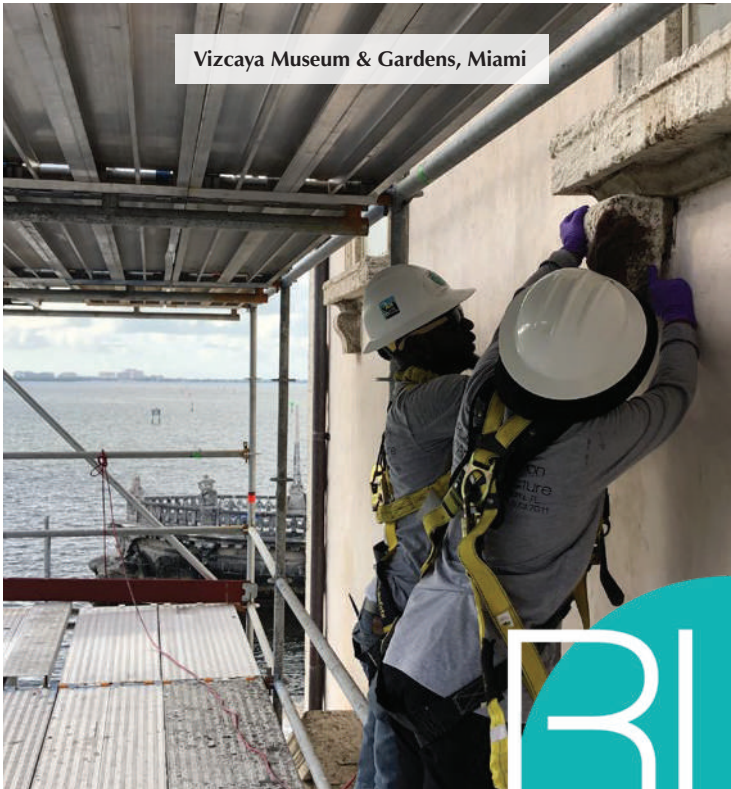


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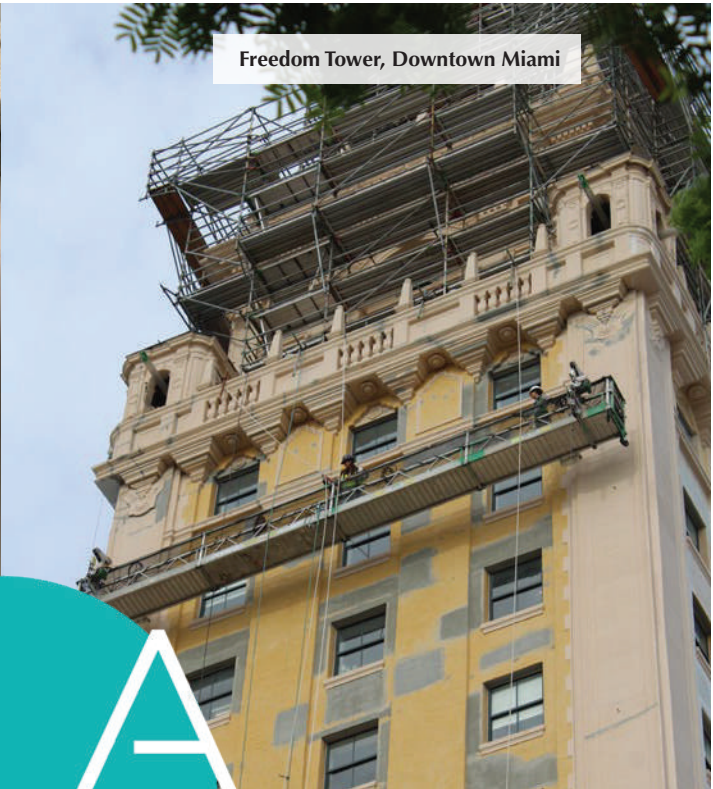
Voices from the Redland

Residents, advocates and policy-makers chime in on Miami-Dade County's beloved historic agricultural area and how ever-increasing development affects the countryside's quality of life.

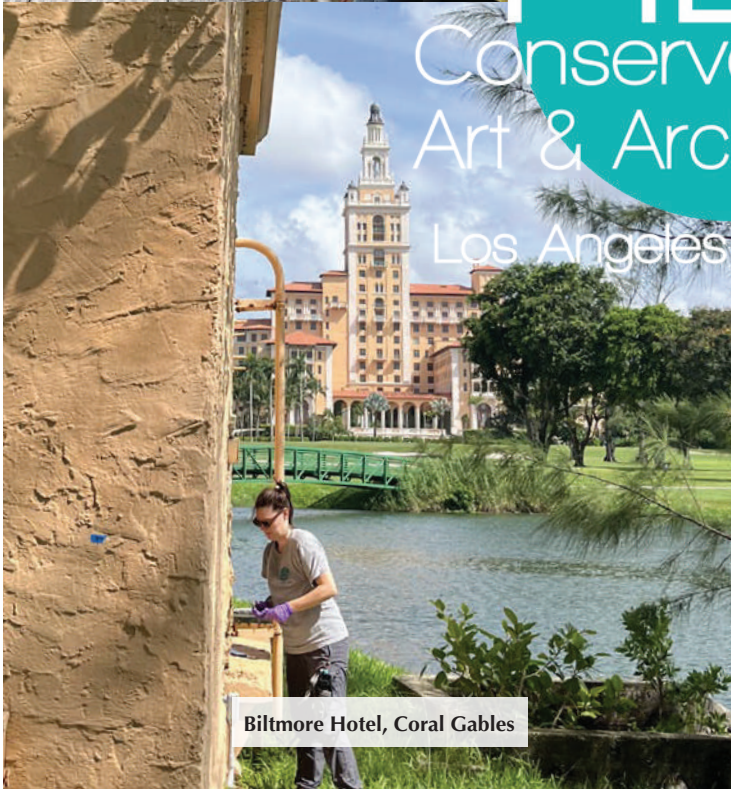
PLUS: Teach the Truth Garden • Cape Florida Lighthouse • DHT's NOAH Update, and more!



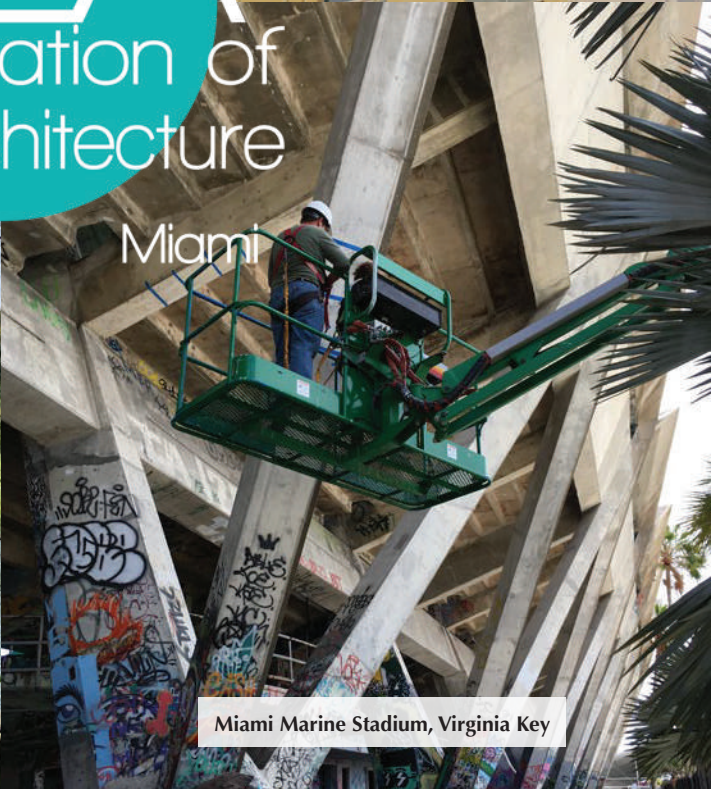
Vizcaya Museum & Gardens, Miami



Freedom Tower, Downtown Miami



Biltmore Hotel, Coral Gables



Miami Marine Stadium, Virginia Key

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FEATURES

- 8 **Voices from the Redland:** Residents, advocates and policy-makers chime in on Miami-Dade County's beloved historic agricultural area.
- 20 **History's First Chapter:** The Coconut Grove Spotlight.
- 22 **Rediscovering Goulds:** How community voices are shaping the future of historic preservation.
- 26 **Indigenous Whispers**
A new augmented reality-based project to honor the generations of Native Americans who called the Miami Riverfront home.
- 30 **Hangar 5 Foundation:** Fostering an appreciation for South Florida's rich aviation heritage.
- 32 **The Hattie Bauer Preserve:** A master plan for this one-of-a-kind place in South Dade.
- 36 **The House (of worship) that Mayor Reilly Built:** 1920s church seeking historic designation.
- 38 **Fleischer Studios:** The center of the 1930s animation world.
- 42 **Arch Creek Trust:** Preservation advocacy in action.
- 46 **Richmond Heights:** How neighborhood culture grew from 26 families.
- 50 **The 1772 Foundation:** Advancing preservation.
- 54 **Cape Florida Lighthouse:** Landmark symbol of guidance and a beacon of change.
- 58 **DHT's NOAH Update:** Dade Heritage Trust is working with local, young design firms to bring fresh ideas and perspectives to the restoration and rehabilitation projects in the preservation of Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing initiative.



DEPARTMENTS



74

4

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

President Iris Kolaya discusses the role of historic preservation and the importance of DHT's initiatives in an ever-evolving Miami.

6

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

DHT's programs and initiatives promote the power of partnership in advancing the positives of preservation in our community.

62

NEIGHBORHOOD SPOTLIGHT: OVERTOWN

This new addition to the Departments pages features a glimpse at the community-based organizations and initiatives that are working to improve the quality of life in Miami's historic urban neighborhoods.

74

PRESERVATION IN EDUCATION

Recognizing DHT's Education Program supporters, School Programs Manager Lucia Meneses details the generous supporters of the Historic Places, Green Spaces K-12 education program and what their contributions mean to DHT.

77

KEY KEEPER

Dade Heritage Trust recognizes homeowners who take great pride in residing in and caring for their historic home. Meet this year's honorees, Alex and Marta Silva.

79

MEET AND GREET

Meet artist Ronald Shelley, a native of Rugby England and a former rodeo cowboy, who has a beautiful talent for capturing the built and natural environments with his illustrations and paintings.

82

MUNICIPAL MOMENTUM

Coral Gables turns 100 in 2025. In celebration of this milestone, the City Beautiful will present a schedule of events and programs to engage and educate the community about the history of the community and the vision of founder, George Merrick.

85

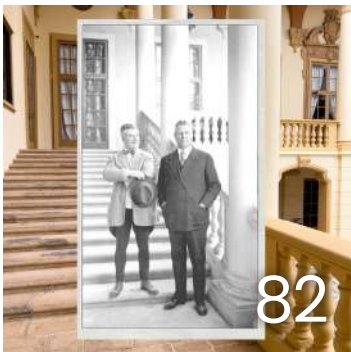
ADVOCACY UPDATES

A mixed bag of news from the Magic City and legislation in the works to promote and enhance preservation's role in Miami's ever-evolving neighborhoods.

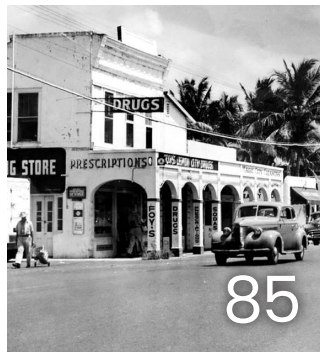
86

OUR BRICKELL NEIGHBORHOOD

Historian and author Casey Picket explores the Tiffany family and home of Annie Tiffany Mitchell which still stands today as a part of the Atlantis condominium complex at 2025 Brickell Avenue.



82



85



86

PRESERVATION STARTS HERE



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear Friends of
Dade Heritage Trust,

My message is simple: Thank you. Amid Miami's rapid growth and change, your commitment to Dade Heritage Trust (DHT) has ensured that our community's roots remain strong. Together, we safeguard the stories and structures defining Miami's distinct flavor and character.

Historic preservation is more than protecting old buildings; it's about creating a solid foundation for our community. It connects us to our roots, fosters a sense of belonging, and provides context for the future. As Miami continues to grow—and the traffic on US1 multiplies—preservation ensures that the stories and structures that shaped our collective identity are not lost. In preserving the past, we create a city that honors its diversity, supports sustainability, and provides spaces where future generations can learn and be inspired.

This year, DHT is incredibly proud of our work with the Preservation of Naturally Affordable Housing (NOAH) program. This initiative, made possible with the support of Miami-Dade County, is about rehabilitating historic structures and providing affordable housing options in a city where housing costs continue to rise. It's about preserving Miami's older neighborhoods' architectural beauty and character while addressing a critical need.

Additionally, DHT launched Miami Preserves, a podcast that explores new and often overlooked perspectives on Miami's history. This platform allows us to share stories that might not be found in textbooks, bringing to light voices and events that have shaped the region and giving them the recognition they deserve.

As we move forward, we want to stress the importance of your continued support. Preservation is not a one-time task, but a long-term commitment. Together, we can continue to protect our historic treasures from Overtown to Little Havana, from El Portal to the Redland, and everywhere in between.

We look forward to your continued involvement as we ensure Greater Miami's rich history remains vital to its future.

With heartfelt appreciation,

Iris Guzman Kolaya, President



preservation Annual Edition 2025 today

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Iris Guzman Kolaya is a writer and researcher based in Miami. As a former print and broadcast journalist, she's covered many issues and events, from local politics to education policy. After moving back to her hometown of Miami, she reconnected with her love for local history. Through her writing and advocacy efforts, Iris is dedicated to sharing South Florida's vibrant past to life and preserving Miami's historical spaces. Her work has appeared in various scholarly journals. She is the co-author of *El Jardin: Creating the Modern Mediterranean Villa*. Currently, she's working on a book about the development of Coconut Grove at the turn of the 20th century.

Iris is the president of the board of Dade Heritage Trust and serves on the HistoryMiami board. She graduated from the University of Miami with a degree in Communications and recently earned a master's in history from Florida International University. She lives in Coral Gables with her husband, Tim, and their two teenage daughters, Alexandra and Sienna. You can follow her historical adventures and musings on Instagram at @305Historian.

Preservation Today is published to highlight and promote the efforts of Dade Heritage Trust, a 501c3 non-profit organization with a mission to preserve Miami-Dade County's architectural, environmental and cultural heritage. Members and sponsors of Dade Heritage Trust receive a complimentary issue of *Preservation Today*. DHT's programs, exhibits, events and publications are made possible in part by membership dues and contributions. A one-year membership includes one issue of *Preservation Today*, discounts on DHT sponsored events and programs and complimentary admission to over 300 museums and institutions in the Southeastern United States.

For membership information, please call 305-358-9572, email chris@dadeheritagetrust.org or visit dadeheritagetrust.org to join online. Your support is greatly appreciated.



Family Portrait 2010 by Tom Spain

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of the 100th Anniversary of the City of Coral Gables*

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DIRECTOR'S NOTE



As Executive Director of Dade Heritage Trust, I am proud of the meaningful educational and advocacy-based initiatives we present to the community. We serve Miami-Dade County Public School students with a robust K-12 education program and urban Miami residents in need of affordable housing; we engage residents and visitors who want to learn about our community's heritage through our community programs and Miami Preserves podcast, and we provide local governments, organizations and individuals with necessary documentation and research regarding our community's historic resources to help in community planning and preservation-based decisions.

It is this spirit of partnership that provides the basis for DHT's success and longevity. DHT partners with the City of Miami and Miami-Dade County, the Historic Hampton House, Virginia Key Beach Park Trust, and the Black Police Precinct and Courthouse Museum to present our education program. DHT partners with a variety of like-minded non-profits whose missions align with ours on important advocacy issues. From The Black Archives in Overtown to Arch Creek Park Trust in North Miami, the Allapattah Community Development Corporation and Concerned Citizens of South Dade, DHT embraces organizations that might need assistance and who also have the potential of supporting DHT's initiatives. In this issue, you will learn about some of DHT's partners and their positive impacts on our community. Continued engagement with organizations and local governments is critical to DHT's success and to assuring that we remain relevant in an ever-evolving Miami-Dade County.

DHT's dynamic and diverse Board of Directors brings community connectivity and a range of expertise and professions that amplify our partnership sensibilities. Additionally, our knowledgeable PR team at Wragg & Casas understands the importance of positioning DHT as an organization that is here to help. These values will serve DHT well as we look forward to furthering our preservation mission through continued relationship-building opportunities.

Christine Rupp, Executive Director



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rediscovering
Miami's neighborhoods



Voices from the Redland

By Susan Cumins

Dade Heritage Trust has long held an interest in the Redland and its historic cultural and architectural resources. Due to the abundant development pressures in a community with finite boundaries (the Everglades, the Atlantic Ocean and Biscayne Bay, and our neighbors to the north) explosive growth in South Dade has changed the character of Miami's farming community. Once a place for a leisurely Sunday drive through the countryside for fresh fruit, flowers, and maybe a strawberry shake, the Redland District faces many of the same issues as urban Miami: too much traffic, increased zoning changes, and lack of transit and infrastructure. Increasing property values are driving out a once stable and thriving farming community. For this article, DHT reached out to Redland residents, farmers, historians, agriculture policy makers, and politicians to hear their thoughts on the future of this South Florida treasure. In addition, with the assistance of Sarah Cody, Miami-Dade County's Historic Preservation Chief, we explore some of the sturdy structures built by homesteading growers. Relatively modest compared to the residences found in urban centers, these early 20th century homes reflect the lifestyle and practical values of South Dade's pioneer families. We also introduce readers to a new study of the Redland by the University of Florida's historic preservation program which is currently focusing student preservationists and planners on the Redland community's pioneer heritage, visual landscape, and deep cultural significance.



Voices from the Redland

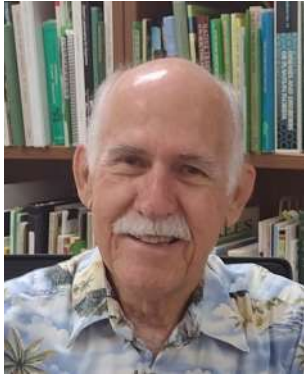
Agriculture is Miami-Dade County's third-most-productive industry for jobs and revenue. The Redland represents the only subtropical growing environment in the entire continental U.S. Dade Heritage Trust asked Redland residents and stakeholders for their thoughts and concerns for this rare but shrinking cropland.

These are their voices.



A second-generation farmer in the Redland, **Michael Borek** owns a 10-acre parcel where he grows vegetables and specializes in tasty varieties of heirloom tomatoes. As a boutique farmer, he works with local Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) distributors, farmers markets, and restaurants to sell his produce. The farm is also open to the public every Saturday. Borek is distraught at the on-going changes to the Redland and the disappearance of agricultural land. "Farmers have to make ends meet. There is no doubt that the food industry is taking a hit in Miami-Dade County, with land being picked up by developers and big corporate nurseries, along with changing weather patterns. Some agritourism venues offer just a glimpse of the farms that once existed on the land, but I understand they have to expand their offerings to hang on to their property."

Jeff Blakley's parents moved from Indiana to the East Everglades in 1941. He was born at Doctor's



Hospital when the nearest house was a mile away and traffic lights were rare. In retirement, Blakley is probing South Dade's past (see hsdade.com) and is writing a book, because "history is complicated, and the stories are important." Neither he nor his parents were growers,

but he's witnessed the challenges: "weather, labor, shipping, bugs." After Hurricane Andrew, he saw locals take insurance payouts and leave, noted the shift from row crops to ornamental tropical plant nurseries.

He says 90 percent of area growers now lease the land from investors. "The Redland's first homesteaders paid \$1.25 an acre for large parcels they later subdivided and sold sections to new arrivals, who did the same. This pattern continues, but new people aren't interested in who owned the properties before them," says Blakley. Aware of Miami's urgent demand for jobs and housing, he sadly observes that "developers don't live here but they have the money and the power. The more people you can pack into a square foot, the more money you can get. It's always about money."

A practical grower, **Mary Waters** settled where she found land and a warm climate with market access. She has kept an eye on South Dade's evolution since 1988, the year she brought seeds and planted 500 Canary Island date palms (*Phoenix canariensis*) in the Redland. Fifty of the imposing, slow-growing ornamentals remain; the rest were sold. "Inevitable pressures are constantly



changing the landscape," says Waters, "but it's important to avoid harming crop production. A way of life could be erased forever."

While serving on the county's community council, Waters reviewed retail, residential, and industrial proposals for the Redland and environs. "Miami-Dade County is large and diverse, meaning there's no right answer to every issue." Her approach is to be sensible about the policies and regulations governing what can be added. Because the District's boundaries have always been fluid, Waters reckons that "the Redland is almost a state of mind," a place where you can still see the sky above quiet fields without traffic or noise.

"Balancing the preservation of historic structures, landscapes, and agricultural lands with the needs of communities and stakeholders is essential to maintaining the unique character of South Dade," says **Danielle Cohen Higgins**, Miami-Dade County Commissioner for District 8. "It's important that we respect the cultural and environmental heritage of areas like the Redland, while also ensuring that any development is thoughtful and addresses the needs of our growing residents." In 2023, she gathered residents and stakeholders to a conference to learn their visions for the Redland. The priorities they expressed included protecting agricultural lands, preserving historic sites, and fostering sustainable growth that respects South Dade's rural identity. The Commissioner, who grew up in South Dade, pledges her commitment "to ensuring that we strike the right balance between progress and preservation, while protecting our quality of life and the economic engine of agriculture."





City planner by training, **Efren Nunez** is active with Concerned Citizens of South Dade, an advocacy group that has partnered with DHT and the county's Historic Preservation office to preserve important properties and features. His perspective is that "productive agricultural fields are not appropriate for large buildings or parking lots. We should increase density in already-urbanized areas near centers of employment, not kill agriculture." He opposes building dense transit corridors without serious infrastructure planning. "We want compatible development, not one-size-fits-all high rises. The market would never welcome 500 units at the edge of farmland. Where's the walkability?" Nunez recommends that zoning guidelines be clarified, and existing noise and other statutes be enforced.

"The historic community and ag businesses need policymakers to look at development long-term, not make decisions in a vacuum." Encouraged that Commissioner Danielle Cohen Higgins appreciates the tradeoffs, he also recognizes that she has only one vote among Miami-Dade County's 13 commissioners.

Charles LaPradd's family came to southern Miami-Dade in the 1800s. Born in Homestead, his childhood included attending the Redland FarmLife School, founded in 1916. As Agricultural Manager for Miami-Dade County since 2005, LaPradd knows all aspects of the industry - growing, sales, marketing, and shipping. "The county's 2022 ag sales produced \$1.35 billion on less than



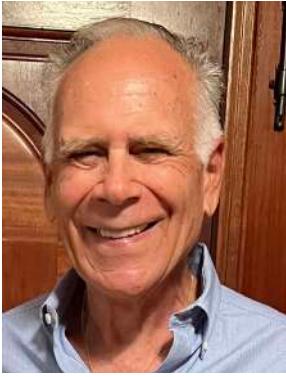
80,000 acres, a fraction of the 460,000 acres used by Palm Beach County to generate \$1.6 billion in revenue—only slightly more than Miami-Dade's total," he reports. "Our tropical agriculture's viability depends on innovation, resiliency, and on the Urban Development Boundary (UDB) remaining in place." Farming is allowed beyond the UDB, but acreage inside it is shrinking.

LaPradd says tourism initiatives present pros and cons. "Agritourism as a supplement to crop revenues has been here for 80 years because farming has to be profitable, or it dies. But keeping tourism activities in sync with the surroundings is key," he says. "Enforcement of existing zoning and noise ordinances can help with that."

Miami-Dade County Mayor **Daniela Levine Cava** has been a staunch advocate for preserving historic agricultural areas like the Redland for more than a decade. She cites multiple programs overseen by the county's Parks, Recreation, and Open Spaces Department as a mark of this commitment. "We are not only working to enhance green spaces and trails through collaborative projects and initiatives but are also supporting agritourism to preserve the area's rich agricultural heritage," says Levine Cava. "Our goal is to ensure that southern Miami-Dade remains a treasured space for both residents and visitors, blending preservation with sustainable tourism."



The Fruit and Spice Park, a 37-acre county facility at 248 SW 187th Avenue, Homestead, exemplifies this determination to maintain "vibrant destinations that connect our community to nature while offering educational and recreational opportunities for all ages," Levine Cava notes. Among activities promoting regional agriculture are ethnobotanical and tasting tours, K-12 nutrition and science classes, gardening and other specialty workshops, plus international orchid and summer fruit festivals. During the 2020-2021 Covid lockdown, annual attendance fell to 37,6270, but in the 2023-24 fiscal year, the park welcomed 77,000 visitors. Maria Nardi, Parks, Recreation, and Open Spaces Director, is enthusiastic about agritourism tie-ins that can develop from its county-wide trail system for pedestrians and cyclists. In partnership with the Florida Department of Transportation, the projected build-out would connect Everglades National Park, Krome Avenue, and Biscayne National Park.



Marc Ellenby is a long-time grower of Florida avocados and many tropical tree fruits, tropical clumping bamboos, and organic turmeric. LNB Groves is a family farm established in 1980, and Ellenby has seen his share of change in the Redland agricultural area. The family's 95 acres of tropical

fruit groves are located throughout the Redland. Ellenby believes that the existing five-acre zoning for AU properties -- i.e., one home per 5 acres -- could help conserve the land resource and preserve the area's rural character.

However, says Ellenby, "Developers appear to be winning in the ongoing battle for rezoning existing farmland and increasing the number of residential units on a per-acre basis. Many properties have been upzoned for residential development. Hundreds of identical townhomes have been built quickly, and these are occupied as soon as completed. Traffic has markedly increased in the area. The farmland in south Miami-Dade is unique in the continental U.S. and we grow a diverse array of crops. What was the country's winter vegetable capital prior to Hurricane Andrew and NAFTA, is now limited vegetable production, foliage nursery plants, field nurseries, specialty crops, niche production, some aquaculture, and fruit groves. But because local fruit production is less, fruit packinghouses are increasingly importers and re-packers."

Ellenby prefers the term conservation to preservation. "Farmers provide measurable ecosystem services, and their farms are local economic engines," he says. "Conserving the land resource for future generations is a need that must be addressed now. Agritourism may be the Redland's ultimate future, as people in Miami-Dade and tourists alike will forever enjoy an opportunity to visit a working farm. It will be interesting to see how this all evolves."



Sarah Cody, Historic Preservation Chief for Miami-Dade County, reminds people that historic preservation is much more than saving "old buildings." Preservation extends to characteristic landscapes and indications of local culture that contribute to an area's visual character.

This was the case with her 2023 recommendation to designate as historic a less-than-50-year-old residence at 23550 SW 187 Avenue. The historic designation was a valid way to preserve two acres of farm fields dating from the 1930s that surround the residence.

Staff of the county's Historic Preservation Department work diligently to survey structures, monuments, and sites that meet state and federal historic criteria. They also guide owners on how to maintain their historic properties. Cody recalls that, unfortunately, internal county policies can conflict. "Florida's building codes were modified following Hurricane Andrew. The owner of a long-designated historic house was denied a building permit when his proposed roof repair didn't meet the stricter rules," Cody relates. Policies are constantly evolving in our diverse county. Her hope is that incentives for developers will change to include more elements of historic preservation. "We are prioritizing the mapping of county policies with overlays showing new flood zones, areas already zoned for development, and areas historically occupied by seasonal farm workers," says Cody. "We want to make future generations aware of what life here was like, not only in the affluent areas."

Linda Stevenson, AIA, and lecturer at the University of Florida, is delighted to be focusing UF's Historic Preservation program on the Redland. Exploring the landscape and talking with the populace will



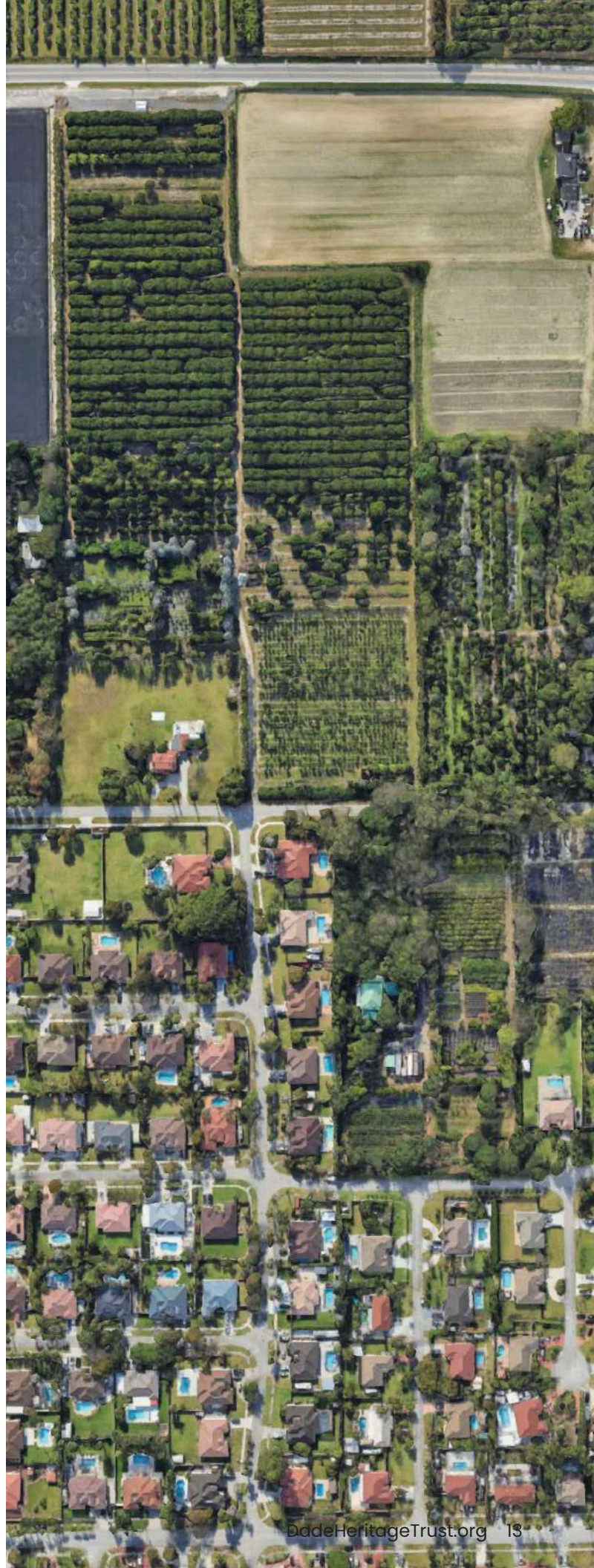
give the program's future preservationists a grasp of the community's practices, values, and deep cultural significance. "In early 2025 we will present a multidisciplinary master plan to the Miami-Dade County Commission" says Stevenson. "It will follow up on the 2022 UF/IFAS study that, like this one, focused on ensuring the Redland heritage's continuation and survival." As it is today, she concludes, "The Redland is magical. It's a treasure."



Cooper McMillan is a third-generation South Dade farmer who raises avocados and children on a 16-acre farm. He was a founding member of the Agricultural Practices Board in the early 2000s, representing

the Redland Citizens Association. Per Cooper, "While the Board was made of up of agricultural professions and organizations that understood that planning for the future of farming in South Dade was essential, in reality we had very little input into county planning. We understood the plan was for the US 1 corridor to harbor residential and commercial development, but the intense growth has continued to push west without proper infrastructure, forever changing the character of the Redland." Cooper believes that Miami-Dade County should do much more to promote South Dade's food farming industry--with 600-plus crops grown here--and help assure that farming is profitable. Says Cooper, "The farmer has to be able to be profitable."

DHT emphasizes that history is a continuum, and the Redland represents an existing agriculture-based way of life. The Redland is not a historical re-creation. It's real, and we have the power to see that it endures for future generations.







Robert Is Here Fruit Stand



Redland Agricultural Area Sign

A Sampling of Symbols of History: Early Homes of the Redland

A vast number of historic homes are scattered throughout the Redland. From humble wood-frame vernacular cabins to coral rock cottages and stately two-story residences, the early homes of South Dade, like all historic structures, hold and tell the stories of their hearty original residents and those who followed seeking a life in the countryside. *Here is a very small sampling.*

Telling the Story of Early South Dade: Redland's Historic Residences



29215 SW 167 Court, December 1956



29215 SW 167 Court, May 2021

The Caves Residence at 29215 SW 167 Court

Robert E. Caves claimed a 160-acre homestead at the intersection of today's SW 296 Street and SW 167 Avenue. Around 1920, Caves built the wood-frame vernacular home for his family. Robert Caves resided in the family home until his death in 1955. In addition to being an early homesteader and farmer in south Miami-Dade, Robert Caves's obituary notes many civic contributions. He served as a Homestead city councilman for 15 years and was the director of the former Homestead Bank. He aided in organizing the first schoolhouse in Homestead and lent his carpentry

skills to the construction of the schoolhouse and to that of war-related installations at Chapman Airfield during World War I. The Caves family home remained under family ownership for many years. The Caves property was purchased by Lennar for redevelopment. Working with Miami-Dade County and Concerned Citizens of South Dade, DHT requested historic designation and Lennar agreed. The restored home now stands in the housing development and is occupied.

The residence was designated in 2021.



19300 SW 137 Avenue, October 1965

The Lindgren Residence at 19300 SW 137 Avenue

This structure is significant because of its age, architectural style, and association with the Lindgren family who were pioneers of South Dade. The house was built in 1912 by John Lindgren. A native of Sweden, Lindgren originally moved to the area after being wiped out in the 1895 freeze in Central Florida. He claimed a homestead in 1903 to grow citrus. The Lindgrens' daughter, Alma, taught at the Redland School for many years. Their son, Alvin, worked on the Key West extension of the Florida East Coast Railway and became locally well-known for inventing a device known as the scarifying machine, a tractor-like vehicle that cleared land. It was used to clear many of South Dade's roads.

When historically designated in 1984, it was considered one of the show places of South Dade.



19300 SW 137 Avenue, February 2019

The Minderman House at 16200 SW 232 Street (below)

The property where the Minderman House is located is significant in the history of the Silver Palm area by its association with several pioneer families who owned it, including the Gossmans. The unique architecture of the house, as well as its location, contribute to the site's overall historic importance. The property on which the Minderman House stands was part of a larger land tract purchased by pioneer Henry Gossman from the United States Land Office in 1904. Gossman took advantage of the 1862 Homesteaders Act. Henry Gossman's brother, Charles Gossman, was one of the original settlers in the Silver Palm area of South Dade. Henry had moved to Silver Palm in 1900 and grew citrus crops. According to the Villagers Archives, mail for the area was picked up at Cutler and deposited in a wooden milk crate tacked up on a tree on Henry Gossman's property. The residence was designated in 1986.



16200 SW 232 Street, 1986



16200 SW 232 Street, 2018



The Forbes/Juan Gabriel Historic Site after Hurricane Andrew, 1993



The Forbes/Juan Gabriel Historic Site, 2023

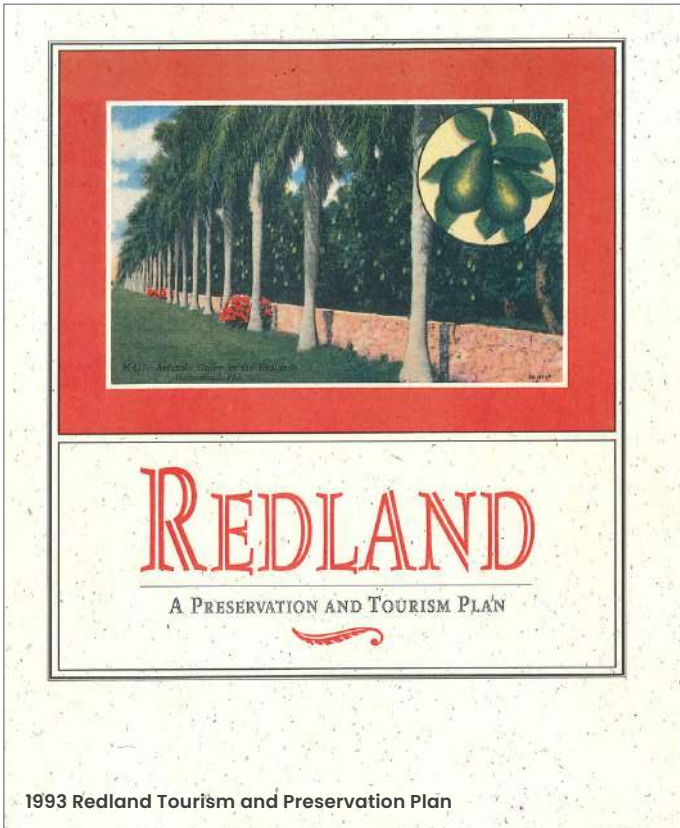
The Forbes/Juan Gabriel Historic Site (above)

The Forbes/Juan Gabriel Historic Site is an example of Masonry Vernacular architecture typically established in rural South Dade during the New Deal era of the 1930s. The residence and surrounding site is associated with the lives of several individuals significant to the history of Miami-Dade County and beyond, including William Brodie, James Forbes, and Juan Gabriel. William Brodie, a native of Scotland, lived for a time in Georgia before relocating to the Redland community in the 1920s. By the 1930s, Brodie had established his own packing house in the area. In addition, local newspapers reported on the Redland's continued agricultural successes including Brodie's citrus groves. There he was said to have a thriving array of 36 varieties of fruit including grapefruits and oranges. He eventually sold his holdings to a fellow Scot, James Forbes. The Forbes family established a well-known citrus grove, called the Kelvin Grove, at Redland Road and Silver Palm Drive. Segway to 1999 when Mexican music star Juan Gabriel purchased this property. Stories passed down about his time here indicate he enjoyed spending time writing songs at a desk beneath the Song Tree. The residence was designated in 2024.

Many thanks to the Miami-Dade County Office of Historic Preservation for providing historic designation reports and photographs for this article.

Gators in the Redland

DHT has engaged the University of Florida to update the 1993 Redland Preservation and Tourism Plan commissioned by Miami-Dade County more than 30 years ago. Linda Stevenson, PhD, and Lecturer in the University of Florida's Historic Preservation Program, is lead advisor on this project, which will result in a cultural resources survey of the Redland District. **The UF students, all master's and PhD candidates, are providing their work pro bono as a community service.**



The Redland field study includes informal discussions with residents and stakeholders, and considers the area's agricultural, environmental, and regulatory context as well as the tangible historical assets. Data-gathering is the first phase and, by spring 2025, the students will develop a master plan with short-, medium-, and long-term strategies. The hope is that local officials and others will apply for funding to carry out the recommendations. These are expected to build on the 2022 UF/IFAS study mentioned in this issue's cover story.

The Redland cultural survey project is extremely valuable for nurturing future professionals because, as Stevenson points out, UF's multidisciplinary approach to historic preservation encompasses architecture, archaeology, building construction, interior design, planning, museum studies, and journalism. The aim is to prepare future preservationists to take a holistic view when developing appropriate plans for a diverse range of the country's historic areas. ■



UF students and instructors demonstrating "the CHOMP"



History's First Chapter: The Coconut Grove Spotlight

By Don Finefrock

Coconut Grove Playhouse courtesy of Patrick Farrell

When the Tikki Club on Grand Avenue in Coconut Grove was demolished earlier this year to make way for a new apartment building, the club's final chapter might have been lost to history, if no one was there to write the story.

Thankfully, the Coconut Grove Spotlight was on the scene in September 2024 when the backhoes arrived, and the Tikki Club's demise was documented with a story and photos published that week at www.coconutgrovespotlight.com.

So much of history is fleeting. Without journalists to write the first chapter, how much of that history might be lost forever?

The United States is experiencing a crisis in local news coverage. More than 2,500 American newspapers have closed since 2005, while others have cut back their coverage, creating news "deserts" for an estimated 70 million Americans.

In response, community leaders and journalists nationwide are exploring new models to create, deliver, and fund local news.

One promising solution: the rise of independent nonprofit newsrooms offering free digital content to readers. More than 400 nonprofit newsrooms nationwide are now providing in-depth local and statewide news coverage.

In Miami, a group of journalists and community leaders recently launched a nonprofit newsroom to provide hyperlocal news coverage of Coconut Grove and Miami City Hall.

Since then, we've written about the disrepair that threatens the Coconut Grove cottage where Marjory Stoneman Douglas wrote "The Everglades: River of Grass."

We've also tracked the political stalemate that has left the Coconut Grove Playhouse in limbo since 2006 and written about a new burst of development on Grand Avenue.



Tikki Club demolition courtesy of Don Finefrock

The Coconut Grove Spotlight was founded in 2020 as a community newsletter by Hank Sanchez-Resnik, a member of the Coconut Grove Village Council at the time. Hank published his newsletter for three years before asking us – a group of 12 colleagues and friends – to dream bigger.

We began meeting in 2023. A little over a year later in April 2024 we launched the Spotlight as an independent nonprofit news organization.

So, what does that mean?

First and foremost, we are a local news organization. We're going to cover Coconut Grove and Miami City Hall in depth and in detail.

Because of that, you'll find stories in the Spotlight you won't find anywhere else. Stories about local personalities, about Little Bahamas and historic Grand Avenue – everything from trees and traffic to parks, peacocks, and historic preservation.

Best of all, our digital content is available free of charge. There is no paywall. And there is no partisan agenda. We are an independent news organization. Our only commitment is to our readers. And to make sure we don't stray from that credo, we've established a Community Advisory Council to provide feedback on our coverage.

Like many other startup newsrooms, we are a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization. We are looking for grant money now to grow our newsroom but, at the end of the day, we're going to need community support to survive.

If you believe in local journalism, consider making a donation to support us.

Finally, we are a professional news organization that practices public service journalism that serves the entire community.

At the moment, we are operating with a volunteer staff of veteran journalists and a roster of freelance writers paid for the work. As we grow, we intend to add staff and increase coverage while remaining true to our mission.



Above: The Coconut Grove cottage where Marjory Stoneman Douglas wrote "The Everglades: River of Grass". Photo courtesy of Don Finefrock

By providing original, objective news content, the Spotlight seeks to inform and engage its readers, highlight disparities within marginalized neighborhoods, promote greater participation in civic life, strengthen local democracy, increase government accountability, and help sustain grassroots journalism in Miami.

We would welcome your ideas, your support, and your participation. ■

Don Finefrock is a lead editor at the Coconut Grove Spotlight, an independent nonprofit news organization (coconutgrovespotlight.com) serving Coconut Grove and surrounding communities.



Rediscovering Goulds:

How Community Voices are Shaping
the Future of Historic Preservation

Tamara McDonald, JD.
Historic Preservation Specialist,
Miami-Dade County

Goulds is located 20 miles southwest of Miami and 9 miles northeast of Homestead with South Miami Heights, Princeton, and Cutler Bay encircling it today. The community's presence blurs its geographical boundaries with its historic connections extending to nearby communities like Princeton and Redland. Major roads traversing the area include US1 (which historically bisected the community), the Florida Turnpike, and Old Cutler Road.

In the heart

of Miami-Dade County, the Goulds Heritage Survey is ushering in a new era of historical recognition and preservation for a community rich in untold stories. Launched in direct response to community feedback and recommendations from the Phase I Heritage at Risk survey, this initiative sought to address past oversights and bring the vibrant history of Goulds into the spotlight. Over time the community and built environment of Goulds has changed, weathering the intense impacts of environmental change like Hurricane Andrew, to the stark realities of the social and political change that once divided the community based on race and economics. Highlighting stories and places that illustrate an inclusive narrative of the development and continuation of this historic community, the survey focused on recognizing the remembered experiences and places in Goulds to inform and preserve associated resources for future generations.

A NEW CHAPTER IN PRESERVATION

Past preservation efforts in Goulds have primarily focused on a narrow geographical area and resources built in the first half of the 20th century.

This early work often spotlighted landmarks like Cauley Square, but unfortunately, it overlooked the dynamic history of Goulds's Black community, save for a few notable sites such as the Store Porch and Arthur & Polly Mays Conservatory of the Arts. The Goulds Heritage Survey set out to correct this imbalance by offering a broader and more inclusive account of the community's past, bringing together members of the community, its advocates, and Miami-Dade County's preservation staff for meaningful dialogue to identify sites of importance and delve more into places that are touchstones to the heritage of the community.

COMMUNITY-DRIVEN ENGAGEMENT

At the core of the Goulds Heritage Survey is a commitment to community engagement and collaboration. This approach ensures that the preservation efforts are grounded in the lived experiences and memories of Goulds's residents. The project employed these key methods to gather information:

- **Questionnaires:** Distributed to residents, these surveys collected detailed accounts of local history and personal narratives that might otherwise be lost.



Cauley Square at 22400 Old Dixie Highway

- **Community liaisons:** Two liaisons were recruited to help raise awareness of the survey throughout the Goulds community, providing updates on scheduled activities, distributing flyers, and sharing social media and email correspondence. Liaisons maintained an active presence within the community, serving as direct points of contact and, most importantly, assisting participants in completion of survey forms.
- **Community Engagement Meetings:** Regular meetings allowed residents to share their stories, provide feedback, and participate in discussions about the community's heritage.
- **Field Surveys:** These surveys documented both existing and lost places of historical significance, capturing the physical aspects of Goulds's heritage.
- **Collaborative Information Gathering:** On May 18th, oral history recordings were conducted to preserve the personal stories and experiences of long-time residents; personal photographs were digitized and added to the Community Memory Project of Miami-Dade Public Library's Digital Collections.
- Through these methods, the project has not only identified significant sites but has also woven together a more comprehensive and inclusive history of Goulds.

HIGHLIGHTING DIVERSE HERITAGE AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The Goulds Heritage Survey goes beyond mere documentation; it amplifies the voices of a community historically sidelined in preservation narratives. By centering on stories of diverse heritage and entrepreneurship, the project showcases the development and growth of Goulds from the perspectives of those who have lived it. It highlights the contributions of local entrepreneurs, cultural practices, and the everyday lives of residents who have shaped the community.

PRESERVING THE PAST, SHAPING THE FUTURE

As an initial step toward broader preservation goals, the Goulds Heritage Survey Project has set a precedent for future scholarship and creative work.

The project's findings provide a foundation for:

- **Elevating Community History:** The project has set the stage for further research and recognition of Goulds's heritage, paving the way for future initiatives that honor and preserve its unique history.
- **Forward-Thinking Preservation Practices:** Insights gathered from community feedback and fieldwork are informing the development of preservation practices that are tailored to the needs and aspirations of the Goulds community.

THE ROAD AHEAD

The Goulds Heritage Survey Project marks the beginning of a transformative journey in historic preservation for Miami-Dade County. By addressing past exclusions and embracing a more inclusive narrative, the Goulds Survey not only reclaims the community's history, it also supports ongoing preservation efforts that reflect the true diversity and vibrancy of Goulds setting a new standard in preservation practices and community engagement that will center equity through inclusive narratives and recognition.



Mt. Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church at 11700 SW 216 Street



FLORIDA JAN. 1955

Gladys Briscoe Residence, January 1955

As the Miami-Dade County Office of Historic Preservation moves forward with additional survey projects, context studies and collaborative work will continue to unfold with the aspiration of enhancing understanding of the unique communities throughout Miami-Dade, and to inspire similar efforts in scholarship and community-informed preservation elsewhere. Through partnerships, community engagement, and a commitment to equity in preservation, the Goulds Heritage Survey Project is not just elevating stories of the past—it's shaping a more informed and respectful future through preservation by expanding recognition of cherished places as touchstones to the stories and events central to the community's story.

Building on the successes of Phases 1 and 2, the department is excited to launch its latest initiative: the Migrant Farmworker Historic Context Study. This project will delve into the history and legacy of migrant farm workers, spotlighting their stories and communities through sites that reflect their contributions to Miami-Dade County's history. The study will illuminate the significant roles these workers played in shaping our diverse community

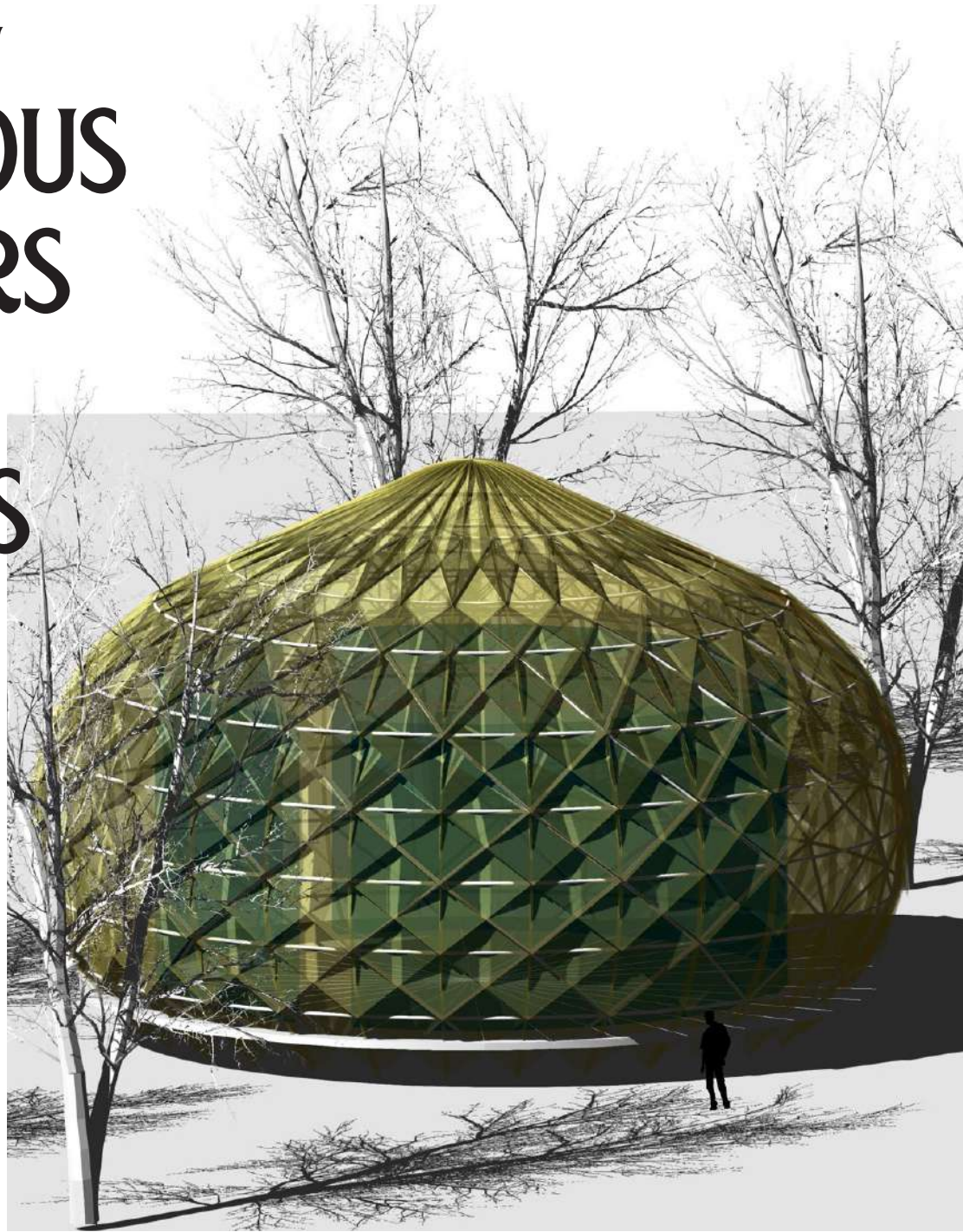
by examining the built environment and recognizing tangible and intangible historic resources tied to the agricultural heritage that has driven Miami's growth and expansion since its inception. ■



To learn more about historic resources and how the County and the Office of Historic Preservation can assist you in preserving historic structures and sites, visit www.miamidade.gov/historicpreservation or contact the Office of Historic Preservation at 305-375-4958 or historicpreservation@miamidade.gov.

TURNING INDIGENOUS WHISPERS INTO A TIMELESS VOICE

By Jeff Zbar



The PineCone - potential housing for a hologram installation at Fort Dallas on the Miami River

Khadijah Cypress remembers growing up among the elders of her Miccosukee tribe west of Miami. Her grandparents would share stories of their own upbringing - stories retold by the elders who guided each generation from their community within the Florida Everglades.

Young Khadijah learned dressmaking from her grandmother and heard stories of her culture and heritage from her grandfather. "You can be what you want to be," Khadijah recalled him telling her. "At the end of the day, you're Miccosukee and you'll always come back to that."

To help those stories live on, "Indigenous Whispers" will create a series of augmented reality (AR) shorts at stops along a Miami River walking path, and potentially a hologram at nearby Ft. Dallas Park. The stories will give voice to generations of Miccosukee.

The idea came to life in a short film screened at a meeting of the City of Miami Historic and Environmental Preservation Board (HEPA) during a discussion of how best to preserve the huge number of Tequesta archaeological relics discovered along the south bank of the Miami River just west of Brickell Bridge. The Miccosukee consider the 7,000-year-old Tequesta site an ancestral burial ground.

"These are stories passed down from grandparent to grandchild in the Indigenous community," said Judith Anderson, co-founder of Indigenous Whispers with Christine Michaels. "I would love people to visit Miami and be moved by these stories."

The sophisticated blend of technology and storytelling will create an interactive experience to bridge Native American wisdom and timeless themes like nature, community and resilience and employ technology to underscore Miami's emergence as a global tech hub.

Using their smartphone to scan QR codes, visitors will see a grandmother sharing how to collect and eat vegetation originally native to the banks of the Miami River, or telling a young child how a caterpillar that soon will transform into an Atala butterfly shares lessons of healing.

Augmented reality can bring to life a place's history and layer in the telling of the change a community has seen, said Mario Lopez, partner and chief innovation officer with technology partner Bravent, which is helping to create the pilot production. "With AR, you are in that place," said Lopez, who has produced similar augmented reality projects for the World Cup.

Former head of Miami-Dade's Historic Preservation Division, Dr. Robert S. Carr, was at the screening of Indigenous Whispers. Impressed with the project, Carr included funding for their pilot in a

grant proposal seeking state funds to underwrite the Tequesta Trail, a project he is spearheading. Indigenous Whispers will co-locate with Tequesta Trail markers when appropriate.

"It's very important to give a sense of Miami and South Florida that transcends the modern urban experience," said Carr, who explored



Khadijah Cypress in the Miccosukee sewing center

"At the end of the day, you're Miccosukee and you'll always come back to that."

-Khadijah Cypress

ancient mounds along the river as a teen, and today is director of the Archaeological and Historical Conservancy, Inc. "We have thousands of years of human history right here in Miami. These efforts help our community to build a sense of place."

Also at the video's screening were developer representatives who will soon present a plan to HEPB to archive and preserve relics of the past and educate the public on the importance of the findings. "This will be our best opportunity to tell Miami's story," said attorney Iris Escarra, who has been involved in 40 such site preservation efforts.

“Understanding the history of the Miami River helps us understand why we have the Miami we have today,” said Horacio Aguirre, chair of the Miami River Commission, who as a youth in the 1950s explored the river’s banks. The organization has supported pilot planning for Indigenous Whispers project, the greenway project, and many other important historical efforts.

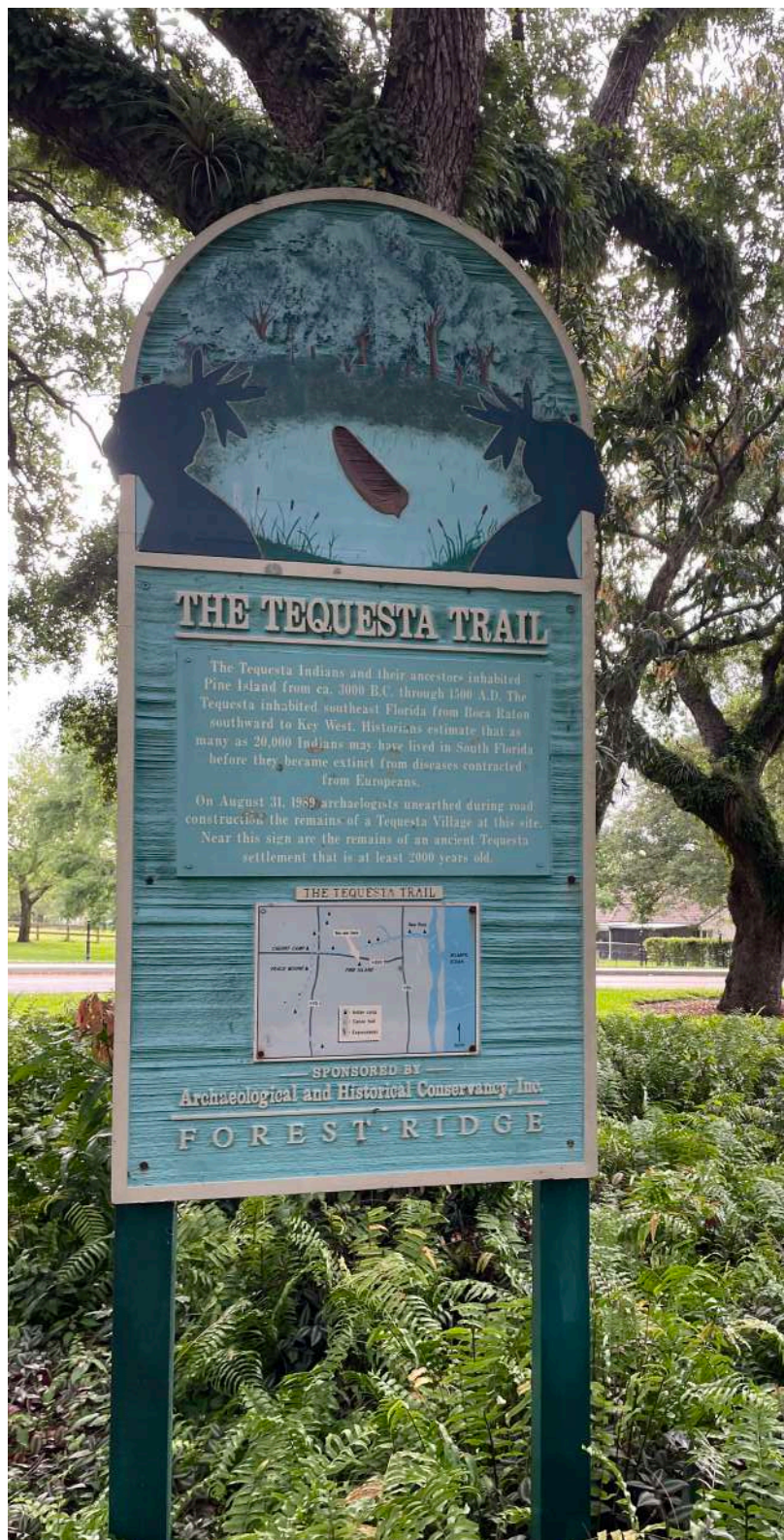
“Throughout the world, all civilizations and social groups start where there’s water,” he said. “If we’re going to understand the Miami of today, we need to reach back as far as we have knowledge. Let’s learn about the history of all of Miami by starting with the history of the river.”

Michaels, a producer of award-winning historical tours from the Art Deco District to Little Havana, sees the Miccosukee stories as a way to retell Miami’s true history.

“There’s this perception that Miami is a concrete jungle,” she said. “Other cities around the world have found a balance between development, respecting our history, and preserving culture. That’s the balance we want to achieve.”

Michaels and Anderson hope Indigenous Whispers will tell traditional stories, not from the voice of historians, archaeologists, or settlers, but through the voice of the indigenous populations themselves, and touch the hearts of Miamians and visitors alike. ■

Images courtesy of Judith Anderson.



Tequesta Trail Marker courtesy of the Archaeological and Historical Conservancy



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HANGAR 5 FOUNDATION, INC.

By Deborah Stander

Hangar 5 Foundation, Inc. (H5F) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization created in 2024 to foster public appreciation of Florida aviation history. It was named for Pan Am Hangar 5, the oldest building at MIA. Today, Pan Am Hangar 5 is threatened with the wrecking ball due to airport expansion. H5F is a fierce advocate for the hangar's preservation and is actively seeking recognition of its significance as a national aviation landmark. H5F also promotes aviation-related events and showcases Florida aviation on social media. Future plans include the creation of a website that will provide a permanent resource for all seeking to learn more about the history of aviation in our state. Please visit our Facebook Group, Hangar 5 Foundation Inc., for daily updates.

Here is a little background on Pan Am Hangar 5.

In May 1929, Pan Am's new Miami airport, located on the south side of NW 36th Street, consisted of 116 acres of cleared field and runways, plus the country's first purpose-built commercial passenger airline terminal and three hangars. The largest of the hangars became known as Pan Am Hangar 5. It was from this airport that the great international airway routes that eventually earned Miami recognition as an international aviation superstar were initially launched.

From its very first days of operation, the Northwest 36th Street airport was an enormous source of civic pride for Miamians. It earned Miami recognition as the international "Gateway to the Americas." In time, it served not only as the hub of Pan Am's Latin American Division but also as a hub for national carriers such as Eastern Air Lines and National Airlines. During World War II, it was used as a base for U.S. Army Air Transport Command operations. In 1945, it was acquired by Miami's newly created Port Authority and, in 1948, was renamed Miami International Airport.

By the early 1950s, the 36th Street airport could no longer adequately handle the sheer volume of traffic of Miami's booming airline industry. Plans to build a new airport on additional land acquired across the field were set in motion and, in 1959, today's MIA commenced operations. The facilities located on Northwest 36th Street --

the "north field," as it became known, including Pan Am Hangar 5, continued to be used by Pan Am and other airlines for aircraft maintenance, cargo operations, offices, and training.

Today, most Miamians are not even aware that the once beating heart of Miami's aviation industry was located along Northwest 36th Street. Almost nothing from that time remains. Pan Am's 1928 terminal building was torn down in 1962. Of the original 1928-1929 airport, only Pan Am Hangar 5 has survived. It is now the oldest in-use building at the airport -- a miraculous survivor of a storied past. Its story richly deserves to be preserved and told to future generations of Miami residents. ■



Images clockwise from page 36: Pan AM Hangar 5, Hangar 5 from NW 36 Street circa 1950's, Cargo Planes at Hangar 5. Images courtesy of Deborah Stander

Deborah Stander is a Miami native and daughter of former Pan American Airways Vice President/Latin America, Humphrey W. Toomey. A past president of the MiMo Biscayne Association, she has been an active advocate for historic preservation of Miami's Upper East Side neighborhoods since 2016. Deborah is the founder and president of Hangar 5 Foundation, Inc.



Hattie Bauer Preserve:

A South Dade Treasure by Every Measure

*By Christine Rupp,
Executive Director*

Images courtesy of Dade Heritage Trust

Dade Heritage Trust was awarded a grant by the State of Florida to develop a master plan for Miami-Dade County's Hattie Bauer Preserve in South Dade. The property located at 26715 SW 157 Avenue has a multi-layered, fascinating story. Hattie Bauer was the daughter of an early pioneer family who gained title to her own homestead. In the early 1920s she sold 15 acres of what was then a hardwood hammock, to orchid grower and native Kentuckian, Lee Fennell.

Upon obtaining his acreage from Bauer, Fennell moved his family to Florida and set about making the necessary improvements to the property. He began to carve out and nurture his garden from the wilderness. There were already 30 to 35 varieties of native Florida orchids thriving in the existing trees. Tucking new orchid plants into the nooks and crannies of the hammock, his plan was to have plants bursting with colorful blooms around every corner as you walked through the property. He created almost imperceptible winding paths through the dense forest, around manmade sunken ponds and natural solution holes. Fennell built a home and greenhouse on the property and cleared away the hammock's dense undergrowth.

Eventually, the property was named Orchid Jungle and became a tourist attraction as far back as the 1920s. Three generations of the Fennell family grew orchids on the site, performed abundant research, and educated visitors on growing techniques. In the 1970s, they opened a laboratory on the property. Hurricane Andrew in 1992 virtually eradicated the orchid collection. It was nearly the end for Orchid Jungle, and the work to bring it back seemed insurmountable. However, the Fennell family wasn't ready to give up. After a quarter-million-dollar investment, and the rescuing of hundreds of bits and pieces of orchids,

Orchid Jungle reopened on October 29, 1993. The high cost of monthly maintenance and the dwindling number of visitors finally resulted in the attraction's closing less than a year later, in June 1994. Though developers offered attractive sums for the property, the Fennell family did not feel pressured to sell due to a fortunate economic windfall. Several weeks before shuttering the attraction, Tom Jr. and Trudy Fennell won a \$6.76 million Florida Lotto jackpot.

That event led the family to approach Miami-Dade County to see if they were interested in acquiring the environmentally sensitive land. The answer was "YES"! The land was purchased by the County's Environmentally Endangered Lands (EEL) program in May 1995 to ensure continued preservation of the rockland hammock, a habitat designated as "imperiled" by the State of Florida. Matching funds came from the Florida Communities Trust (FCT) in March 1996. Renamed to honor the original owner, in 1998 the property was designated as a historic site by the Miami-Dade County Historic Preservation Board.

Much documentation has been prepared for the Hattie Bauer/Orchid Jungle property, given its historic, environmental, and cultural significance. This includes an Historic American Landscapes Survey prepared by University of Miami students and faculty, and an Historic Structures Report prepared by architect Richard Heisenbottle, which provided much of the information presented in this article.



Eric King from Miami-Dade Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces guides a tour at the preserve. King is standing adjacent to the abandoned orchid lab.



EEL has continued to maintain the property for 30 years. However, the original buildings have deteriorated and been severely vandalized. Invasive vines and other plants are ever-present, the old orchid lab is just a shell, and the lovely coral rock home is in need of a total rehab. The vanda house's coral rock foundations still exist, as if to say "I'm here, bring me back to life."

The grant funding will focus on site and operational

planning for the future of the Hattie Bauer/Orchid Jungle property. It will take a holistic view of the site and its current condition, its natural and built attributes, and preservation components. Also taken into account will be the preservation, reconstruction, and potential operations to create a roadmap for moving forward to ultimately present a unique historic venue for the public to enjoy and explore – a place that is architecturally, environmentally, and culturally significant. ■



“The Hattie Bauer Preserve is home to some of the most important archeological, horticultural, and archeological wonders of south Florida. Its history is the cyclical history of the American

tropics, and is as deep and complex as the solution holes that dot its ground.”

*-Rocco Ceo, Professor,
University of Miami School of Architecture*

“Our team had the honor of preparing the Orchid Jungle Historic Structures and Site Recommendations Report for Miami Dade County. The site is important to our cultural heritage as it tells the story of the industrious early Miami pioneer, Hattie Bauer, and that of resourceful entrepreneur, Lee Arthur Fennell. Orchid Jungle was one of the earliest roadside attractions in Miami-Dade County and played a major role in the history of botanical research in the U.S. for the propagation and popularization of orchids. With some careful site planning, revitalizing portions of the site would allow for the historic aspects of the park to be celebrated, provide usable, active park space, and

safeguard those portions that require sensitive maintenance and protection. The preserve provides a rare opportunity to experience one of South Florida's last remaining indigenous landscapes, the Tropical Hardwood Hammock, and should absolutely be conserved.”

-Richard Heisenbottle, Architect





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THE HOUSE (OF WORSHIP) THAT MAYOR REILLY BUILT

Architectural sketch of the new residence of Mr. and Mrs. Reilly, which is being erected in Shenandoah,

By Christine Rupp, Executive Director

Architectural rendering of the Reilly residence published in 1926

Dade Heritage Trust is working with the current owners to ensure the preservation of the residence of the first mayor of Miami which now houses the Saints Peter and Paul Russian Greek Orthodox Church in Miami's Shenandoah neighborhood.

Completed in 1927 as the home of City of Miami Mayor John B. Reilly and family, the stately residence at 1411 SW Eleventh Street in Miami was designed by noted architect Martin Luther Hampton. The Reilly family lived at the home until 1954, when the property was sold to the Saints Peter and Paul Orthodox Church. The Church renovated the interior of a residence and created a chapel with an apartment on the second floor for the reverend and conducted the first service on December 12, 1954.

John Bernard Reilly was born May 18, 1870, in New

Haven, Connecticut. At the age of 16, he began his career as a shipping clerk for a manufacturing establishment. In 1893, Reilly moved to Florida and worked for the construction firm of McGuire and McDonald, a decision that would prove to be fortuitous for both Reilly and the future City of Miami. McGuire and McDonald were contractors for Henry Flagler and builders of Flagler's hotels along Florida's east coast, including the Royal Poinciana and Breakers hotels in Palm Beach. Joseph A. McDonald was one of the principals of the firm and, as Flagler's Florida East Coast organization moved south, McDonald's firm moved with them to help oversee construction of hotels along the way. In 1895, Reilly married Marie McDonald, daughter of Joseph A. McDonald, in Palm Beach, Florida. A few months later, Henry Flagler contracted McDonald to oversee the construction of the Royal Palm Hotel

in what would become the City of Miami on July 28, 1896. Subsequently, Reilly was elected the City of Miami's first mayor. He would serve as mayor for four consecutive one-year terms from 1896 to 1900. Following his mayoralty, Reilly served two terms as city councilman. After his father-in-law's death in 1918, as a director of the Bank of Bay Biscayne he took on the role of personal banker for James Deering. He was also active in the community and belonged to several prominent civic organizations.

The Reillys moved into their new residence in the summer of 1927, but John was not able to enjoy his new home for long. By summer 1928, Reilly began suffering from complications of liver disease and tragically died in November of that same year.

Marie McDonald Reilly continued to live in the mansion until her death in 1935 from pneumonia. The Reillys' daughter, Eleanor Pero, her husband Joseph, and their children lived in and kept the house until 1954. When the Saints Peter & Paul Russian Greek Orthodox Church needed a permanent home to conduct services, they turned to an unconventional building for their new house of worship - and have called it home for seven decades.



Marie Ann McDonald Reilly and John Reilly



Saints Peter and Paul Orthodox Church today

The Church is now seeking historic designation of the building to ensure its preservation and to pay homage to its heritage and role in Miami's history. The Church offers tours of the building to educate and enlighten Miami residents and visitors about its significance. For more information, see: orthodoxpeterandpaulmiami.com. ■

Miami historian and author Casey Pickett contributed to this article and provided images.



FLEISCHER STUDIOS

The Hidden History of Miami's Film Industry

By Michele Zakis

In April 2024, an item on the City of Miami's Historic and Environmental Preservation Board agenda piqued the interest of Dade Heritage Trust: a resolution supporting the placement of a historic marker at a building formerly known as the Fleischer Studios at 1788 Delaware Parkway in Miami's Grapeland Heights neighborhood.

The person behind the effort to place the marker is Griffin Hansen, an animation writer and director and President of the Animation Education Association. We connected with Hansen and learned about the fascinating history of Fleischer Studios. Through additional research, we discovered the significance of the studios created by brothers Max and Dave Fleischer.



On February 2, 1938, The Miami Herald reported the relocation of a \$5 million motion picture enterprise, Fleischer Studios, Inc., from New York City to Miami. Fleischer Studios became the first "sound and technicolor company" established in the state of Florida.

Credited with producing colorized cartoons featuring Popeye, Betty Boop and Superman as well as the Oscar-nominated film, Gulliver's Travels. Fleischer Studios created 36 short pictures annually. The local business community believed that the establishment of Fleischer Studios would be the beginning of an industry that had been eagerly sought to enhance Miami's position as the world's greatest winter playground. Eastern Airlines and other local businesses celebrated the opening of Fleischer Studios by placing advertisements in the October 9, 1938 edition of The Miami Herald.

Released on December 22, 1939, Gulliver's Travels was Fleischer Studios's first full-length animated film. Produced by Max Fleischer and directed

by Dave Fleischer, the film had a running time of 76 minutes. Estimated to have cost over \$1.5 million to produce, Gulliver's Travels earned \$3,270,000 at the box office.

Built at a cost of \$300,000 Fleischer Studios was billed as the "latest in industrial modern design," the structure was designed by architect C. Sheldon Tucker and his associate, John M. Lyell. According to an article in The Miami Herald, the "construction is of monolithic poured concrete. One story in height, it is built in an 'H' shape on a plot of ground 185 by 340 feet around a 70 by 80-foot central patio. Covered cloisters join the wings. A separate structure at one wing is the elaborate sound and production stage."

Each room in the studio was designed for a specific purpose. According to The Miami Herald, "The staff of animators occupies eight large rooms in the plant. Backgrounds are created in one room; two are termed 'in-betweeners' rooms; three coloring and inking rooms and an experimental research room. Other departments include two film cutting rooms, a camera room with 18 machines in operation, music and library rooms and a lunchroom." The building was featured in Architectural Record in 1939 for its innovative design.

Fleischer Studios provided competition for Walt Disney's California studios. However, through a series of unfortunate personal and business-related events, in 1942, the studio closed and was taken over by Paramount in California. Miami-Dade County owns the property and has used it for a number of services, it most recently served as a police subdivision. The building now sits vacant with no acknowledgement of its history and significance. The property has great potential for uses that could pay homage to its history while meeting community needs. Think affordable housing and studio space for artists, and as a center for community arts and animation education.

Also, many people don't know that Fleischer Studios still exists today and oversees all the licensing and other activities for several of the beloved characters, including Betty Boop, Koko the Clown, Pudgy, Bimbo, and others. In fact, Max Fleischer's grandson, Mark Fleischer is the chairman and CEO. And, Betty Boop is coming to Broadway this spring in BOOP! The Musical. boopthemusical.com



Gulliver's Travels image courtesy of Fleischer Studios

SOUND-RECORDING BUILDING, FLEISCHER STUDIOS



Photos by Charles E. Goodridge

Fleischer Studios construction in 1939

Several online tributes and even short films about Fleischer Studios exist. In 1939, Popular Science created a documentary on the studio.

Vox recently put out a good video on Fleischer's significant impact on animation with a nice reference to their Miami studio.

Per Griffin Hansen, "As the founder and president of the Animation Education Association, it's in line with our organization's goals for me to bring a greater appreciation of animated filmmaking - and the artists who make it possible - to the general public. The artists of Fleischer Studios were integral to the cultural heritage of film in the United States, yet most people have no idea their final films were made at a studio that still stands right here in Miami!

I am confident that our partnership with Fleischer Studios to have an official state historical marker installed at the site will encourage a new generation of folks to check out the fabulous work of these artists who have inspired lineages of creative minds."

Dade Heritage Trust is poised to make the case that this property's cultural and architectural significance make it eligible for historic designation and appropriate adaptive reuse. For more about Fleischer Studios and potential for its preservation, please visit dadeheritagetrust.org/advocacy. ■

Michele L. Zakis is a Miami-Dade County native. A lifelong educator, she writes about topics related to South Florida history. Ms. Zakis holds master's and specialist's degrees in education from Florida International University and a master of fine arts degree from Spalding University, where she is currently working on a doctorate in organizational leadership.



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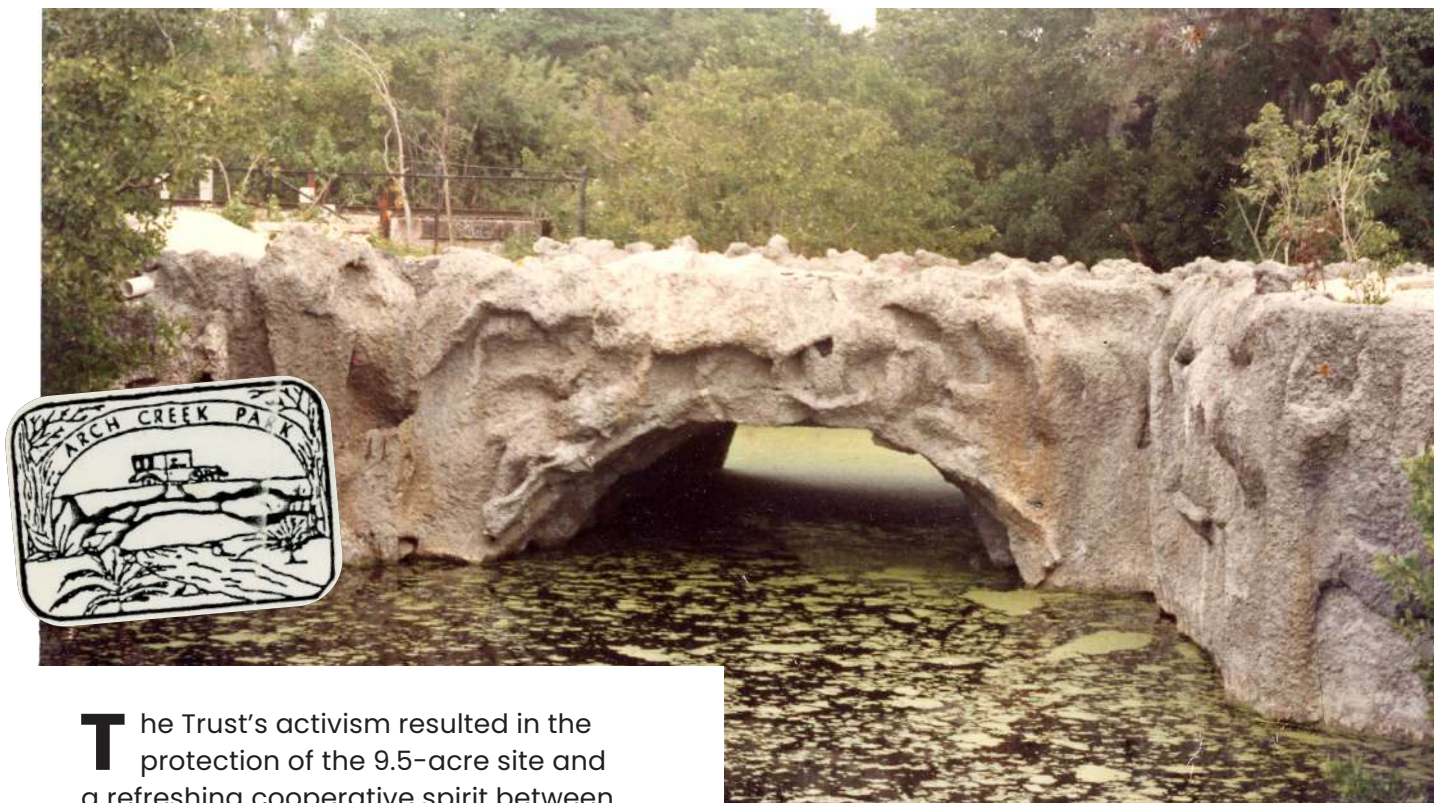
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Arch Creek Trust: Advocacy in Action

By Maureen Harwitz



Arch Creek bridge with restoration work completed, February 1987

The Trust's activism resulted in the protection of the 9.5-acre site and a refreshing cooperative spirit between governmental entities. In 1974, the State of Florida Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund (TIITF) acquired the property from the City of North Miami Beach via a quit-claim deed. Miami Dade County then leased the property from the TIITF in 1979 for a conservation and recreation area now known as Arch Creek Park. The lease period is 50 years and requires a state-approved management plan that must be updated every 10 years. In addition to the leased area, Miami Dade County also added 1.21 acres of designated Environmentally Endangered Lands (EEL) to the park.

The park is named for the historic Arch Creek that flowed through the property as it hurried southeastward below a 40-foot-long geologically unique limestone natural bridge on its path to Biscayne Bay.

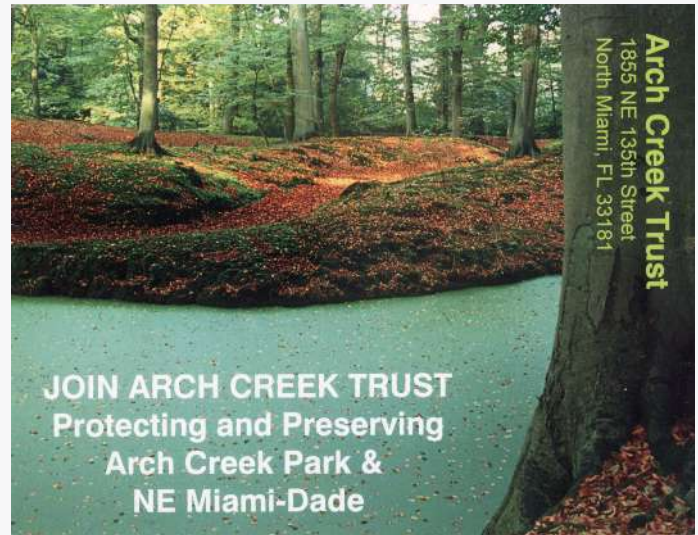
Miami-Dade County's Arch Creek Park in North Miami Beach represents a wonderful example citizen advocates and government uniting for cause that benefits the community.

In 1973, the City of North Miami Beach was set to permit the construction of a Chrysler dealership on a piece of environmentally and architecturally significant land on 135th Street. A small group of citizen volunteers, who eventually formed the Arch Creek Trust, reached out to elected officials and area residents to enlist their political will and advocacy to ensure preservation of this significant site which included Arch Creek and the famed natural bridge. The Creek, a natural occurring body of water, historically flowed from the Everglades eastward into Biscayne Bay, and believed to have first been used by people of the Tequesta and Seminole tribes.

Prior to the massive plumbing construction project of the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) drainage system, the creek was an important source of fast-moving fresh water for the Bay, with enough force to power a coontie mill. It is now slow-moving and blocked by a SFWMD salinity dam at 135th Street. Some of the creek's original meanders exist in the Keystone Point bayfront residential community to the east-southeast of the park. Unfortunately, the natural arch collapsed in 1973.

Arch Creek Trust was formally incorporated in 1981 as a member-based non-profit organization dedicated to the protection, improvement, and support of historic Arch Creek Park and its natural environment. Its scope also includes preservation of the local history of this important Florida archaeological site. The organization works with park staff and management to enhance park amenities, programs, and facilities.

The Trust assists in funding and maintaining infrastructure improvements in the park including the museum, trails, and the reconstructed natural bridge, in addition to presenting programs and events to benefit the park. Volunteer interest is welcome. **For more information, please see archcreektrust.org.** ■



Arch Creek Trust Membership postcard

Images courtesy of Arch Creek Trust

Maureen Harwitz learned about Arch Creek in 1972 on a field trip with her 7-year-old son. She learned that site was once home to Indigenous people about 2,000 years ago. Protecting that property from urban development was a start of her career as a volunteer activist. Her work came to include protection of Biscayne Bay, Haulover Park, Greynolds Park, Oleta River Park, John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park, and campaigns to establish the North Bayshore William Lehman Park and the Dagny Johnson Key Largo Hammock Botanical State Park. She served on the Miami-Dade Historic Preservation Board, Biscayne Bay Management Committee, Miami-Dade Environmentally Endangered Lands (EEL) Committee and the State of Florida Pollution Prevention Council.

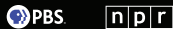


Arch Creek Trust Membership booth at a Cauley Square event, 1989

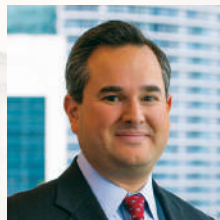
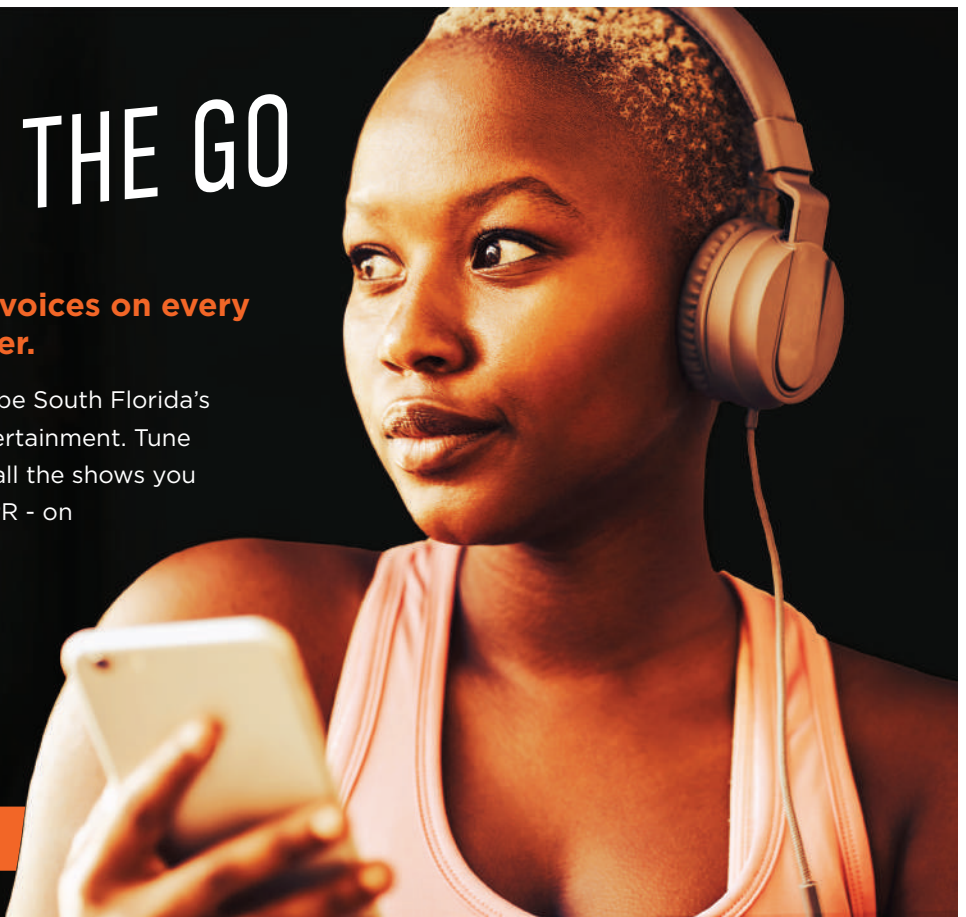
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Richmond Heights:



Wallace residence at 14520 Monroe Street, 2016

How Neighborhood Culture Grew from 26 Families

Sarah Cody, Historic Preservation Chief, Miami-Dade County

Images courtesy of Miami-Dade County

On December 12, 1949, Luther Wallace was the first person to purchase a property in Richmond Heights. His daughter, Lynette, still lives in that home today. Wallace, along with 25 additional African American men, purchased their new family homes within the opening days of property sales in the new residential development. Decades later, these 26 families would come to be known as the pioneers of Richmond Heights.

The area where Richmond Heights would eventually be developed is part of the ancestral lands of the Tequesta and Seminole people. After forced removal of the Indigenous people, the land was in part portioned off by the United States government to various homesteaders through a series of land grants in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In 1838, Dr. Henry Perrine obtained such a land grant in South Dade. Dr. Perrine never developed his homestead claim, and areas of the Perrine Land Grant remained undeveloped until well into the 20th century, including the eventual Richmond Heights.

The area was a native pine rockland, defined by stands of Dade County pine with a natural slough running through the northeast section, draining out to Biscayne Bay at the future location of the Deering Estate.

Around the turn of the 20th century, the Richmond Timber Company purchased several thousand acres of this land, using it to become a major Dade County pine supplier. At the start of World War II, the US Navy purchased 2,500 acres from the timber company and established the Naval Air Station Richmond. Around the same time, Captain Frank Crawford Martin, a former West Point student and then a pilot for Pan American Airlines, purchased 3,000 acres from the Richmond Timber Company, adjacent to the new military base. He discovered the land during his flights, noticing that it was a relatively elevated area that never flooded. He initially purchased the land to establish a fruit grove. However, a major hurricane in 1945 wiped out his papaya groves.

Following World War II, Captain Martin recognized a different opportunity in his undeveloped land. He decided that developing his failed papaya grove as a residential community for upstanding African American World War II veterans was an ideal business opportunity. Martin met initial resistance from investors, who felt the proposed subdivision was too distant from already-established African American neighborhoods in Miami-Dade County, particularly Overtown and Coconut Grove. Additionally, the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) refused financing for housing developments for anyone other than the Caucasian race. Martin was only able to gain the required FHA approval through a personal connection - a former West Point classmate who was then an aide for President Truman. With the help of this connection, President Truman directed the FHA to approve Martin's financing. With the FHA support, Martin had three model homes constructed. Immediately upon their completion, Martin had a list of applicants wishing to purchase residences in Richmond Heights. This quick response persuaded Martin's investors that Richmond Heights would provide a sound business partnership.

With financing secured, Martin formed a counsel of African American community leaders to advise him on his new venture. This council included David Douglas, Miami representative for the Atlanta Life Insurance Company; Reverend Edward T. Graham; Father Theodore R. Gibson, rector of the Christ Episcopal Church in Coconut Grove; Associate Judge L.E. Thomas of the Miami Municipal Court; and Charles Ratcliffe of the Veterans Administration Hospital in Coral Gables. With the input of his advisory council, Martin determined that only African American World War II veterans with honorable discharges who remained in good financial standing would be eligible to purchase residences in Richmond Heights. Prospective homeowners had to meet with Captain Martin and provide documents indicating they met these qualifications. Martin created the first private development in Miami-Dade County exclusively for African Americans, and one of the first planned African American communities in the United States.

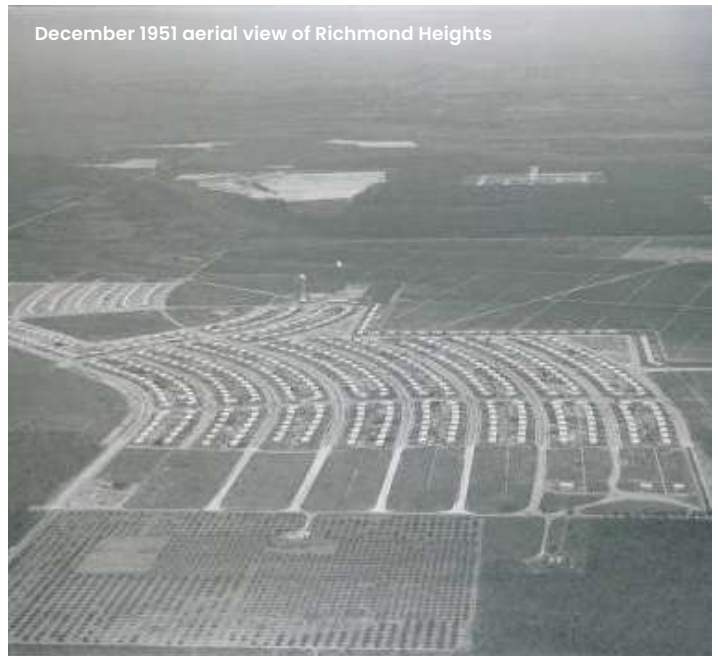


Richmond Heights monument, installed 2012



Martin devised the subdivision plan with an initial build-out of 457 residences. In it, he set aside land for future development of churches, a school, a medical clinic, and a playground. Martin's original acreage also included 615 acres that would eventually be used for the creation of ZooMiami. Avenues throughout the neighborhood were named for US presidents, while streets were named for African American community leaders. The neighborhood laid out with gently curving streets, designed to enhance curb appeal and to slow traffic. On November 22, 1949, the Dade County Commission approved his proposed plat.

Interest in the new residential community was strong and immediate, with a waiting list of applicants quickly accumulating. The first 26 residential sales were all purchased in December 1949, with the first 23 sales occurring on December 12, 1949, and 3 additional sales on December 14, 1949. The next recorded sales did not occur until March 1950, setting these first 26 sales apart as the first members, and pioneers, of the Richmond Heights community. Once the 26 pioneer families settled in Richmond Heights, the reputation of the new community quickly spread and sales continued. By May 1951, all 457 homes had been constructed and the neighborhood had 2,100 residents, with foundations laid for another 275 homes.



Today, the Richmond Heights neighborhood encompasses several thousand homes in South Dade. Its gently curving streets and distinctive mid-century ranch homes interspersed with parks, churches, and local businesses continue to define the peaceful character of Richmond Heights. The 26 original properties remain today, stretching along Monroe Street from the Wallace home near Carver Drive, eastward across Graham Drive. In 2016, the Miami-Dade County Historic Preservation Board designated the homes as the Richmond Heights Historic District. The same district was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on March 25, 2019.

The district celebrates the history of Richmond Heights, and recognizes the important role of its founding residents. Over time, the Richmond Heights neighborhood has grown to include thousands of homes and notable community members – a thriving and proud community that blossomed from those 26 founding families. ■

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The 1772 Foundation:

Advancing Preservation

By Ethiel Garlington, Executive Director

In June 2024 The 1772 Foundation co-hosted a historic properties redevelopment program charrette with An Taisce (The National Trust for Ireland) to bring American preservation practitioners to Ireland to jumpstart a new properties program.

A Legacy of Preservation

Founded by Stewart B. Kean in 1984, The 1772 Foundation is named after Liberty Hall in Union, New Jersey, which was constructed in 1772 and represents the rich history of the Kean and Livingston families. Liberty Hall was the first historic restoration project undertaken by the Foundation, setting a precedent for the organization's ongoing dedication to preserving historic properties across the United States. Our foundation is the only national foundation dedicated to historic preservation.

In October 2019, the board and staff of The 1772 Foundation uncovered the connection between the organization and profits made from the labor of African people enslaved by the early forebears of our benefactor. This discovery led the Foundation to acknowledge the wrongs of enslavement and offer a profound apology. We are committed to making meaningful change within the organization and supporting efforts towards a more just and equitable society. As part of the legacy action plan, they have pledged to expand efforts to preserve sites that tell African American history in a forthright manner, ensuring that the heritage and contributions of African Americans are acknowledged and preserved.

Mission and Focus

The mission of The 1772 Foundation is to ensure the safe passage of historic assets to future generations. The Foundation achieves this through various grant programs focused on historic preservation and supporting the preservation efforts of small non-profit organizations. In addition to its grant programs, the Foundation makes program-related investments (PRIs) to establish historic properties redevelopment programs (HPRPs), which utilize revolving funds to preserve endangered properties. Arguably one of the most important roles of our philanthropy is pushing the preservation field to the future.

For instance, we believe that historic preservation is climate action, but recognize the data and policies don't necessarily align with that sentiment. We intend to remedy that by funding educational opportunities, building assessment protocols, best practices research, and professional development. As Miami-Dade residents know, the climate is changing rapidly and we see existing buildings and their energy reduction as a key to the solution.

Grant Recipients Selection Process

The 1772 Foundation's grant programs are designed to support a wide range of preservation activities. Each year, the Foundation invites letters of inquiry from eligible organizations, followed by a rigorous evaluation and selection process. Grants are awarded based on the potential impact of the projects, the readiness of the organization, and the alignment with the Foundation's mission. The selection criteria often include financial stability, the broader impact of the project for the community and the organization, and the feasibility of the proposed preservation work.

In July 2024 our board adopted the 2025-26 plan that outlines our giving priorities.

Those include

1. Historic Property Redevelopment Programs (HPRP)
2. Black History
3. Legacy giving: grants to communities where our wealth was generated
4. SBK Brick and Mortar Grants: a re-granting program with 6 states
5. Dynamic Preservation

Impact and Achievements

Over the years, The 1772 Foundation has made significant contributions to the field of historic preservation. In 2024, the Foundation awarded grants totaling nearly \$4 million, supporting historic properties redevelopment programs, innovative climate action work, and bricks and mortar grants. These funds have helped preserve countless historic buildings and landmarks across the United States, ensuring that they remain integral parts of their communities.

One notable project supported by The 1772 Foundation is the preservation of the Jonathan Street community in Hagerstown, Maryland, one of the state’s oldest African American neighborhoods. This project exemplifies the Foundation’s commitment to preserving underrepresented histories and fostering community development through historic preservation.



Seen here outside of Charleston, SC, Joe McGill leads a tour of a slave dwelling site. Joe has spearheaded the innovative Slave Dwelling Project since its inception in 2010.



Located in Saunterstown, RI, Casey Farm is owned and operated by Historic New England. Over the past few years, 1772 has been working with Casey Farm to develop and implement a climate action plan for the site. HNE has ambitious climate goals for their entire portfolio.

Looking Ahead

As The 1772 Foundation continues its work, it remains dedicated to addressing the evolving challenges in the field of historic preservation. The Foundation’s approach includes exploring innovative preservation practices, promoting sustainability, and ensuring equity in the preservation of historic sites. By supporting projects that blend conservation with community engagement, The 1772 Foundation aims to make a lasting impact on the preservation of America’s cultural heritage.

For more information about The 1772 Foundation and its grant programs, please visit www.1772Foundation.org.

Ethiel Garlington has served as the Executive Director at the 1772 Foundation since September of 2023. Prior to his work at the Foundation, he was the Executive Director at the Historic Macon Foundation. A graduate of the University of Georgia, he has been in the field of historic preservation for over 20 years. ■

All images courtesy of the 1772 Foundation



During a site visit in December 2023, 1772 Executive Director, Ethiel Garlington, toured DHT projects - some complete and some in progress.



Cape Florida Lighthouse:

*Landmark Symbol
of Guidance and a
Beacon of Change*

By Christina Bracken

The Cape Florida Light is the oldest standing historic structure in Miami-Dade County and one of the oldest surviving lighthouses in Florida. It was first constructed in 1825 and has played a crucial role in maritime navigation and the cultural heritage of South Florida. The lighthouse stands as a rich yet complex symbol of the region's diverse histories while being a treasured icon for residents, businesses, and visitors. To celebrate its 200th birthday in 2025, The Friends of Cape Florida have prepared a year-long bicentennial celebration.



Historic photograph of the red brick Cape Florida Lighthouse ca. 1950

The iconic lighthouse was first constructed in 1825 to aid navigation around the Florida Reef that extends from Key Biscayne to the Florida Keys. Marking two centuries of maritime history, the Cape Florida Light, as it was called, and “Cape Florida,” the land surrounding it, feature importantly in the layered histories of South Florida and Key Biscayne. These complex histories include thousands of years of Indigenous stewardship, the U.S. military reservation at Cape Florida and Lighthouse’s service to maritime traffic, and the violence suffered by the Seminoles at the hands of U.S. military. This treatment led to an attack on the Lighthouse in 1836. Later, Cape Florida had a role as the launching point for formerly enslaved peoples who fled violence via the Saltwater Underground Railroad to the islands.

Cape Florida Light is the focal point of many of these stories that traverse centuries of South Florida history.

Leading up to the 200th anniversary culmination on December 17, 2025, an extensive agenda of events and activities will commemorate the rich history of the Lighthouse, as it draws attention to South Florida’s ecology and history from different perspectives. Everyone is invited to attend the planned array of events that will involve storytelling, music, natural sciences, poetry, conservation, art, archeology and so much more. Events will be held at Bill Baggs Cape Florida State Park and throughout the county in collaboration with local advocates, artists, and institutions, including the local educational, cultural, and creative communities.

Together,

we'll illuminate the past, present, and future of this historic structure and its Cape Florida home, and the vivid histories surrounding it.



The long-term goals of The Friends of Cape Florida include endowment-building, aligning with synergistic community and corporate partners, and growing a robust membership base motivated and enriched by unique programming and curricula. We invite the entire community to partner, collaborate, and enjoy the bicentennial celebrations. ■

Christina Backen grew up in Germany, then embraced her adventurous spirit by crossing the Atlantic in a 39' sailboat to start anew in vibrant Miami. Working over 25 years in the international footwear industry, Christina became a US citizen in 2014 and focuses her design, marketing and business experience on projects to enhance civic engagement. Her inspiring motto "Citizens don't have term limits" reflects her commitment to foster strong connections among people and their communities. As the president of the Friends of Cape Florida she is leading the extensive Bicentennial Campaign celebrating the 200th anniversary of the Cape Florida Lighthouse at the southern tip of Bill Baggs Cape Florida State Park. Please see friendscapeflorida.org

Images courtesy of Cristina Bracken

The Friends of Cape Florida offer unique programming and events to encourage community engagement and active use of this local treasure.



Celebrate the 200th Anniversary of the Cape Florida Lighthouse in 2025 and support DHT with the purchase of a Cape Florida Lighthouse Commemorative Brick

In the 1990s Dade Heritage Trust assisted with the total restoration of the 1825 Cape Florida Lighthouse Complex at Bill Baggs State Park on Key Biscayne. And now in 2025, DHT is a partner in the year-long celebration of the Lighthouse.

To assist with continued maintenance and special projects at the Lighthouse complex, Dade Heritage Trust offers a great commemorative brick program. For a donation of \$150, a handsome commemorative red brick paver is engraved with the wording of your choice and installed along the walkways of the Cape Florida Lighthouse Complex. These bricks are beautiful symbols of your preservation commitment and make lasting gifts for anniversaries, birthdays and memorials.

As a brick donor, you will receive celebration updates and invitations to the 200th anniversary events and programs!

Simply go to dadeheritagetrust.org/join-support/#lighthouse for information.

DHT AND NOAH UPDATE

Christine Rupp, Executive Director

In 2020, Dade Heritage Trust, in partnership with Miami-Dade County, kicked off an initiative to preserve historic buildings that offered naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAH), thereby maintaining the character of Miami's urban neighborhoods while helping to solve our community's affordability crisis. Miami-Dade County District 5 Commissioner, Eileen Higgins, championed this effort.



"Preserving naturally occurring affordable housing is about keeping a roof over someone's head AND preserving the soul of our neighborhoods like Little Havana. These historic buildings tell the story of Miami's diverse communities and, by maintaining them, we're ensuring that residents can continue to call these places home. At a time of

when we are facing an affordable housing crisis, preserving our heritage while keeping housing costs low is a win-win for Miami-Dade County."

-Miami-Dade County Commissioner Eileen Higgins

DHT's "Keyhole" building at 523 SW 7 Avenue



Dade Heritage Trust currently has three unique and architecturally distinctive multi-family properties undergoing rehabilitation under our preservation of naturally occurring affordable housing initiative. The Keyhole building at 523 SW 7 Avenue is a 1942 Art Deco gem, the 1924 Totowa Apartments at 1269 NW 5 Street exemplify a Mediterranean Revival central hallway walk-up, and the Lummus Park Cottage at 401 NW 3 Street is a 1917 wood-frame vernacular residence we now call Lula's Treehouse, as the original owner was a woman named Lula Hattersley.

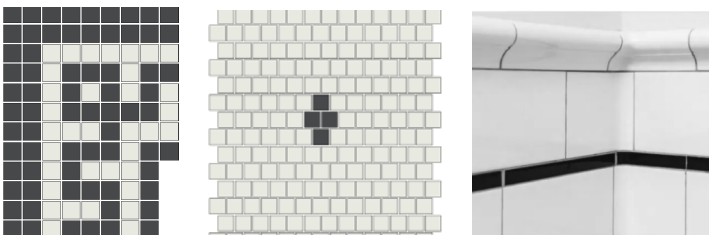
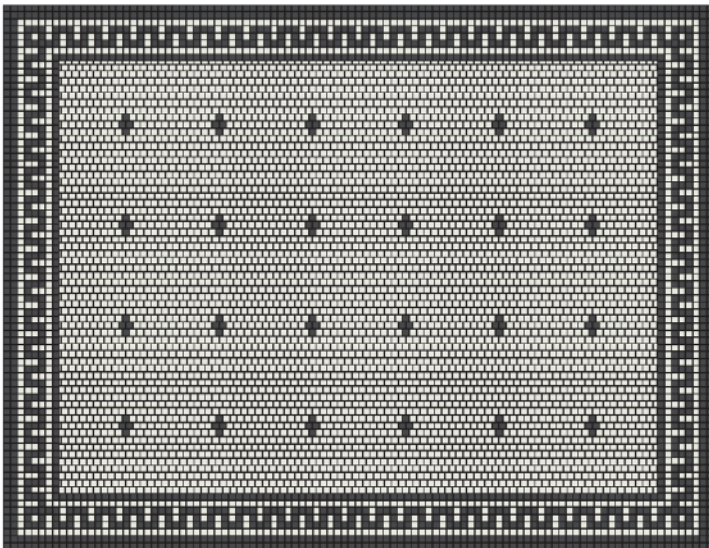
These properties offer opportunities for creativity and thoughtful reimagining of the spaces during restoration necessitated by the lack of proper maintenance and disregard for the historic fabric by previous owners. DHT is fortunate to have the expertise of three young Miami-based architecture and design firms to assist in the revisioning of our buildings.

Catherine Crotty is an architect with her own firm, Within Architecture. Crotty's focus is the interior of Lula's Treehouse including paint schemes, furnishings and fixtures. We are in line with her philosophy of resourcing used items that work into her design scheme and often find items on Facebook Marketplace that are old, one-of-kind and seem made for the space.

"As an architect, envisioning the future life a place can inspire is at the heart of our work. Collaborating with Dade Heritage Trust on restoration projects, such as Lula's Treehouse, is not only about preserving history; it's about designing spaces that honor their past while shaping the possibilities of their future. We at Within Architecture are deeply humbled to be part of this important initiative, crafting spaces where Miami's history and aspirations harmoniously converge."

—Catherine Crotty

Catherine Crotty from Within Architecture



Rachel and Daniel Castillo are the principals of Busycon, a design and architecture firm named after the Busycon shell. With a love of history and architecture in Miami, the Castillos are the guiding force behind the restoration of the Totowa Apartments. They joined DHT in the challenge of restoring a building that had been deemed an unsafe structure by the City of Miami and have been a steady, guiding force in the process, working with the City of Miami, the engineering firm, and the general contractor.

Rachel and Daniel Castillo from Busycon



"Few projects fulfill our passion for preserving Miami's architectural history while helping the community retain affordable housing. While many might be deterred by the challenges of this kind of work, we find inspiration. That's why we are pleased to collaborate with Dade Heritage Trust on this adventure."

-Rachel and Daniel Castillo

Studio Shell, led by Johnny Laderer and Noah Garcia, was founded in 2021 as a multi-disciplinary firm working holistically in the fields of architecture, landscape, design, branding and identity development. Laderer and Garcia have been tasked with designing the exterior paint schemes, landscaping, exterior lighting and on-site artwork at The Keyhole building. Through careful research and an eye for both beauty and practicality, they have produced a thoughtful proposal working in conjunction with Rosa Lowinger Associates on the restoration of the building's Art Deco elements.

Noah Garcia and Johnny Laderer from Studio Shell





*"We at Studio Shell admire Dade Heritage Trust's work and jumped at the chance to assist with the stunning Art Deco apartment building located in Little Havana. We were so happy we were able to help restore and elevate the building's identity as a key piece of the neighborhood's cultural and architectural heritage, especially as naturally occurring affordable housing. We sought to give the Art Deco details more prominence and dramatize the "keyhole" entry by giving it more depth through a thoughtful paint scheme. We assisted in game planning a clean-up scheme of some of the extraneous build retrofits and worked on a name and brand identity to make the building immediately identifiable and memorable."
-Noah Garcia and Johnny Laderer*

Working with these creative firms gives Dade Heritage Trust the opportunity to fulfill our mission as we educate and engage young professionals in the field of historic preservation. We open the doors to them for recognition, networking and potential new projects under our NOAH initiative. Their amazing talents will be showcased when we host the ribbon cutting ceremony on each of these lovely buildings in the coming months. ■

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Teach the Truth Garden

Dr. Marvin Dunn in The Garden

Cultivating Health, Wellness, and Community Empowerment

By Christyna Salmon

Nestled in the heart of Miami's historic Overtown neighborhood at NW 3rd Avenue and NW 9th Street, Teach the Truth Garden was born out of a desire to create a safe space within the community where we could all share TRUTHS and stories of our history. Historian, author, professor, and activist Dr. Marvin Dunn aimed to create something that is more than just a place where fruits and vegetables grow. His idea was to create a beacon of hope, a hub of learning, and a catalyst for change in the community. Founded with a mission to address food insecurity, promote health and wellness, and empower the local community, Teach the Truth Garden has created a food insecurity initiative that is a thriving urban farm dedicated to serving the people of Overtown and beyond.

At Teach the Truth, our commitment to the community goes beyond providing fresh, locally grown produce.

We are deeply invested in the health and wellness of the families we serve, particularly those who are socioeconomically disadvantaged. One of our flagship initiatives is a 12-week health and wellness program specifically designed for BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) mothers. This program, which includes biweekly classes, is a comprehensive approach to tackling some of the most common health issues that disproportionately affect BIPOC communities, such as diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease.

The program is thoughtfully structured to combine both education and practical application. Each session begins with a 45-minute nutritional class led by a certified dietitian who educates participants on the importance of a balanced diet, how to make healthier food choices, and how to manage specific health conditions through nutrition. Following the educational component, participants engage in a 60-minute cooking class where they learn to prepare delicious, nutritious meals using vegetables that are readily available in supermarkets or that can be easily grown at home.

But the learning doesn't stop there. Understanding that knowledge is most powerful when it's applied, we incorporate a hands-on gardening curriculum into the program. Participants are taught how to cultivate their own vegetables, which not only helps to reduce grocery bills but also empowers them to take control of their food sources. Our community garden serves as a live classroom where participants can practice their gardening skills, fostering a deeper connection to the food they consume.

To broaden participants' understanding of where their food comes from, and to deepen their appreciation for local agriculture, the program includes two field trips. The first is to a local farmers market, where participants can meet with vendors, learn the importance of supporting local agriculture, and discover new and interesting produce. The second field trip takes them to a farm, where they gain firsthand experience in sustainable farming practices and witness the journey of food from farm to table. These trips are designed to inspire and educate by showing participants the broader food ecosystem of which they are a part.



Garden goodies for the community



Teach the Truth Garden is also a hub for various community initiatives. We believe that access to fresh, healthy food is a right, not a privilege. To this end, we regularly donate produce to local food banks and community kitchens, so that even those who are unable to participate in our programs can benefit from the farm's harvest. In addition, we host free workshops on topics ranging from composting and sustainable gardening to canning and preserving food - further empowering community members to lead healthier, more self-sufficient lives.

Our collaboration with other local organizations is a cornerstone of our work. We partner with schools, churches, and other community groups to extend our reach and impact. One such partnership is with Big Green, a national nonprofit that helps create learning gardens in underserved schools. Through this collaboration, we are helping to establish gardens in local schools, where children can learn about nutrition and agriculture from a young age.

As we continue to grow in size and scope, our vision remains clear: to be a leader in the urban

agriculture movement, a champion for food justice, and a pillar of support for the Overtown community. We are excited about the future and the many possibilities it holds, from expanding our programs to reaching even more families, to exploring new and innovative ways to promote health and wellness through sustainable agriculture.

Teach the Truth is not just a farm or garden; it's a movement. A movement to reclaim the narrative of health in our community, to empower individuals with the knowledge and resources they need to thrive, and to create a more equitable and sustainable food system for all. ■

Christyna Salmon has a bachelor's in environmental science from the University of Florida and is a Master Gardener volunteer. Known as "Chef Chrys," she is a food advocacy expert focusing on community issues and addressing food supply and resources through Dunns Overtown, a 501c3 non-profit organization. Its mission is to advocate for super local farm-fresh ingredients, sustainable agricultural practices, and urban food co-ops that allow food to reach those who need it most.

All images are courtesy of Teach the Truth Garden.



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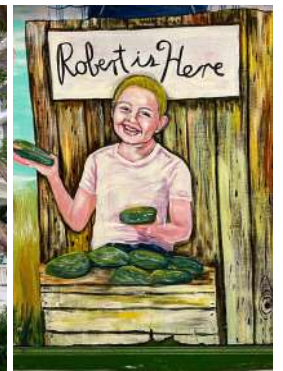
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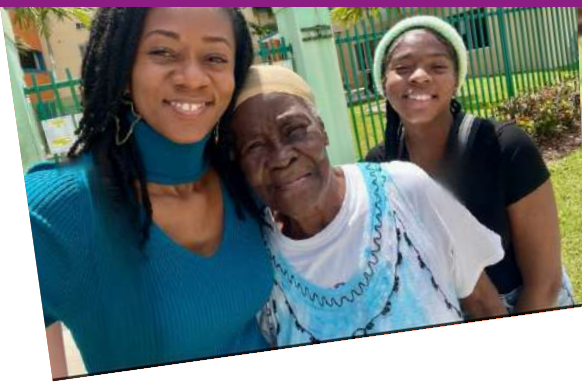
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As TML approaches its 30th anniversary in 2025, it reflects on a journey marked by growth, challenges, and triumphs. "Through every challenge, we remain steadfast in our commitment to offering not just services, but solutions," says TML CEO Trina Harris. From educational services to housing opportunities, TML is committed to meeting the community's needs at every level, providing opportunities where once there were none.

Honoring the Past, Empowering the Future

What began as a modest mission in downtown Miami in partnership with Central Baptist Church and the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship addressing homelessness, the AIDS epidemic, and prison ministry has grown into a multi-site operation specifically focusing on INSPIRING - EDUCATING - EMPOWERING YOUTH AND FAMILIES in the Overtown and West Homestead communities. On a mission to share the love of Christ by offering hope, opportunities, and resources to their communities, TML's reach extends beyond daily programming and support — the organization is at the forefront of addressing pressing challenges such as affordable

housing and job training, ensuring a brighter future for all.

This year, TML proudly welcomed Jennifer Estime as its new board president—the first Haitian American/Black Woman Board President. "Our work is about being present with our communities, so we can merge efforts, while breaking barriers," Estime shared. "I am honored to help lead TML into its next chapter of service and impact."

Photos above from left to right: Engaging the community: CEO Trina Harris, her daughter Zuri, and a neighbor unite in the heart of Overtown; Strengthening bonds: A TML family enjoys quality time at the Summer Community Cookout; Building friendships: TML summer campers unwind on the basketball court during the community cookout.



New adventures await: Elementary students at TML's summer camp sit down to formulate a fun plan for their next outdoor activity.



Sharing hope: Board president Jennifer Estime joins high school students and instructors during devotion at the Wednesday night youth dinner.



Inspiring young minds: Trina Harris with TML youth, nurturing the leaders of tomorrow.

Join Us as We Put 'Love in Action'

As TML celebrates 30 years of service, the organization invites the community to join in continuing its legacy. Every volunteer, donor, and supporter play an essential role in putting "Love in Action"—the theme of TML's 30-year campaign. Together, TML and its supporters are not just transforming lives, they are building a future rooted in love, compassion, and empowerment.

In 2025, TML will commemorate its 30th anniversary with events that honor the past and celebrate the possibilities of the future. With continued partnership, the organization will redefine what's possible for the children, youth, and families of Miami.

Stay Connected: touchingmiamiwithlove.org

Images courtesy of Touching Miami with Love

Christie Mancuso joined Touching Miami with Love as the Director of Development in December 2023. With over two decades of experience in leadership, fundraising, and marketing, Christie is passionate about community outreach and nonprofit growth. Join her in volunteering and supporting TML's mission—visit touchingmiamiwithlove.org to impact a child's life today.



NEIGHBORHOOD SPOTLIGHT



The historic Lyric Theater complex at 819 NW 2 Avenue in Overtown

Preserving the Legacy of South Florida's Black History – Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow

By Kamila E. Pritchett

Images courtesy of The Black Archives

The Black Archives History & Research Foundation of South Florida, Inc. stands as a cornerstone in the preservation and celebration of Black history and culture in Miami. Founded by Dr. Dorothy Jenkins Fields in 1977, this esteemed institution has been dedicated to documenting and preserving the experiences of people of African descent in the region from 1896 to the present. With a mission to collect, preserve, and make accessible this vital history, the Black Archives has played a pivotal role in capturing the narratives that shape our understanding of the past and inform our future.

Dr. Fields, a visionary leader and passionate advocate for historical preservation, laid the groundwork for the Black Archives with a mission to chronicle the lives and experiences of pioneering Black people in South Florida. Her dedication led to an extensive effort to visit homes, gather stories, and collect artifacts, ensuring that the contributions of these communities would be recorded for posterity.

Under her guidance, the Black Archives established a reputation for excellence in documenting and showcasing the history of people of color in South Florida and beyond. The organization's commitment to maintaining with the utmost care its historical records, curating thoughtful exhibitions and community programs, and advocating for the preservation of historic structures in our city, has cemented its status as a national leader in the fields of historic preservation, archival leadership, and educational programming.

In 2014, under the leadership of Timothy A. Barber, the Black Archives made a significant move of its operations from an office space in the Joseph Caleb Center to the Historic Lyric Theater in Overtown, a site listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This relocation marked a new chapter for the organization, providing an expanded space to enhance its capabilities and outreach. The Historic Lyric Theater, with its rich historical significance, became a fitting home for the Black Archives, reflecting the organization's deep connection to the community and its dedication to preserving cultural heritage.



Kamila Pritchett with consultants at the historic X-Ray Clinic restoration project

In 2022, after 10 years of service as an employee in various capacities, I was appointed to the role of Executive Director of the Black Archives and Historic Lyric Theater.

I am honored to build upon the foundation laid by my predecessors and to steer the organization into a new era of growth and innovation. My vision for the organization centers on engaging and inspiring the next generation of history keepers. I believe that the future of historical preservation depends on our ability to attract young, passionate individuals who can bring fresh perspectives and innovative ideas to the field.

As director, one of my primary goals is to foster a dynamic environment where young people are encouraged to explore careers in history, archival work, and cultural preservation. By creating opportunities for internships, educational programs, and mentorship, I believe the Black Archives can play a crucial role in nurturing the talents and ambitions of young historians, researchers, and educators.

I envision a future where these emerging professionals contribute to our mission with enthusiasm and creativity, ensuring that the vital work of preserving Black history continues to evolve and resonate with new generations.

In addition to expanding the organization's outreach efforts, the Black Archives also has plans to enhance our educational programs and public engagement initiatives. By partnering with schools, universities, and community organizations, the organization aims to make its resources and expertise accessible to a broader audience. In the summer of 2023, I traveled to Norway to speak at a Norwegian archives conference about the work of the Black Archives in the face of Florida's acrimonious relationship with Black history education.

Embracing technology and modern archival practices will also be a key component of the organization's strategic vision. As we continue to digitize our collections and develop online resources, we will enhance our ability to reach global audiences and preserve our materials for future generations. By leveraging digital platforms, we can provide broader access to our archives and engage with diverse communities around the world.

I am committed to strengthening our partnerships with other cultural institutions, historical societies, and community groups. Collaborative efforts will enable us to expand our reach, share resources, and create joint initiatives that amplify our impact. By working together, we can build a more comprehensive and inclusive narrative of our shared history and ensure that the stories of our ancestors continue to inspire and educate. ■

For more information about the Black Archives, visit www.BAHLT.org.

Kamila Pritchett is a graduate of Miami Northwestern Senior High School and received her BA in English and Undergraduate Certificate in African New World Studies at FIU. Beginning her work in the non-profit arena in 2007, Kamila is deeply rooted in community service to the Miami community and is currently serving as president of the Greater Miami (FL) Chapter of The Links, a national service organization. She is also a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated and volunteers her time to March of Dimes, United Way, and Susan G. Komen Foundation. She served the Black Archives as Development Coordinator, Operations & Programming Manager, and is now the organization's Executive Director.



Original details on the historic Lyric Theater



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PRESERVATION IN EDUCATION

EDUCATION UPDATE



BY LUCIA MENESES,
DHT SCHOOL PROGRAMS MANAGER

In 2017, Dade Heritage Trust launched an educational program called Historic Places, Green Spaces to introduce students to significant cultural, historical, and recreational spaces within Miami in hopes of empowering them with knowledge and inspiring a sense of civic pride. We started with one historic place and now we have seven different historic and recreational sites for teachers to choose from. We have serviced more than 20,000 students from more than 100 schools in Miami Dade County!

Field trips are led by our amazing team of educators and include tours and interactive activities, which are all Florida standards-based. We are pleased to offer our field trips at no cost to students. We also award bus scholarships to Title I schools or schools with a large population of economically disadvantaged students. The majority of the schools we work with are Title I. Last school year, we were able to award 77 bus scholarships! The scholarships are a big deal for most schools and often a deal breaker when we can't provide one, but luckily that doesn't happen very often! None of this would be possible without the generous support from our funders:

The Miami Foundation focuses on building a stronger Miami through civic leadership, community investment, and philanthropy. Their funding allows us to offer a wide range of educational resources and opportunities for students and teachers alike.

The Peacock Foundation shares our commitment to empowering underserved populations. Their generous contributions enable us to provide meaningful experiences to the most economically disadvantaged students in Miami-Dade County.



Support from **Miami-Dade County** ensures that we can continue offering high-quality education programs to diverse communities at county parks like AD Barnes Park. Through our partnership with MDC Department of Transportation, we are also able to secure buses for Title I schools.

With a focus on education and community well-being, the **Dunspaugh Dalton Foundation** has been a critical partner in advancing our mission to inspire students to become advocates for their community and its historical assets.

The Batchelor Foundation is committed to funding programs that support the natural environment in South Florida. Their contributions to our education program have allowed us to implement environmental education initiatives like our Miami Urban Tree Trekkers multiple-site program.

The Kirk Foundation supports the youth of South Florida through projects in arts and education. Their partnership has enabled us to develop multidisciplinary activities that promote the arts and visual thinking strategies.



The Admire Family Foundation's dedication to charitable causes has helped ensure that we can continue providing these field experiences at no cost to teachers or students throughout Miami-Dade County.

Miami Downtown Development Authority's support in our education programs as well as our role as a visitor center has been crucial in helping us service the Downtown community. Their commitment to grow, strengthen, and promote the economic health and vitality of Downtown Miami aligns with our preservation mission.

The Society of Architectural Historians has been a unique and valued partner, supporting our efforts to integrate architectural education into our curriculum.

As individual philanthropists, **Trish and Dan Bell** have shown immense generosity in supporting educational

and arts initiatives. Their contributions have enabled us to reach even more students and provide high-quality education programs.

The Lynn & Louis Wolfson II Family Foundation has generously supported the production and launch of our new podcast, *Miami Preserves*, which complements our education programs. In this podcast, we explore historic places in Miami and what it means to preserve our history.

Lastly, these partnerships would not have been possible without the leadership of our organization. DHT's Board of Directors understands the value of educating kids about where they live and is committed to ensuring our programs are free and accessible to our most underserved communities. We look forward to our continued partnership with all of our funders who make this meaningful work possible!

Lucia Meneses is Dade Heritage Trust's School Programs Manager. With DHT since 2017, she has developed the education program's entire curriculum, which includes Historic Places, Green Spaces; Miami Urban Tree Trekkers, and the African American Heritage program tracks. Under her leadership, DHT has been deemed an official STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math) partner of Miami-Dade County Public Schools.



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BY CHRISTINE RUPP, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Every year, Dade Heritage Trust honors a homeowner who lovingly and proudly cares for their historic residence. This year, Marta and Alex Silva are recipients of DHT’s Key Keeper Award.



Alex and Marta Silva

The Silvas closed on the property at 1043 North Greenway Drive in Coral Gables in November 2021. The house had been a neighborhood eyesore for many years and, although it was designed by renowned architect H. George Fink in 1923, it was severely altered and in disrepair. In spite of its age and its famed designer,

when the Silvas purchased it, the residence was a non-contributing structure in the Granada Golf Course Historic District due to numerous additions and the stuccoing of the original coral rock. According to the Silvas, “There were also MANY leaks in the house.”

Alex, an architect, did the design work. Construction and restoration efforts lasted over the course of 22 months. The Silvas originally expected to live in half of the home while the other half was being renovated, but it proved impossible due to the amount of work required. They moved out, restored the home, completed the project and moved in on Labor Day weekend 2023.

Many of the home’s historic features had been removed, but they were able to restore the exterior back to its 1926 configuration, with a small kitchen addition located where there had previously stood an open breezeway connecting two separate wings of the house. The restoration was very thoughtful as the team salvaged some of original wood flooring and consolidated all the salvageable wood on the second floor, saved the old checkerboard flooring and coral rock interior of the old porch on the 1926 addition and reconstructed some of the arches that had been removed as well. This was quite the undertaking, as one of the previous owners had removed the load bearing coral rock arches and replaced them with flat concrete lintels. Restoring the arches required removal of the entire east side wall and re-integration of the original arched geometry.

The Silvas requested historic designation of the residence which the City of Coral Gables granted in 2022. According to the Silvas, “It was a very fulfilling project and we’re very happy with how it turned out and thrilled to be living in our dream home.”

Images courtesy of Sandy DeWitt and the City of Coral Gables



Photos courtesy of © Steven Brooke

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MEET AND GREET



Shelley's rendering of DHT's Lula Hattersley Cottage

BY DONNA SHELLEY

Ronald Shelley is an architectural illustrator. For decades he worked as a concept artist for architects such as Milton Harry, Larry Seitz, Charles Harrison Pawley, Lane Pettigrew, and Kobi Karp. He brings his ability to capture form, perspective, light, and shade to historic buildings, too. In his work for Dade Heritage Trust, he has illustrated historic buildings for exhibits, presentations, and the magazine *Preservation Today*.

Some of Ronald's paintings for DHT include Lula Hattersley's Cottage, the Old School House in Coconut Grove, and Andersons Corner. He painted the Wagner Homestead in Lummus Park for the onsite exhibit and it is also the background for the logo of Historic Places Green Spaces educational programming. In preparation for drawing and painting a historic building, Ronald researches the assigned subject by studying old photographs, and period information, and photographing the extant building. If available, he will consult architectural plans and elevations. Then he is ready to compose, sketch, and color the subject using acrylic watercolor and markers.

Ronald's skills as an artist have been viewed and enjoyed by tens of thousands of people. From book covers and magazine illustrations to architectural renderings, to fine artworks located in museums and private collections, his art has made an impact, often on people he has never met.

Born and raised in Rugby, England, Ronald spent his childhood immersed in the realities of war in his daily life. At a very young age, his father encouraged him to use his artistic talents and powers of observation to draw bombers and fighter planes as they readied for World War II. Later, he was trained as a draftsman and watercolorist, graduating from the Rugby School of Art in 1949 at 15.



Ronald Shelley on the front porch at DHT holding an issue of *Preservation Today* Magazine that featured one of his illustrations.

Looking to escape life as a farmhand, Ronald traveled to France and worked in car shows. While there, Ronald signed on as a wrangler for an American rodeo on tour in Europe. His new adventure with cowboys convinced him that the United States was the place to be. Thanks to the sponsorship of the rodeo owner Ronald came to the U.S. and continued as a wrangler in Texas. Bumping around the country for a bit, he ended up in Florida, where he has lived for over 60 years.

While exhibiting his work at the Coconut Grove Art Show, he was engaged to design and draw for a builder who admired his work. In the 1970s, architect Milton Harry hired him to make concept illustrations of the new International Terminal at the Miami Airport. It was to be the first of many assignments with Mr. Harry. Ronald gained a reputation as a creative and reliable illustrator working on projects built in South Florida, the Caribbean, the Middle East, and Europe.

To see more of Ronald's work, please visit fineartamerical.com/profiles1-ronald-shelley For more information, please email him at cowboyshelley@yahoo.com.

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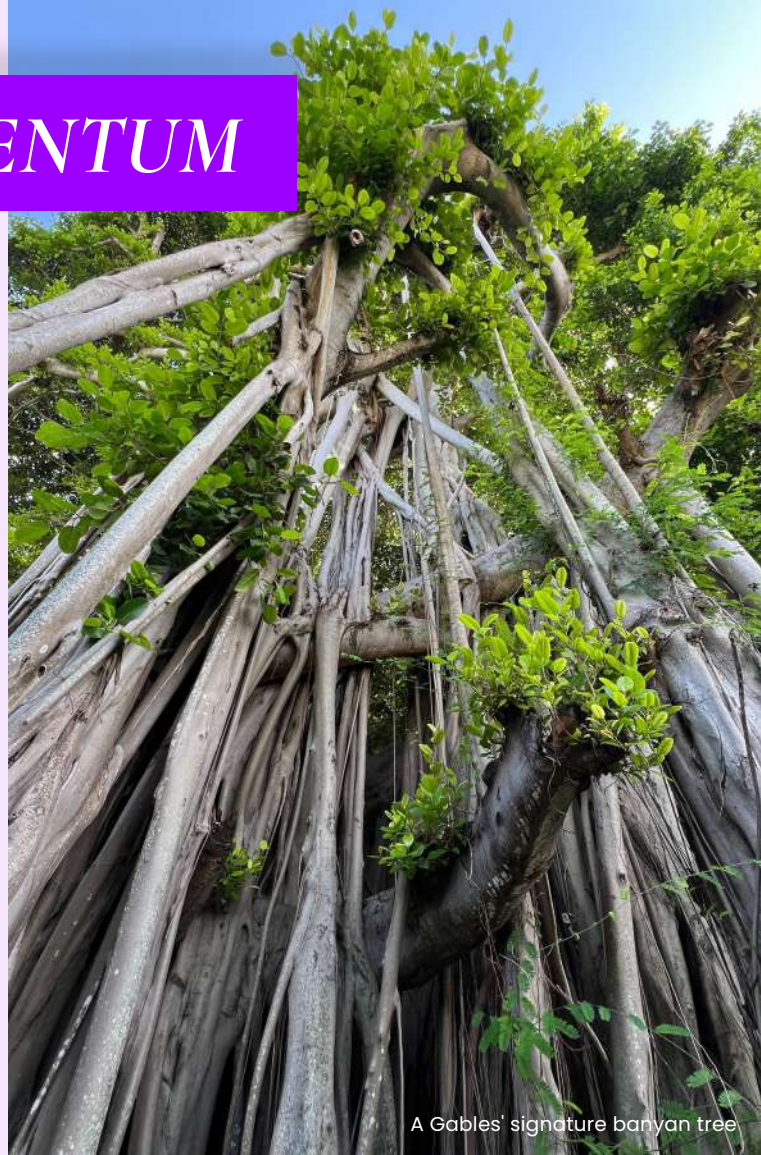
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THE CITY BEAUTIFUL CELEBRATES 100 YEARS

BY NICOLAS SAENZ

Coral Gables, one of the first planned cities in Florida, kicked off its centennial anniversary at the annual Tree Lighting Ceremony on December 6, 2024. While the official 100 years is to be celebrated April 2025, the entire year will be an exciting chance to celebrate with the community this historic milestone and reflect on its exciting future ahead. The city and community partners will add a centennial flair to their annual events, and there are many interactive opportunities for residents to pay tribute and preserve the city's rich history.

The Coral Gables Centennial website, www.100coralgables.com, serves as the central hub for centennial activities through 2025, offering the community a platform to share personal photos and memories while highlighting historic sites and influential figures who have shaped the City Beautiful into what it is today. The website features oral history videos, a calendar of community events, a historic timeline, and a comprehensive photo gallery.



A Gables' signature banyan tree



George Merrick and team in 1925



The Douglas Entrance

Residents will also get the opportunity to share and record their favorite Gables memories at the popular Farmers’ Market across from City Hall every Saturday starting January 11 through March 29, 2025. These memories will become part of the city’s archives. There are other opportunities to engage by sharing a photo memory with the Frame the Memory challenge.

“One of the premier projects will be the Art in Public Places sculpture commission by Morel Doucet,” said City Manager Amos Rojas, Jr.. “It celebrates the Bahamian and Black workers that helped build Coral Gables. It will be placed at Merrick Park across from City Hall. “The sculpture and its location were chosen together with community members from the MacFarlane Homestead Historic District and Golden Gate communities.”

One of the city’s greatest (and greenest) treasures is Coral Gables’s dense tree canopy. The Coral Gables Landscape Beautification Advisory Board unveiled a Tree of the Year contest to spotlight the city’s lush urban forest and build awareness for proper canopy care. The board will announce a Tree of the Year winner on Arbor Day 2025. Residents are urged to submit their favorite tree by visiting www.coralgables.com/treeoftheyear.

The Raúl E. Valdés-Fauli Archives is seeking personal donations to add to the city’s depository of historical items. To preserve a personal item with historical significance and make it a part of Coral Gables history for years to come, visit www.coralgables.com/archives to learn more.

The city is excited to honor 100 years through many more activities, exhibitions, and festivities. We hope you’ll join us in celebrating and continuing to build toward another 100.

Nicolas Saenz is the City of Coral Gables’s webmaster and works in the Communications and Public Affairs Department.

Images courtesy of the City of Coral Gables

Above: The third level of the building originally was a 2/1 apartment, with a rounded window opening that’s since been restored.

A classic 4th of July at the National Landmark Biltmore Hotel





"The Museum is an awakening, historical and extremely knowledgeable experience that provides a look back into the of City of Miami Black Police History."

- Veronica H.

"I don't remember ever having enjoyed a museum as much as this one. Fascinating history and the documents they have curated are so worth the trip."

- Jessica Z.

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- Marcus P.

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ADVOCACY UPDATES

Westmoreland District

In last year's edition, DHT was hopeful about the potential preservation of a distinctive home in Little Havana's Westmoreland District along SW 13 Avenue south of Calle Ocho. Unfortunately, the home, which certainly met the requirements for historic designation, was recently demolished. The owner was only in favor of designating the property if he could create an income-producing property by restoring it and creating a bed and breakfast; however, neighborhood zoning in the City of Miami does not allow that use. So, demolition was his apparent solution. This situation presents an issue that should lead to some important dialogue about historic single-family homes and multi-family buildings in need of restoration in residential neighborhoods. Should those properties, through zoning changes, offer the owner incentives to rehabilitate and maintain the historic structures by allowing them to be income-producers, such as a bed and breakfast?

City of Miami Legislation Focuses on Historic Structures

In April of 2024, City of Miami Commission passed a resolution regarding historically designated structures in the City of Miami as follows:

A RESOLUTION OF THE MIAMI CITY COMMISSION URGING THE CITY MANAGER TO CREATE A PROGRAM TO MONITOR AND TRACK THE STATUS AND BUILDING INTEGRITY OF STRUCTURES DESIGNATED HISTORIC IN THE CITY OF MIAMI.

According to Chairwoman Christine King, who sponsored the legislation, "As we embrace Miami's growth, we also need to honor and preserve our history for future generations. Historical structures are part of the foundation of our community. Sponsoring this legislation and its passing is helping to ensure these structures are not demolished because of neglect, with the support of the City of Miami."

The resolution's timing infers that the Commission's action was in response to the unsafe structure violation and subsequent demolition of the historic Dr. DuPuis Office & Pharmacy building in Little Haiti, which caused an uproar in her district and throughout the Miami preservation community.



Residence at 1147 SW 13 Avenue that was given an unsafe structure violation and demolition order by the City of Miami. DHT is working with the owner to try to preserve this wonderful multi-family residence.



The City of Miami's Olympia Theater is in dire need of restoration

The resolution passed at the 4/11/2024 commission meeting and was a resolution item (RE 13).

To bring this legislation into action with meaningful results will require cooperation, communication, and strategic action among several City of Miami departments including the Office of Historic Preservation, which falls under the Planning Department, Code Enforcement, Department of Real Estate Asset Management, and the Building Department.

Should we be hopeful? If this legislation is followed, then it would seem that City-owned historic structures that continue to deteriorate should be top-of-mind for city officials. We know them by heart: Miami Marine Stadium, the Olympia Theater, Palm Cottage in Fort Dallas Park — three gems that are part of the foundation of our community.

To view the Westmoreland District Preliminary Report, visit: dadeheritagetrust.org/advocacy-projects



OUR BRICKELL NEIGHBORHOOD

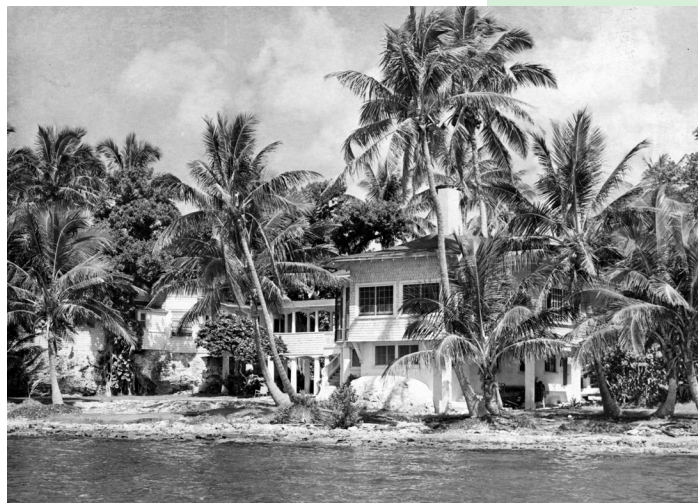
SWEET WAY ON BRICKELL AVENUE

BY CASEY PIKET

A leisurely cruise on Biscayne Bay along Miami's Southside neighborhood one hundred years ago would reveal a group of extravagant mansions along a bluff known as Cliff Hammock. This quarter of the neighborhood now known as Brickell was called "millionaire row" for the extravagant residences and notable residents who generally occupied the homes during winter.

One of those mansions was constructed for Annie Tiffany Mitchell, daughter of the founder of Tiffany & Company, Charles Tiffany. Her brother, Louis Comfort Tiffany, was her neighbor to the north in this extravagant section of the Brickell neighborhood.

After her husband's death in 1911, Miami became Annie's winter destination, most likely on the recommendation of her brother, Louis, who had been traveling to South Florida for several years before Annie's first visit. She decided to invest in bayfront property close to a parcel her brother was developing for his own residence. In the summer of 1919, Annie purchased land along today's Brickell Avenue from Charles Otis Richardson, whose family-owned farm grew guava, bananas, and other fruit trees along the Miami River. Richardson had purchased the land from Mary Brickell in April 1904 for \$200 and sold it to Annie in July 1919 for \$33,500. Although he never constructed a home on the property, he did pave a private road from Brickell



Avenue to the bay, which he named "Sweet Way" due to the number of guava trees found on the property when he purchased it from Brickell.

Construction on Louis's Comfort Lodge was started and completed ahead of Annie's Sweet Way residence. In both properties, the directive was to preserve as much of the native configuration and growth as possible. Sweet Way's design incorporated two buildings joined by a covered walkway. The southern structure was constructed on a small oolitic limestone bluff and was designed to have a more rustic feel. The kitchen, dining room, guest bedrooms, and bathrooms were located in this portion of the home.

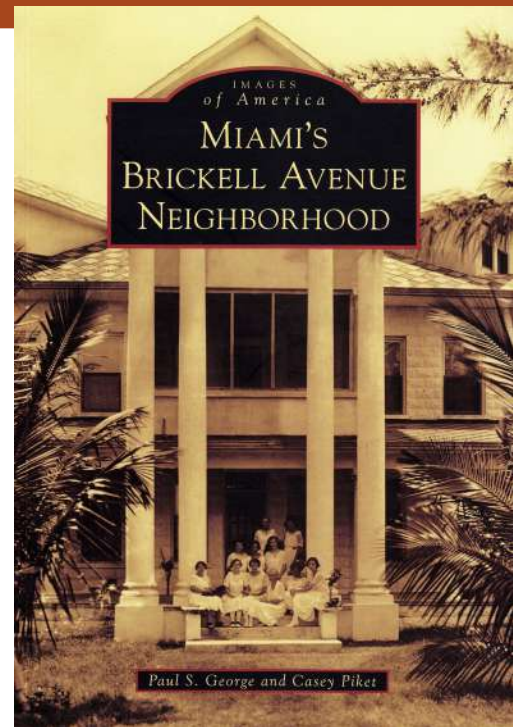
The north portion of the residence was more elegantly finished and contained the living rooms, main bedroom, and additional bedrooms and bathrooms. In the living room, the windows and screens could be opened up and folded out of sight, leaving the room as open as a porch. In total, the home was configured with nine bedrooms and six bathrooms with separate servant's quarters.

Once Annie Mitchell settled in her new residence, Sweet Way became a place where she hosted friends and family, as well as various local organizations. On several occasions, she welcomed both the South Florida and Shenandoah Garden Clubs at her home for meetings and fundraisers. After Annie's death in 1937, the mansion became a venue for recitals sponsored by the University of Miami School of Music.

The property was eventually sold by Annie's heirs and it changed hands a few times. By 1980, the property was acquired by Stonecrest Development, which retained the Miami-based architectural firm of Arquitectonica to design the 21-story Atlantis condominium on the site.

A key feature of the Atlantis is that its design preserves much of Annie Tiffany Mitchell's original residence. The old mansion was left in place, renovated, and included as part of the pool deck within the condominium grounds. While the structure may get lost in the larger building complex, Annie Tiffany Mitchell's former residence provides a legacy of the prominent Tiffany family's lineage, and also recalls a bygone era when the Brickell bayfront was lined with grand and interesting single-family winter mansions.

Current and historic images of the Mitchell residence courtesy of Casey Picket



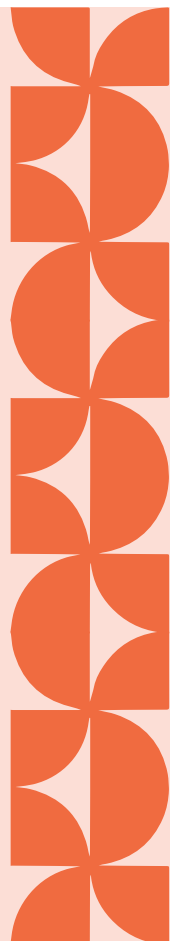
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Citizen's Bank Building

In June 2017, the Omni CRA began rehabilitating the historic Citizen's Bank Building, enhancing its structure and aesthetic. This effort preserves an iconic piece of the area's architectural heritage.



Dorsey Library

The Omni CRA funded the Dorsey Library restoration in 2017, leading to the 1st Take Youth Film Program, offering hands-on filmmaking to local youth. It continues to foster creativity and education in the community.



Future Preservation Projects

Miami City Cemetery: In 2020, the Omni CRA completed a historic survey of the Miami City Cemetery to guide future preservation. Notable figures like Julia Tuttle, Olympic pioneer Mary Abbott, and Mayor John Sewell are buried there.

Dorsey Park: Omni CRA seeks to team up with the City of Miami to revitalize what once a vital hub for African American baseball during segregation and celebrate the rich history of the Negro Leagues in Overtown .



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Photograph: Historic Miami News Tower (Freedom Tower) c.1925, photo by Dan Forer

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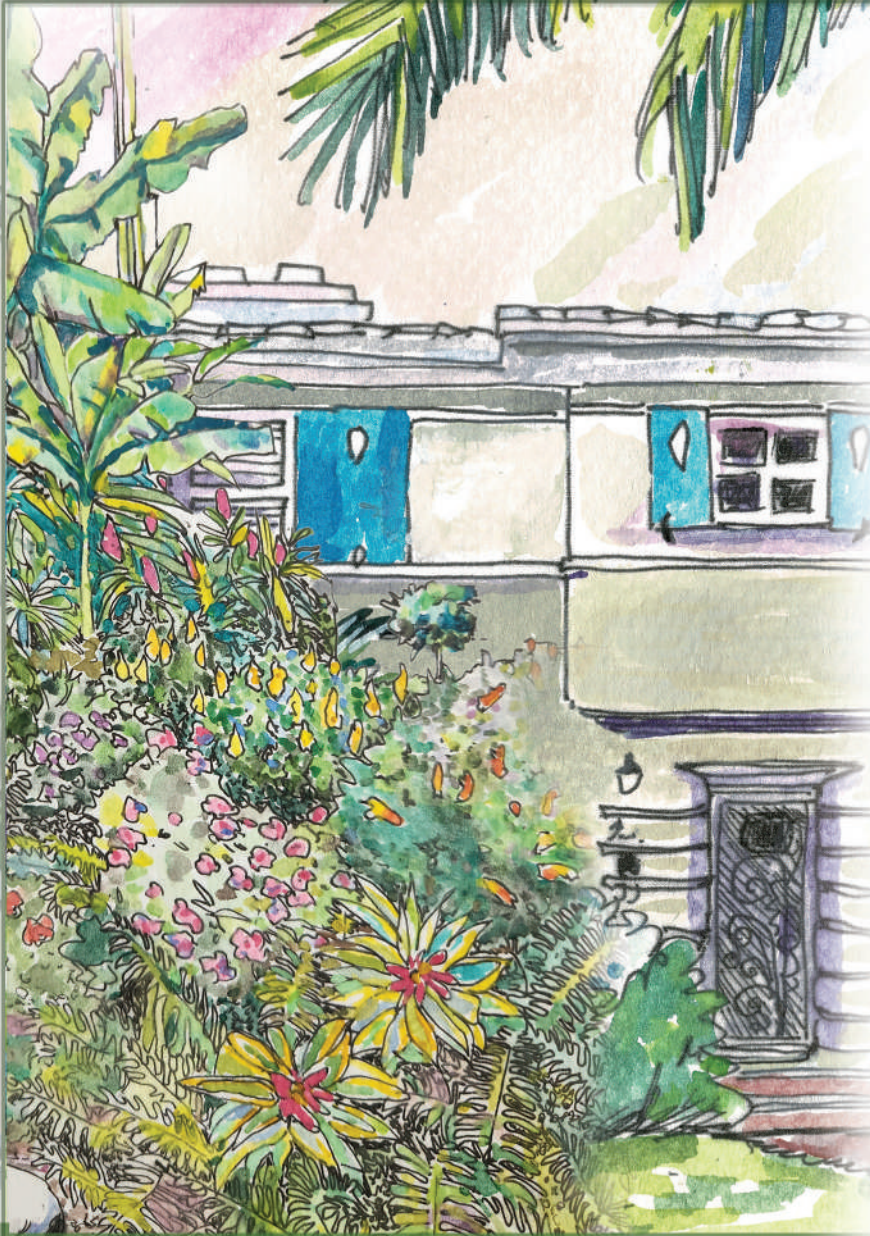
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