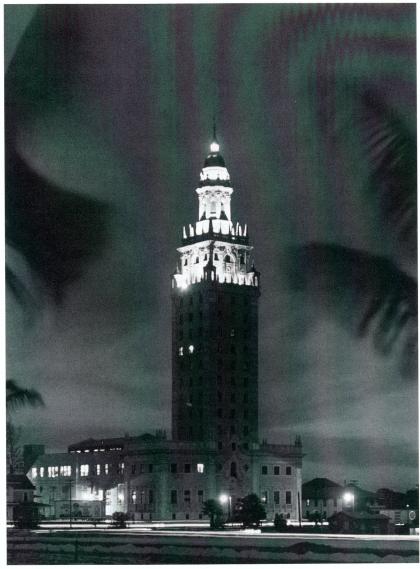












The illuminated tower of the Miami News Building welcomed thousands beginning their new life in the United States. Courtesy of Raul Rodriguez.

What's In a Name?

For Hundreds of Thousands of Cuban Exiles, Miami's **Eveedom **Tower** Meant Hope and the Beginning of a New Destiny

by Ellen J. Uguccioni

For many Americans, the perception of symbol is frequently lost to the literal. Objects transcend the literal when they are associated with a greater reality. Think of the associations we conjure when viewing the American flag, the Vietnam Memorial or the Liberty Bell. Perhaps America's greatest symbol is the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor, an image that speaks to democracy's limitless magnanimity in assisting the oppressed with the promise of opportunity for all. For hundreds of thousands of Cuban citizens, the Freedom Tower would take on that powerful status of symbol in its role as a Cuban Refugee Center opened in 1962. The epic story of the Cuban exodus is remarkable in many ways. One of those was in the way United States' policy addressed this unprecedented phenomenon.

A Brief History of Immigration

Immigration to the United States reached epic proportions in the late 19th and early 20th century. On the east coast, the Port of New York received the largest number of immigrants from all over the world. In 1890 the federal government selected Ellis Island as the Federal Immigration Center for New York. Opening in January 1892, the center processed thousands of refugees who received medical exams and travel assistance. The peak period for Ellis Island was between 1892 and 1924 when some 12 million immigrants came into the country. By 1924, the government passed the National Origins Act that severely restricted the numbers of immigrants admitted. As the numbers of immigrants slowed, the need for the facility dwindled. During World War II, the facilities were used as a detention center for enemy aliens. In 1954, the doors were closed permanently.

On the west coast, the United States Immigration Station on Angel Island served as the point of entry for Asians from 1910 until 1940. The island was the largest in the San Francisco Bay, and originally served as a military installation. In 1908, construction began on the immigration facilities that included an administration building, detention barracks, hospital, powerhouse and wharf. Chinese immigrants were detained at Angel Island in a prison-like environment while awaiting permission to enter the United States. Unlike the European immigrants who entered the country through Ellis Island, with the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, the Chinese were prohibited from becoming citizens. The only exceptions allowed were for diplomats, travelers, ministers, students and children of citizens. Upon their arrival in San Francisco, whites, Japanese and other Asian immigrants were separated from the Chinese.

Angel Island Immigration Station closed in 1940, but during World War II it was used as a prisoner of war camp. Between 1942 and 1946 the facilities housed German, Italian and Japanese prisoners of war. The Army declared the facility surplus in 1946.

The Politics of Exile

The world still resonates from the startling political development that occurred in Cuba more than 40 years ago. Cuba was once the playground of Americans who visited its pristine beaches,

enjoyed its storied history and invested in hotels and agricultural pursuits. In the early 1950s, a young rebel, Fidel Alejandro Castro Ruz, would begin his rhetorical war with then dictator Fulgencio Batista, a war that would soon escalate to physical violence and eventually overthrow the Batista regime. Along with Argentinean revolutionary Ernesto "Che" Guevara, Castro

would lead a revolution that ended with his ascension to power in 1959, during the presidency of Dwight D. Eisenhower. Surprisingly, the revolution did not merit the front page of the Miami Herald newspaper even though its consequences would change the face of Miami forever.

Castro sought a normalization of affairs with the United States in April 1959, but Eisenhower refused. Before long, Castro began a reign of terror and aligned himself with the Communist party. He seized the assets of the wealthy and expropriated

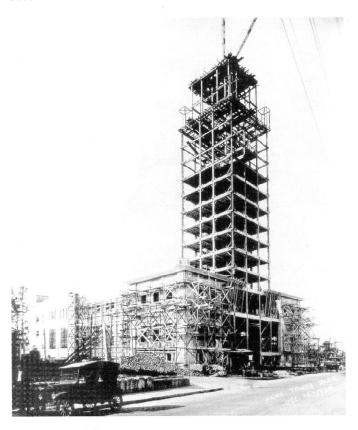


Monsignor Bryan O. Walsh was instrumental in the Cuban refugee relief effort of the 1960s. HASF 1995-277-17446.

lands and businesses. Droves of upper and middle class Cubans, fearing violence, imprisonment or worse, fled the country leaving their possessions behind. They never doubted that they would soon return to their homeland after Castro was ousted from power. The Cuban people thought of themselves as exiles, not immigrants, as did the United States government, and that distinction would powerfully influence the government's policies and conduct in assisting their resettlement.

Castro's government began a campaign to rid the island of anyone who did not support his ideologies. Thousands were imprisoned, and reports claimed that as many as 10,000 were executed. An unprecedented exodus followed that would test the mettle of Americans who provided shelter and the fortitude of the Cuban people who were to begin a new life, many with nothing left. The number of émigrés to the United States was estimated at 62,000 in 1960; 67,000 in 1961 and 66,000 in 1962. The federal government was not yet prepared to deal with either the short- or long-term consequences of the exodus.

Given that Miami was geographically close, possessed the same climate and had been the vacation destination for scores of Cubans in the pre-Castro days, the city became the major port of entry for the exiles. Before the arrival of federal aid, the Catholic Church became the leader in the Cuban relief effort. In 1959, Bishop Coleman Carroll established the Centro Hispano Católico, located in a wing of the Gesu Church in downtown Miami. Monsignor Bryan Walsh, then a young priest, was instrumental in these humanitarian efforts. He characterized the arriving émigrés in this way: "They are simply destitute, and these are the people who were people of substance in Cuba."





Old News Tower Leased For Cuban Refugee Workers



Top—The Miami News Building under construction. Designed by New York architects Schultze and Weaver, the building rose to the height of 15 stories. Above—This edition of the Miami News published on April 19, 1962 announced the renaming of the building as the Freedom Tower. Courtesy of Howard Kleinberg.

As conditions in Cuba worsened, it soon became clear that federal assistance was needed. Florida's Governor LeRoy Collins appealed to President Eisenhower who immediately released

\$1 million in disaster relief. In making those funds available, Eisenhower acknowledged that Cuba was a communist state and that the arriving Cubans were considered political refugees. He was following the Truman Doctrine, which emphatically stated that the United States would support "free people resisting aggression from without and within."

The government provided rent subsidies of between \$80 and \$100 a month so that refugees could find housing. The subsidy actually facilitated the creation of "Little Havana" in an aging Miami neighborhood once known as Riverside. The first federally funded assistance center was set up in this area at Southwest 12th Avenue and Coral Way.

A unique immigration policy was established during the Eisenhower administration. By relaxing immigration quotas, the administration "bent the rules." The situation warranted this approach as this was the first time that the United States became the country of first asylum for such a large group of refugees. This immigration policy was, in any event, just a temporary solution, as both the U.S. government and the refugees fully expected Castro's hold on power to be short lived.

Following his election in 1961, President Kennedy sent Abraham Ribicoff, Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, to Miami in order to evaluate the situation firsthand. Federal aid was immediately increased and included provision for such additional services as health services, job training and surplus food distribution as well as monthly relief checks.

On July 1, 1962, the General Services Administration leased the first four floors of the former Miami News Building at 600 Biscayne Blvd., soon to be renamed "The Freedom Tower, and for the émigrés themselves "El Refugio." The Miami News Building was already considered remarkable in its first incarnation as a newspaper plant.

The Miami News Building

The *Miami Metropolis* was first published on May 15, 1896, as a weekly. Former governor of Ohio and the 1920 Democratic Party presidential candidate James M. Cox purchased the paper in 1923 and changed its name to the *Miami Daily News and Metropolis*. In 1924 Cox commissioned the New York architectural firm of Schultze and Weaver to design his building housing the offices and the printing presses for the paper.

The architectural firm of Leonard Schultze and S. Fullerton Weaver was no stranger to the South Florida scene. They simultaneously designed the Miami News Building, the 1925 Roney Plaza Hotel in Miami Beach (demolished 1968), and the Miami-Biltmore Hotel in Coral Gables (designed in late 1924, opened in January 1926.) For each of these buildings, the architects chose as the focal point of their design, a tower structure that was modeled after the 16th century Giralda Tower of the Cathedral of Seville, giving the buildings a strong sense of historicism with a decidedly Spanish flavor.

Begun in June 1924, the Miami News Building with its 17 stories rising to a height of 283 feet soared over the skyline of boom-time Miami. When it opened on July 26, 1925, the *Miami*

News printed a special edition of the paper containing 504 pages and weighing a whopping seven and one-half pounds. As the year 1925 proved to be the zenith of the Florida Real Estate Boom, the advertisements for goods and services along with the hundreds of real estate offerings fully justified a paper that huge. With the end of the Boom and subsequent Depression, the Miami News weathered the storm and occupied their building on Biscayne Boulevard until 1957, when they moved to new quarters.

El Refugio

In simple gold letters, the building at 600 Biscayne Blvd. was identified as "The Freedom Tower." Lines of Cuban émigrés snaked around the building waiting their turn at achieving self-sufficiency in the United States. At the Freedom Tower immigrants were furnished with identification cards and interviewed to determine their strengths along with their needs. The first through fourth floors were used for processing at a series of different stations.

The new émigrés were given a medical examination, checked for tuberculosis and inoculated. Those found seriously ill were transferred to either the Gesu Medical Clinic or Jackson Memorial Hospital. Surplus foods like canned meat, peanut butter and cheese were distributed to augment financial means.

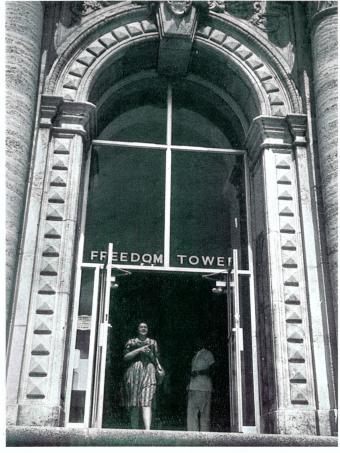
Volunteer agencies interviewed the new arrivals to arrange for resettlement outside of Miami. The resettlement effort was a major program of El Refugio. While the federal government insisted that there be no "forced" resettlement, the Miami community could simply not accommodate the number of Cubans entering the country. Lists of job offers were maintained, and the government attempted to send at least four families to the same location so that they avoided the feeling of isolation.

In 1974, the federal government closed The Freedom Tower as they phased out the Cuban Refugee Program, having spent \$957 million in the effort. Even while the government program ended, thousands more would come in the next three decades, many risking their lives to find a new way of life in a new country. Though its role as The Freedom Tower ended, it remains a powerful symbol of the indomitable spirit of a people whose most important possession is freedom.-SFH

Architectural Historian Ellen J. Uguccioni is the retired Director of the City of Coral Gables Historic Preservation Department and presently an historic preservation planner with Janus Research. She is currently a member of the Florida Historical Commission, a Trustee of the Historical Museum of Southern Florida, and a Trustee and Secretary for the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation.

Top right—A line of Cuban émigrés snakes around the Freedom Tower as they await assistance. Courtesy of Howard Kleinberg. Bottom right—This magnificat portal led to the four floors of assistance workers inside. HASH 1981-99-74.





Freedom Tower/Miami News Tower

A new Museum?

An opportunity currently exists for the public acquisition and operation of one of the most historically significant buildings that graces the Miami waterfront landscape. The Historical Museum of Southern Florida has been engaged in conversations with Miami-Dade County leadership and the Mas family, current owners of the property, about use of the proposed General Obligation Bond (G.O.B.) program funds for Miami-Dade County to acquire the Tower and the Historical Museum to occupy and operate it as a premier interpretative center for Miami's history. The County, in a similar bond issue, purchased the Vizcaya property in 1952.

The building was built as the headquarters of the *Miami Daily News and Metropolis* and first occupied on July 26, 1925, and continued in that role until September of 1957. It sat idle until 1962 when the U.S. General Services Administration used it as the Cuban Refugee Center until it closed in 1974. The building went through several transitions until the Mas family purchased it in 1997 and started the restoration.

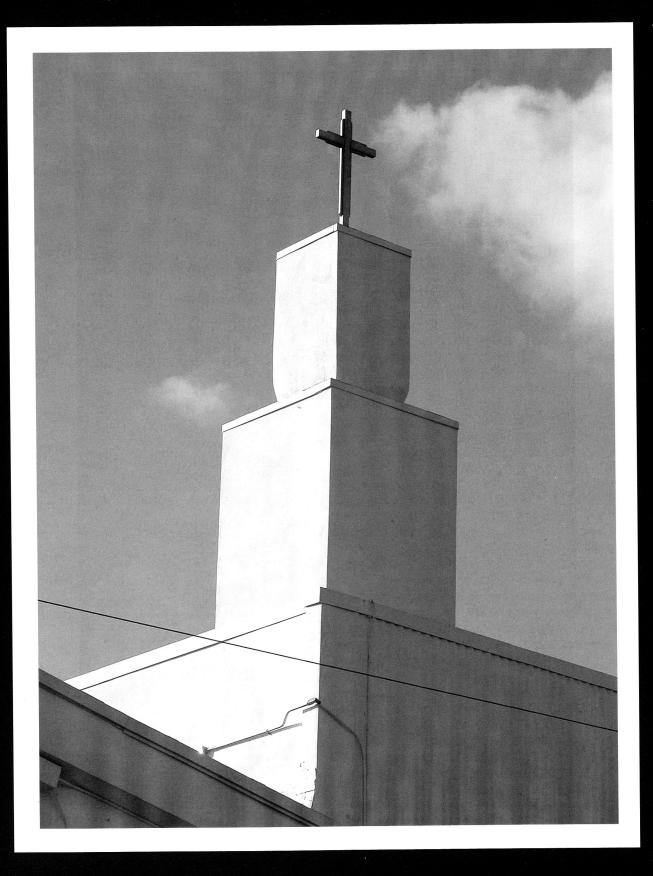
On September 9, 2004, the Board of County Commissioners identified the Freedom Tower / Miami News Tower, along with the proposed new museums for Art and Science, as appropriate venues for use of the proposed \$1.5 billion G.O.B, which are much needed in our rapidly expanding area. The G.O.B. issue will be presented to the voters of Miami-Dade County in November of 2004.

The Historical Museum, along with other community leaders, believes that the Tower has significant historic, symbolic and landmark value that is of major importance to our past, present and future populations. The building, which has been restored, currently stands idle, waiting for program use. The extensive multi-year restoration utilized the recognized talents of former Historical Museum Chair, architect Raul Rodriguez. Because of this prior work, the time and public dollars needed to acquire and turn this unique Miami building into a world-class museum could be achieved at a fraction of the cost of new construction. This would be a most efficient use of public money. This is truly a project deserving public and private support to benefit our entire community.

The Historical Museum is committed to fulfilling its mission for our community by providing the best possible facilities and programs available to interpret, preserve and share with our residents and visitors the rich history of our region. If the Tower acquisition does not emerge as an option, we will continue to look for new or improved facilities to provide the kind of historical programming that our world-class community deserves.



Right—The Freedom Tower. Courtesy of Raul Rodriguez.



Preserving the

A brief architectural, historical and pictorial essay on the first seven historically black churches of Fort Lauderdale

by Christopher R. Eck

The steeple of the Mount Hermon A.M.E. Church is a testament to the stark modernist geometry of the early 1960s. All photographs courtesy of Christopher R. Eck.

FOR A CENTURY, through pioneer deprivations, segregation, hurricanes and floods, urban blight and renewal, a core of religious institutions has helped to nurture and sustain the African-American community in northwest Fort Lauderdale. Seven churches—like the seven biblical churches described by Saint John in the New Testament—have served as beacons of spiritual renewal and social sustenance for the needs of the city's black residents.

Each of these seven churches—the Fifth Avenue Church of

God, Mount Hermon African Methodist Episcopal, Mount Olive Baptist, Piney Grove First Baptist, Saint Christopher Episcopal, Saint John's United Methodist, and Saint Luke Baptist—first planted roots in the city between 1904 and 1925. Through 100 years, at times alternatively struggling and thriving, these seven congregations have survived.

This article presents a brief vignette of each of these remarkable institutions which are near to the heart of many of the city's black residents. The several photographs presented here were taken in a single afternoon; a day of mixed clouds and sunshine perhaps reflecting both the stormy and clear times that they have endured. They each present a glimpse of the front façade or steeple representing the hopes of those that enter these hallowed edifices that their prayers aspire heavenward.

Piney Grove First Baptist Church, 400 N.W. 12th Ave.

Piney Grove is the most venerable of all of the churches represented here and the second oldest church (either black or white) in the city. Founded in 1904 as a "mission" church by the Reverend B.F. Goodwin of Lemon City, its original congregation was comprised of only 11 members. Before the first permanent church could be built, one of the city's white founders, Thomas M. Bryan, allowed the members to meet in the white school house while the first church building was constructed. Today, the present building—a modernist interpretation of a traditional ecclesiastical form with a central nave, bell tower, and a mullioned "rose" window over the arched main entrance completed in 1951 at a cost of \$90,000—remains an important cornerstone of social activity within the city.

Mount Hermon African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, 401 N.W. 7th Terr.

Mount Hermon is the second oldest black church in Fort

Lauderdale and was established in 1911. The first pastor was the Reverend James H. Haines, who also shared his ministry as head of another church in Pompano Beach. Mount Hermon's ministers were active in the young city, which had only been incorporated in 1911, and the county, which was created by the legislature in 1915 from northern Dade County and southern Palm Beach County. Rev. Haines, for instance, received the sixth hunting license issued in the county in 1915 and another pastor, the Reverend Lawrence A. Forbes, was among the earli-

est black residents in the city registered to vote, which he did in 1916. The present church building—a large but starkly unadorned modernist masonry structure built in 1962—has a tall, stacked pedestal steeple capped by a small concrete cross.

Seven churches—

like the seven biblical churches

described by Saint John in

the New Testament—have

served as beacons of spiritual

renewal and social sustenance

for the needs of the city's

black residents.

Saint Christopher Episcopal Church, 318 N.W. 6th Ave.

In 1913, Saint Christopher's was the third of these seven churches to be organized and it was the second Episcopal church formed in Fort Lauderdale, the white parish of All Saint's having been formed in 1912. Of the seven churches discussed here, however, Saint Christopher's is the oldest congregation to have its house of worship still remain on its original location. Started by five Bahamian families in a converted three-room wooden house, the first church stood on the present site until the great hurricane of 1926 destroyed it like so

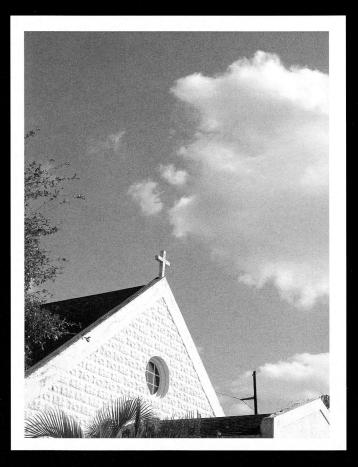
many other South Florida buildings. The current church, a small and simple adaptation of a Gothic Revival design constructed of rusticated concrete blocks with small protruding side buttresses, was built in 1927 and is the oldest, largely original church building of this group that remains in continuous use. Pictured here, the entrance to the church is topped by a small concrete cross at the peak of a low parapet above a mullioned "rose" window.

Saint John's United Methodist Church, 1520 N.W. 5th St.

Formed by 1918 as an African Methodist Episcopal congregation, the exact founding date of Saint John's has not been determined, but it seems to have been the fourth church organized just shortly before that of Mount Olive Baptist Church. The pastor in 1918 was the Reverend Jacob J. Johnson. The present church location on Northwest 5th Street is the third location for its membership in over 85 years. Built about 1965

FIRST BAPT GROVE
1904

The American flag flutters over the arched front entranceway to Piney Grove, the city's oldest black congregation.



Looking southeast toward the front facade of Saint Christopher's, the oldest black church building in continuous use in Fort Lauderdale.



The nearly 40-year old cross tower of Saint John's United Methodist Church, flanked by palm trees and built of decorative cast concrete blocks, is of a thoroughly "Florida Modern" design.



Looking heavenward from one of two Gothic Revival bell towers of the Church of God Temple.

under the pastorate of Reverend Clarence Banks, the architecture of the structure has a plain, institutional modernist design with masonry walls of a modest height and awning windows. Its most unique element is its cross tower, which is offset to the west elevation and constructed of stacked and pierced cast concrete bricks of an open cruciform design with an unadorned metal cross attached to the exterior wall of the tower's north wall that extends several feet over the top.

Greater New Mount Olive Baptist Church, 400 N.W. 9th Ave.

On November 25, 1918, the Reverend Gabriel T. Green became the first pastor of Mount Olive Baptist Church, the fifth church in the northwest community. Like the other nearby church congregations, it had a small number of members and its first humble buildings were destroyed by hurricanes in 1926 and 1928. In 1929, a larger third church was built of rusticated concrete blocks and had several additions to it through 1961 as church membership increased rapidly as the city grew. The largest church of the group in total membership, in 1979, the current church building was built across the street from the old church under the direction of its pastor, the Reverend George E. Weaver, at a cost of about \$1.2 million. The picture taken here is

of the late afternoon sun setting through the old church's openmetal steeple on its southeast corner. The aluminum steeple has a repeated grapevine motif and is a strikingly beautiful mid-century addition to the older structure and one of the most interesting architectural features of any building in the city.

Church of God Temple, 211 N.W. 5th Ave.

Established by 1925, the existing church building has been on this same location since at least 1928 and is the second oldest church site location remaining in continuous use after its block neighbor, Saint Christopher's. For much of the first 30 years of the church, the congregation was led by the Reverend John Henry Curry, a Bahamian who became a naturalized American citizen in 1938 and who died in 1955. Beatrice Curry, the minister's wife, was a nurse at Provident Hospital, the first black hospital in Fort Lauderdale. A 1928 Sanborn fire insurance map of this block cites both this establishment and St. Christopher's to the north as having no heat, lights or electricity. With additions over the years, the church building is a modified masonry vernacular interpretation of more traditional Gothic Revival form including twin front façade rectilinear bell towers.

Saint Luke Baptist Church, 210 N.W. 6th Ave.

The last of the seven churches to form about 1925, Saint Luke's remains today modest in both the size of its structure and its total membership. The first pastor of the church in the 1920s seems to have been the Reverend Alfred Harris. Because of the small size of the congregation, listings for the church periodically fall out of the city directories for the 1920s and 1930s.

> The church seems to have stabilized enough by the early 1940s that the present building was constructed about 1941. One story in design and built of stuccoed masonry, it has little architectural embellishment other than vestigial buttresses and a small concrete "eyebrow" hood over a false Tudor-arched front entrance.

Each [church] tells part of the unique development and history of Fort Lauderdale, South Florida and the

past 100 years.

black community over the

Conclusion

Each of these venerable community institutions deserves our attention for the vital social niche they have filled. Each tells part of the unique development and history of Fort Lauderdale, South Florida and the black community over the past 100 years. Though many of these churches may lack

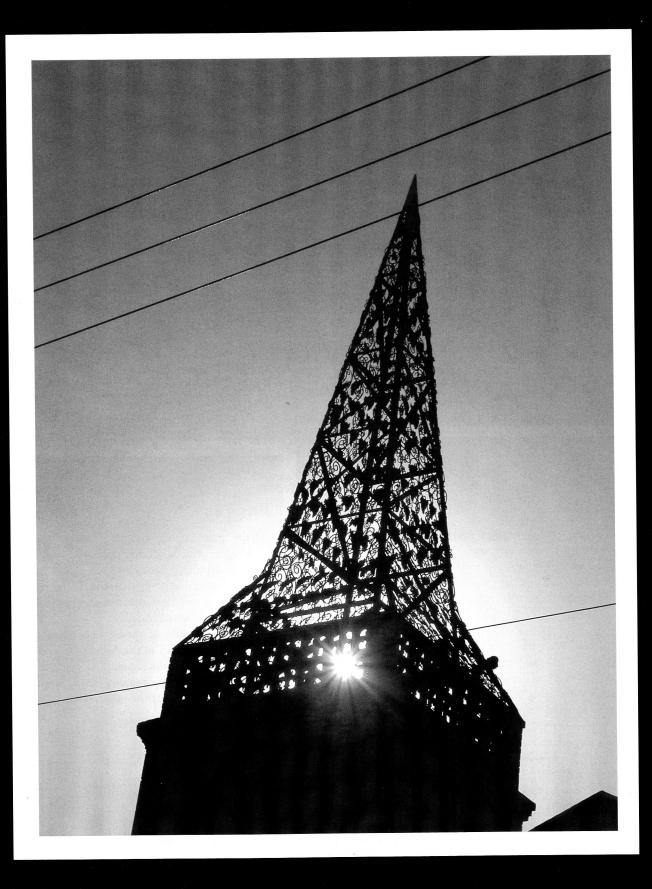
some of the grandeur of wealthier churches locally and elsewhere, they accurately reflect the desires of the African-American community to sustain viable houses of worship and acknowledge traditional religious architectural traditions while adapting them to the limited economic circumstances of the time and place they were created.

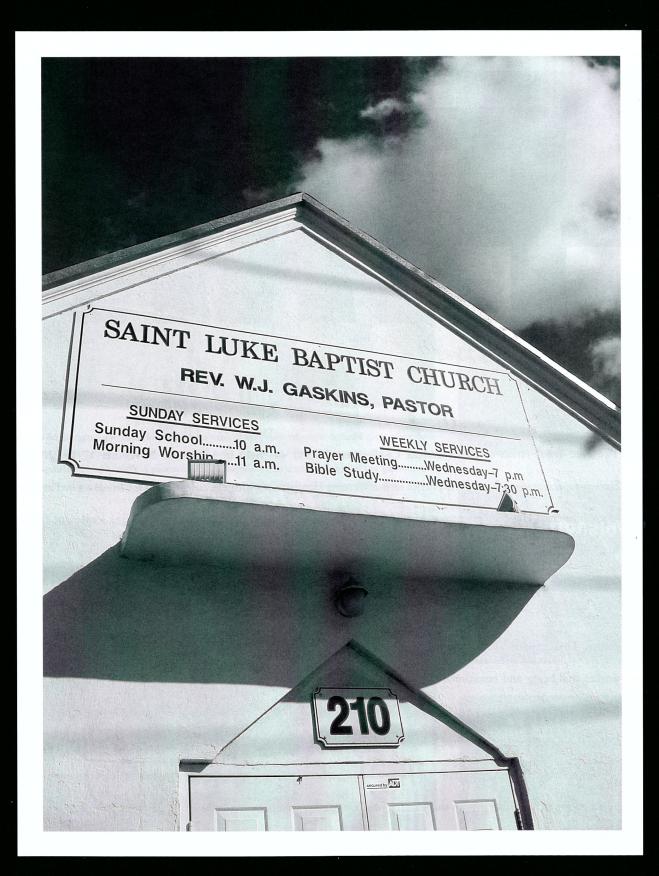
The continued success of these seven churches helps carry forward the historic legacy of the African-American community in the development of the region. Preserving these seven religious buildings and their congregations is nothing less than preserving the soul within the heart of black Fort Lauderdale.-SFH

Christopher R. Eck is the administrator of the Broward County Historical Commission and the Broward County Historic Preservation Officer. He previously served as the executive director of the Miami-Dade County Office of Historic Preservation.

Photographs on the following pages.

Pg. 32—The setting sun radiates through the decorative fretwork of the old Mount Olive Baptist Church steeple. Pg. 33—The unpretentious front facade of Saint Luke Baptist Church, the last of the first seven churches to be organized.





History in the Making



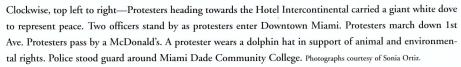
The Free Trade Areas of the Americas Conference (FTAA) was held in Miami on November 17-19, 2003.

Sixteen representatives from 34 countries in the Western Hemisphere, with the exception of Cuba, convened at the Intercontinental Hotel in downtown Miami for ongoing discussions on the creation of a tariff-free trade zone from Alaska to Argentina by 2005.

During the meetings, thousands of protesters from around the world gathered in the city to oppose the formation of the FTAA. Protesters included representatives from environmental, labor, consumer, farm, students and retirees groups. These groups felt that the borderless economy that the FTAA promotes will place corporate profits ahead of worker well-being and environmental standards. Clashes with the police led to over 200 arrests. Life in the surrounding areas practically came to a halt as businesses were shuttered, offices closed, traffic diverted and metrorail and metromover services disrupted.

The conference ended with representatives reaching a broad agreement that gives member nations the option of participating at their own pace in the negotiations. The trade and foreign ministers also reaffirmed their commitment to further prosperity and economic growth throughout the hemisphere, within a framework that respects and values cultural diversity.















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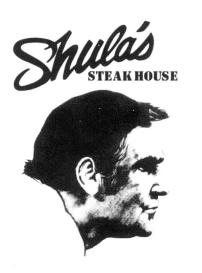


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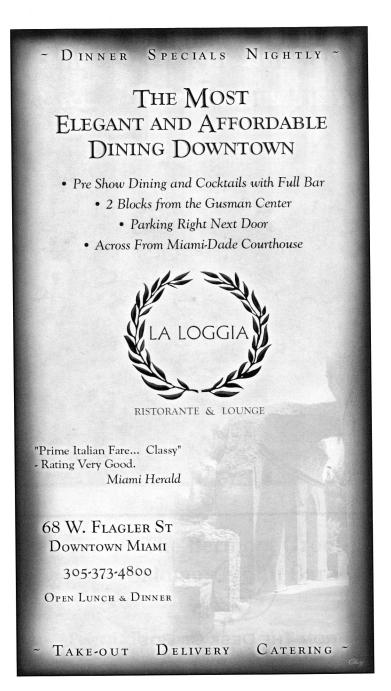


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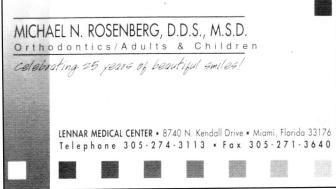
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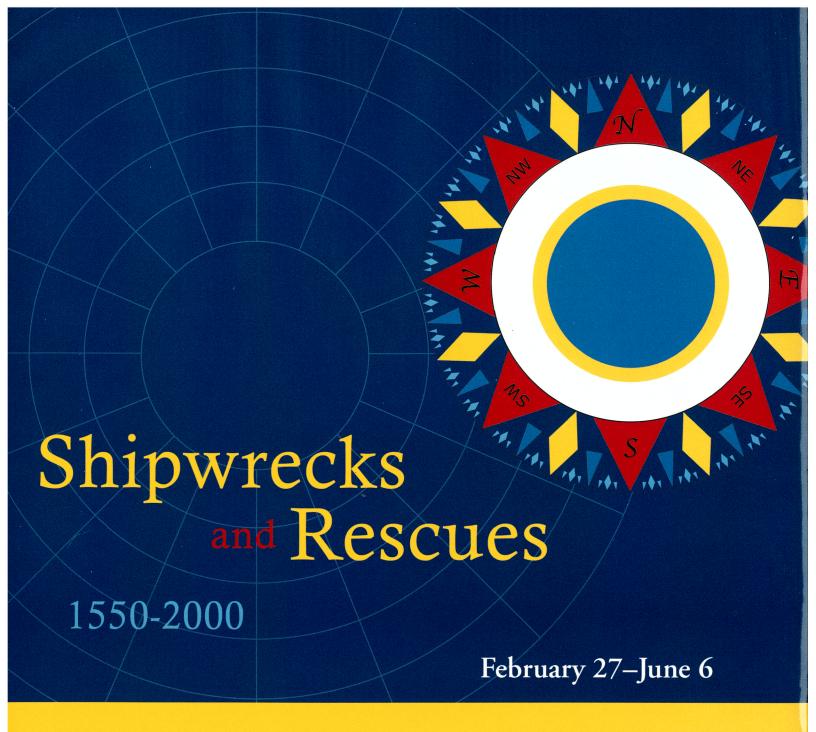
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