

# Update



COME TO THE FAIR

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## COVER:

1892 Bazaar was held in the Munroe's boathouse in Coconut Grove. Photo from "The Coconut Grove School" by Gertrude Kent.

## UPDATE

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## LIBRARY GIVEN RARE BOOK IN COLLECTION

The Reference Library has received the gift of four valuable books on the Second Seminole War and the Seminoles. One of them is the almost priceless *Origin, Progress, and Conclusion of the Florida War* by John T. Sprague, published in 1848. It is in excellent condition and extremely rare. The volume augments the reprint version already owned by the Library.

New to our shelves is *Battling the Seminoles* by J. O. Parrish, published in 1930 in Lakeland and autographed by the author. It is a collection of yarns, told mostly in vernacular by John Akins, woodsman and scout with the U.S. forces in the Second Seminole War.

The other two volumes are duplicates of some already owned by the Library. They are *The Exiles of Florida* by Joshua R. Giddings, published in 1858, and *The Seminoles of Florida* by Minnie Moore-Willson, the 1928 edition.

These four volumes are the gift of Robert C. Stafford, a new member, who acquired the Parrish book from the author in about 1935. He was then probably in his 80s. He lived in Auburndale and at that time was suffering from total loss of hair and much of his skin, due to a reaction to medical treatment, but he remained a testy, sharp-tongued individual. Stafford does not know anything about Parrish's background.

## WOLFSON ANECDOTE

The recent article in *Update* on Mitchell Wolfson calls to mind an anecdote Wolfson tells about the early days of sound movies. In those days the picture and sound were on separate tracks and sometimes they failed to synchronize, with unpredictable and often ludicrous results. When sound movies were still very new the manager of a theatre in the black district telephoned frantically.

"Mr. Wolfson, you better get down here quick. We got a panic on our hands. All the kids are screaming and running out the theatre crying, 'Mama, Mama, the horse is talking!'"

—Mary C. Napier

## HASF PRESENTED RADA PHOTOS

The Association has recently been given the Rudi and Annette Rada photograph collection from Mrs. Margaret Schoonover. This collection of about 5000 prints, with negatives, contains much of historic and artistic interest, such as a number of architectural interior and exterior views taken over the past twenty-five years. Our picture resources are now richer because of this fine acquisition.

## THE HARVEST

Nov. 6 and 7

A Real  
Country Fair



SEE PAGE 4



## CERTIFICATE OF Commendation

Presented by The American Association for State and Local History

to HISTORIC MUSEUM OF THE HISTORICAL  
ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHERN FLORIDA  
for PRESERVING AND INTERPRETING THE HISTORY  
OF SOUTH FLORIDA.



*Samuel J. Boldrick*  
President

*William C. Aldinger*  
Chairman, Committee on Awards

September 17, 1975  
Date

A Certificate of Commendation from the American Association for State and Local History was presented to the Historical Museum during the last annual meeting of the Florida Historical Society. This honor is in recognition of the quantity and quality of services the Association has offered in proportion to the money spent.



# BASEBALL IN EARLY MIAMI

by Art Simons

Miami had its start in baseball 64 years ago when a small minor-league team dubbed the Miami "Magicians" played in the shadow of the elegant Royal Palm Hotel, near the present site of the Dupont Plaza. On Thursdays, Sundays, and holidays as many as five hundred people, then a large proportion of the populace, would gather in Royal Palm Park to watch the team play.

Miami Stadium was built in 1913 to hold increasing numbers of Miami baseball fans. The still-existing arena is now dwarfed by the Orange Bowl, a mile or two away. The diamond where many of yesterday's greats played is sometimes used for overflow parking for football spectators.

The great war of the later teens robbed baseball of many players and reduced the sport in Miami to a handful of commercial teams sponsored by the prosperity of the real estate market. This continued until the bust of '26.

In late 1926 an expansion of the Florida State League found a home here and was managed in turn by Max Carey, Paul Warner, and Red Ermisch. The club was abandoned in 1930.

The new-found popularity of softball in the thirties brought down to the sunny south such names as Elmer Smith, Max Rosenfeld, and Pete Harris. Local teams were again reduced to commercial status.

1934 brought the New York Giants to Miami Beach,

*Art Simons is a student at Ponce de Leon Junior High School, where he is a staff member of the school paper, "The Rambler."*



Yankee great Babe Ruth played baseball at Miami's Tatum Park on March 16, 1920. The New York team (above) was opposed by the Cincinnati Reds. Tatum Park (below) in Miami's northwest section was named after the Tatum family, real estate developers. The Riverside subdivision was a Tatum development. (Photo from the HASF Collection, Matlack Collection)



the first major league team to venture that far south. Manager Bill Terry had ordered them to Flamingo Park for training. The wind, however, proved to be quite bothersome. The Giants left one year later only to return in 1940. By that time the New York team was hovering between fifth and sixth in its league. Soon after they left never to return. The Philadelphia Phillies tried Miami Beach about the same time but also beat a hasty retreat.

The Florida State League returned in 1940 and formed a team named the Miami "Wahoos". Shortly thereafter the name was changed to "Sun Sox." The team folded in '49, less than a year after winning its first pennant.

The further story of baseball in Miami will be continued in a future issue.

## PROGRESS REPORT

The *Miami Metropolis*, May 28, 1897, did a little bragging about Miami, not yet a year old. It claimed Miami had an ice factory with a daily capacity of ten tons, four hotels, one bank, six churches, two lodges, the only sewer system south of St. Augustine, and no saloons. — T. P.

## THE HARVEST

Nov. 6 and 7

A Real  
Country Fair



# THE HARVEST — A COUNTRY FAIR

"When I accepted this job as Museum Director, I had several goals which I felt were absolutely essential. One was the formation of a volunteer group; a second was to enrich the life of this community, where I grew up, by making local history come alive and making our Museum the focal point of this awakening. I felt it had to be a dramatic event that would aim for total involvement of all the cultural, educational, and creative elements of this region. With the organization of a volunteer group, the second goal became feasible, and the result is THE HARVEST," Randy Nimnicht explained to the HASF Board.

Randy described several local history celebrations to the volunteers and as a result we decided to hold THE HARVEST, a country fair, celebrating the good life in South Florida with emphasis on the simple pleasures which have flourished here since Julia Tuttle saw the River and dreamed her dreams. We hope to recreate the joys of the past as well as to celebrate our community of today with its multi-ethnic character and its magical mix of young and old, cosmopolitan and small town. Our goals are to make every aspect of this fair as authentic as possible and to make local history come alive for South Floridians in a joyful way.

As a trial run to test community acceptance of the idea, we held an eight-day Crafts Fair at the Museum in January. This fair attracted over 8500 people, 1700 on one Sunday! From this response we knew we were onto a good thing. So for two days in November, Saturday and Sunday the 6th and 7th, we will explore the variety of our

community's historic entertainments involving as many participants as possible. Dade County Parks and Recreation Department has scheduled the Dade County Youth Fairgrounds for us from 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. on Saturday and 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Sunday. Admission is \$1.00 for adults, \$.50 for children 6-12.

## THE HARVEST

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*A Real  
Country Fair*



Crafts will be a focal point at the Harvest. Marlene Arel and Mary Pirie are co-chairmen and have invited more than 120 quality craftsmen working in over 35 different crafts to participate. All craftsmen are asked to actually do some phase of the work during the days of the fair.

Historical crafts already confirmed include a farrier, a doll collector and doll maker, an Indian craftsman, a cigar maker, woodcarvers, weavers, macrame artists and quilters. A special feature of the quilt category will be a contest among the entrants. Byrd Tribble is co-ordinating the quilt section. If readers know of craftsmen who work in unique historical crafts that may have been overlooked, please notify either co-chairman.

In addition to historical crafts, the fair will include the widest possible range of ac-

tivities by local artisans which fairgoers may purchase just in time for holiday giving. This will encourage our local craftsmen and enhance our understanding of these talented members of our community.

Historical exhibits will feature Charles Sebastian and his "Rinky Tink" mechanical instruments covering 600 square feet of exhibition area, including a calliope, a player piano, and other musical instruments. Mr. Elroy Cormack will recreate a coontie mill. Dade Heritage Trust will exhibit, as will the first prize winner in the Florida Tree Snails Competition. Some outstanding shell collections and antique dolls will be included. Several Chambers of Commerce are presenting local history displays. Antique toys, utensils and clothing will round out the historical exhibit section. Libby Fullerton and Betty Tongay are co-chairmen.

Our docents are organizing historical contests for area school children. Elementary students will compete through drawings and paintings related to South Florida life. Junior and Senior High School students will compete in baking contests using typical Florida foods, a photographic contest of specific historic sites, and a scale model competition covering transportation and inventions from 1865 to 1926. Dr. Charlton Tebeau and Dr. Thelma Peters will select questions for students participating in the History Bee. The questions will be drawn from *Memories of Old Miami*, by Hoyt Frazure as told to Nixon Smiley, and *The Unconquered Seminoles* by Irvin Peithmann. A Quilt Block competition depicting some

aspect of Florida history, flora or fauna on a 12 x 12 inch square will complete the contest areas. Public school consultants have authorized these contests, and private school headmasters will be encouraged to have their students participate in every one. Civic clubs and Chambers of Commerce will assist the docents by sponsoring contests and awarding prizes. Lucy Cogswell is chairman; Byrd Tribble is in charge of the quilting block contest.

## THE HARVEST

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One of the most enjoyable features of the Harvest will be music in all the forms that find expression in South Florida. Forrest McGinley of Miami-Dade Community College will present the Caravan Singers on Sunday from 2:00 to 3:00. Sixteen singers in lavish costumes will sing Early Renaissance songs and selections from Carmen. The South Florida Bluegrass Association will present Country/Western groups as well as Bluegrass. Harriet Totlock, musical director for Temple Beth Am, will bring the Beth American Singers to the fair at 12:00 on Saturday. These youngsters are in the 4th through 8th grades. Then on Sunday the Troubadours, also from Temple Beth Am, will present their

Bicentennial program from 1:00 to 1:45.

Our goals for presenting the sounds of South Florida include support of the cultural contribution that music makes to the good life in our community, showing music as a major aspect of historical development, and providing a showcase for the rich variety of musical expression that abounds in this area. Continuous music will include rock, Bahamian, jazz, Gospel, Seminole, bagpipes, Latin, Barbership, and perhaps a singalong. Silvia Morgan is chairman.

Another dimension of the Harvest will be field games for children, which we expect to make as authentic as possible: pitching real horseshoes, throwing real pies, nail driving, and, we hope, milking real cows and churning real butter. Tests of strength and skill, pony rides, hayrides, tug of war and sack races should add flavor to our simple-pleasures theme. Joan Thompson is chairman.

Florida food and drink will include lemonade provided by the Kendall family and many ethnic specialties: falafels from Israel, black beans and rice and roast pig from Cuba, black-eyed peas and barbecued ribs from the South, conch salad and fritters from the Bahamas, shashlik (shish kebab) from the Russian Orthodox community, and on and on. As is true throughout the fair, Pat Molinari, chairman, is stressing the unique rather than the commonplace.

Funds raised will be used to further the programs of the Historical Association of Southern Florida, which will be expanding when we move into our new museum site at the Government Center. As an outgrowth of the crafts displays, we expect to offer classes in various crafts in the

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spring of 1977.

We hope the weekend will fill everyone who attends with the same inspiration we felt on July 4— that this country and our section of it are much more than neon and plastic, and that as long as our people create, play and laugh, the discovery of America is a continuing adventure.

This is our HARVEST staff:

- Co-Chairmen, Pat Brandt and Bixie Matheson**
- Secretary, Nita Norman**
- Treasurer, Sherrill Kellner**
- Site Chairman, Maida Brown**
- Volunteers, Barbara Bremer**
- Publicity, Zee Shipley**
- Co-ordinator, Mary Dodd**
- Trammel Russell, HASF Museum 854-3289**

**THE HARVEST**

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*Yesterday's Polk County, by Louise K. Frisbie. Miami, E. A. Seemann, 1976.*

This is a pictorial history of Florida's fourth largest county. It appeals not only to lovers of the Peace River valley but to those concerned with South Florida as well. Dade Countians, for example, can read that William Burdine spent a decade in Bartow before coming to Miami. The orange groves, the phosphate fields, and the tourist attractions, such as Bok Tower and Cypress Gardens, interest us all.

**1932'S AGRICULTURAL HARVEST**



Florida State Agriculture Department display January 14, 1932, at the Miami Biltmore Hotel. The sign on the right wall reads "Florida produces and ships a carload of fruits and vegetables every minute during the winter months." (Photos from the Miami-Dade Public Library.)



The exhibit presented by the Indian River Citrus Growers League of Fort Pierce featured a pyramid of grapefruits and oranges. The show was at the Miami Biltmore Hotel, January 14, 1932.



Cellophane "a quality wrap" that provides "protection plus visibility" was the featured item at this display by New York's DuPont Cellophane Company at the 1932 agricultural exhibit. The eggplants, corn, tomatoes, celery, lettuce and citrus on display were Florida grown.

# REDLAND DISTRICT FRUIT FESTIVALS

by Jean C. Taylor

From the time their groves and farms started to produce, the farmers of South Dade entered their fruits and vegetables in the Dade County Fair. Families who could afford it often spent the whole fair week at Miami lodged at a hotel. The thirteenth annual Dade County Fair in 1910 marked the first time that products grown on Everglades soil were displayed in their own section. To show the world how rich was the farm land made available by drainage, Mr. J. C. Baile, the Fair President, provided a large box of black Everglades soil for the visitors to see and feel. Each year the grove owners and vegetable farmers from South Dade sent bigger and better displays until they were garnering many of the prizes and trophies. The Women's Clubs also took their share of firsts with jams, jellies, woven rugs and handiwork.

In 1915 the Redland District sent their band and a float to

Miami to parade before the fruit festival. The float was appropriately decorated with a grapefruit tree in the center while four girls, Anice Hayes from Detroit, Chloe Flora from Longview, Bessie Harris from Homestead and Alice Kahl from Redland threw grapefruit to the people in the streets. The Redland banners and pennants were red with yellow lettering to convey the impression of the red soil and golden fruit while the Homestead pennants were black lettering on a yellow background. At the fair their fruit was displayed in lavish arrangements guaranteed to attract many visitors to the south end of the county. Visitors at the booth received as a souvenir a picture of a ripe grapefruit and a map of the lower end of the state showing the location of Homestead and the Redland District, also giving some interesting facts about the area.

By 1924 the Redland District Chamber of Commerce



The First Annual Redland District Fruit Festival was held in 1924, one week before the Dade County Fair. A professional celebration promoter was hired to manage the Fair and in addition to displays, the program included concerts, vaudeville contests, dancing and an automobile door prize. The entrance pyramid was made of oranges, grapefruit, tomatoes and bell peppers.

decided to go all out and have their own fruit festival the week before the Dade County Fair with fruit displays such as Dade County had never seen. The Chamber of Commerce hired Frank M. Petit, a professional celebration promoter, to manage the Fair while W. K. Walton, an avocado nurseryman, and Dan Roberts, a citrus grower, were the local chairmen in charge of erecting a "Temple of Fruits" near the entrance. In addition to the displays they had afternoon band concerts, a different program of vaudeville features every evening and dancing after the performance. A baby show, "Miss Redland" popularity contest, and an auto door prize were added features. Refreshment concessions were given to civic and fraternal organizations.

Homestead businessmen fell to work with a will and decorated the windows and streets in the Chamber of Commerce colors of avocado green and orange, while many of them entered floats in the parade that opened the fair. Everybody sold tickets; a book of six for admission to the festival each night went for 50¢ and included a chance

on the door prize, a Ford touring car to be drawn on the last night and a vote for "Miss Redland". Homestead real estate men contributed their share by patrolling the streets of Miami for five hours with a truck, carrying a set of drums and banners advertising the festival.

The vacant lot next to the Chamber of Commerce on Krome Avenue was cleared, scarified and covered with sawdust before the 70x200-foot tent was erected. The pyramid at the entrance, 29 feet high and 20 x 20 feet at the base, was formed of grapefruit of uniform size and color on the front, oranges on the back and tomatoes and bell peppers on the other sides. A sign made of fruits on each side of the pyramid spelled out "Redland District



In 1915, the Redland District sent this float to the Dade County Fair. The four girls riding on the float, Anice Hayes, Chloe Flora, Bessie Deeden Harris and Alice Kahl Lutz, threw grapefruit to the crowds.

Our author is a regular contributor to Update.

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Fruit Festival." Such a mammoth display had never before been attempted. The booths inside were manned by both individuals and organizations with many Miami firms represented.

The judging of the baby show was by local physicians assisted by trained nurses using the national scoring rules as adopted by the "Woman's Home Companion". So many people entered their children that it was necessary to divide them into two groups for judging. Esther May Pope, age 38 months, was the winner. At the countdown Miss Lorraine Plummer was named queen and received a silver trophy and a diamond ring, while the runnerup became the proud possessor of a gold wrist watch. Homestead Mercantile Company took first prize of \$10 for their parade float.

Despite all the enthusiastic cooperation there was a deficit for the Chamber of Commerce at the end of the week, so the biggest dance ever was held in the Fruit Festival tent the next Wednesday to cover it. Couples were charged \$1.00 admission but ladies without escorts were admitted free.

Regardless of the strenuous week they had just been through, the Redland District Chamber of Commerce the next day set up their usual elaborate booth at the Dade County Fair. As an added attraction two members were on duty at all times passing out slices of ripe avocado to the visitors. This became so popular that they had to put out a hurry-up call to the entire neighborhood for donations of ripe fruit, since their entire week's supply was consumed in the first few days. Mrs. J. C. Baile, perennially in charge of the women's booths, announced that the exhibit of the

Longview Club was the best feature of her department. The Longview ladies were especially famous for their rag rugs woven on looms set up at their clubhouse soon after the town was founded in 1910. The Redland Chamber of Commerce also took first prize that year for their display in the Florida State Fair.

For the 1925 Fruit Festival the Chamber of Commerce planned to make everything bigger and better than the year before. An 80 x 200-foot tent was secured for the exhibits and dance floor and a

pioneers as honored guests and a group picture made of them in front of the imposing entrance pyramids.

The Fruit Festival had become such an attraction that many northern states sent groups to visit. On Thursday 200 came from Indiana, on Friday 350 came from New England and 200 from the Carolinas while Saturday brought 300 from Illinois and 400 from New York. Extra buses were chartered to bring the throngs from Miami. The type of commercial displays



The entrance display for the 1926 Fruit Festival featured "orange" writing, grapefruit background and avocado green and orange colored flags. The Fair was advertised in Miami by a steam calliope and over 10,000 people visited the exhibits.

separate tent for the auto show. The climate and growing conditions were ideal that year so the fruit was of superior quality. A high-class carnival was set up in the rear of the tents with six mechanical rides, shows and concessions. The dance floor was built of the best Georgia pine to assure firmness and resilience and a seven-piece orchestra engaged to which couples could glide for 10¢ a dance. Rev. J. G. Stradley and his Boy Scouts placed 150 Fruit Festival banners on autos in Homestead in one afternoon. The door prize was a Homestead building lot. The second day of the Fair was designated "Old Settlers Day" with the district

attested to the wealth and progress of the Redland District. The cars in the auto show were of the \$2000 and up class while the displays from Miami showed the latest in approved conveniences for the farmer and his wife. W. K. Walton, chairman of the exhibit committee, commented that there was no cheap stuff of any sort and that the District farmhouses boasted all the conveniences of a city mansion — a far cry from the old days.

Mrs. Frank Skill chaired the baby show with 114 entrants while L. E. Bishop, Festival treasurer, doubled as entertainment chairman, arranging auto rides through

the district for the visitors. A. R. Livingston of the ticket committee said he could have sold twice as many booth spaces as were available. All in all the second annual Fruit Festival was decidedly a success; there was no deficit; each individual exhibitor worked for the district as a whole; and no one dragged his feet. The dance pavillion was such a success that they decided to roof it over and hold weekly dances sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce.

The third annual Fruit Festival in 1926 was housed in a 120 x 240 foot tent at the corner of Krome Avenue and 2nd Street. Crime reared its ugly head as the police apprehended a woman fake solicitor who was collecting contributions from the Homestead merchants for the Festival. New features were a prize for the oldest auto still in service, a freak vegetable display, exhibits from the local schools and news coverage by the Pathe Weekly Film Company, a newsreel. A poultry show was added. The local ministers protested the games of chance and gambling which had resulted from the carnival hired the year before but, as the contract had already been signed, the Chamber of Commerce members promised to keep an eye out and restrain any money gambling.

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# THE BATTLE OF SANTIAGO

by Thelma Peters

In its fifth year, 1902, Miami's homey vegetable-and-fruit fair moved to larger quarters and combined with a carnival in a bid for more out-of-town visitors. The 1901 fair had been held in the Budge Opera House at 231 Twelfth Street, about the location of the Miami Theater on Flagler. "Opera House" was a tongue-in-cheek designation even then. The barn-like building, unpainted outside and rough inside, had been used by Frank T. Budge temporarily for his hardware store after a fire had destroyed his original building. Soon after the fair in 1901 the building became a bicycle shop.

The ambitious 1902 fair was staged in a tent, 75 by 150 feet, provided by the Florida East Coast Railway Company and located on Company land, a part of the grounds of the Royal Palm Hotel, which at that time extended to Twelfth Street (now Flagler). The "carnival" included a shooting gallery, bicycle races, military drills, baseball, a swimming meet, and the Electric Theater—a demonstration of pictures that *moved*—the future motion-picture industry in swaddling clothes.

But the *piece de resistance* was the Battle of Santiago, an early light-and-sound show staged on the Miami River by

a fireworks company. The company, having acquired hundreds of miniature lamps left from the Chicago World's Fair of 1893, also created what they billed as "Fairyland" by stringing these lights along the banks of the river. The real Battle of San-

Miami's front yard. Nothing like it had ever happened in Miami, before or since.

William Brickell consented to let the fireworks company use his rock-ledged, tree-covered south river bank. A wall of mangroves at the



Frank T. Budge operated his hardware store in this unpainted, barn-like structure. The 1901 Dade County Fair was held here at the Budge Opera House. The building later became a bicycle shop. (Photo from the HASF Collection)



The interior of the Budge Opera House during the Fair in 1901. Fresh produce and canned and packaged goods were exhibited side by side. The building was located on what is now Flagler Street. (Photo from the Historical Association of Southern Florida, Jaudon Collection)

tiago, a contest between American warships in Santiago Bay and Morro Castle, a Spanish fort on a promontory above the bay, had climaxed and virtually concluded the Spanish-American War four years earlier. Now for three nights running, March 20, 21 and 22, the "Battle" was recreated in

water's edge had to be partly cut away and the scenery men hacked and chopped until they had cleared space on the bank to erect a cardboard castle. At night by the soft glow of the "fairy" lights the fort was said to look quite realistic.

Opposite "Morro Castle" on the north bank was the

Seminole Club—once the home of Julia Tuttle and before that Miami's most famous early landmark, Fort Dallas. The Club grounds were designated as the viewing area. According to the press there was standing room only, with many of the people attending all three nights, for the sound and fury of battle was too much to resist. When the last bomb had exploded and the last rocket died away a glorious pyrotechnic American flag appeared above the castle to send the cheering spectators back to their hotels and homes.

The fair, soon called the Dade County Fair, was held in downtown Miami for more than two decades, usually with less whoopla than in 1902. Usually held in March, a time of harvest and a time of tourists, it became very important to the development of South Florida. One reporter wrote in the *Miami Metropolis*: "Just think of it, ye frozen denizens of the North, Miami is the only place in the United States where agricultural fairs are held in March."

One visitor from Illinois wrote the editor of the *Metropolis* that the fair was a real eye-opener to South Florida potential, since on the train coming to Miami he had observed Florida land that looked "so poor one could scarcely raise an umbrella on it."

The fair was directed for years by E. V. Blackman, editor of a promotion magazine "The Home-seeker", and proponent of Florida agriculture. Blackman's goal was to get everyone involved—farmers, housewives, school children.

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The 1902 Fair was held in a tent located on the grounds of the Royal Palm Hotel. The actual site was at the present Flagler Street and N.E. Second Avenue where Walgreen's is. At that time the hotel grounds extended to that intersection. A highlight of the 1902 Fair was the Battle of Santiago. (Photo from the HASF Collection.)

His plea was "bring something to show, if only a vase of flowers from your garden." Housewives responded by displaying canned goods and home handicrafts. One reporter said that after standing a moment in contemplation of a glorious array of canned goods he had to move along "because the water in his mouth rose to high tide mark." The jellies and jams of A. R. Simmons, who had a jelly factory in Coconut Grove, attracted so much attention that he was soon getting orders from Germany and France.

Merchants and business men were solicited for prizes. Some gave money, some

goods or services. Fred Hand, well-known early photographer, offered twelve photographs for the best green peppers. William Freeman won a two-year subscription to the *Florida Times-Union* with his radishes. Mary Brickell's sapodillas won her two wool blankets (valued at \$3) which had been donated by Isador Cohen. Kirk Munroe got one of the top prizes, \$25, for his fine oranges.

In 1907 the fair committee offered a prize to the high school student who could compile the longest list of South Florida trees — native or exotic. It was won by Vernon Richardson with a

phenomenal list of 700! But then Vernon's neighbor and mentor was none other than the world-renowned naturalist, Dr. Charles Torrey Simpson.

After five years of fairs, staged here and there, Henry M. Flagler gave a permanent fair building to the county. It was built on pilings at the Stone Dock near the foot of Flagler Street. Like the Royal Palm Hotel and 200 railroad depots along the East Coast it was painted "Flagler Yellow" trimmed with white. Between fairs the building was used for community events and once housed the library. In 1924

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when the bayfront was filled to create Bayfront Park the fair building was demolished. There are still many pioneers who remember this long-cherished Miami landmark.

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The committee outdid itself on the entrance display with towers of grapefruit on each side connected by an arch of oranges spelling out the words "Third Annual Redland District Fruit Festival" with a background of grapefruit surmounted by five flags in avocado green and orange. A steam calliope was borrowed to outdo the band of 1925 and the drummer of 1924. Luther Chandler donated a three-horsepower motor to propel the device to advertise the Festival on the streets of Miami. For the first time parking in Homestead became a problem as about 10,000 visitors turned out to see the gorgeous fruit displays and cabbage and turnips that weighed up to 10 pounds each.

By Friday of that week it became evident that the local ministers had not been unnecessarily alarmed. Gambling was rampant with poker games for cash leading the list while some of the sideshows were either questionable or outright immoral. The Chamber of Commerce

padlocked the offending booths and vowed never again to operate a carnival at a festival. However, in all other ways the Fruit Festival was a huge success with Miss Christine Webb being crowned "Miss Redland" on the final night.

In September 1926 the great hurricane struck and laid waste the fields of South Dade. Grove owners had hardly righted their fallen trees when another storm in October laid them back again. Vegetable fields already planted had to be replanted or abandoned. By March 1927 all thoughts of a fruit festival were forgotten, as what little fruit was available was commandeered for the Dade County Fair. In 1928 Homestead's only two banks closed their doors, and there were more important things to worry about than fruit displays. By 1929 the groves and fields were bearing well, and the festivals were resumed. They ran through the depression years and through World War II. The last fruit festival was under the chairmanship of Sylvester Adair in 1948.



The 1907 Dade County Mid-Winter Fair was held in the permanent fair building given to the county by Henry M. Flagler. It was built at the Stone Dock on the bayfront at Flagler Street. Local residents could tell the forecast by what kind of weather flag was floating from the steel tower at the left. This photo of Fair visitors was taken March 14, 1907.

# HOW COME COCOA

by Charles W. Skelly and Donna Sheriff

There are many stories about the naming of Cocoa; each one is supported by some fact or other, some old document dug up or someone's actual, unquestioned memory. You know, one of them is probably true. Now you take the one that goes like this:

A group of settlers were sitting around on boxes and stools in Willard's Store chewin' the fat and politickin'. The main issue was, "What are we going to name this city now that we're about to be incorporated?" They discussed all kinds of names from Indian ones to Spanish and everything in between. I imagine a Brownsville or Jonesboro got nominated, too. And since this was Willard's Store on Willard Street how about Willardsville? At that point I'll bet things got a little heated. As a matter of fact, one brand-new bridegroom probably suggested, "The Beautiful City of Estherville."

Well, there's a native shrub called the coco plum which

*Editor's note: The territory covered in this article was a little outside Update's regular South Florida beat but we decided to publish it anyway.*

*Mr. Skelly is descended from Florida stock but was born in Wisconsin. He came to Florida at an early age and became interested in local history. Ms. Sheriff, a native of Ohio, also is interested in Florida history. The two authors met while attending a course on creative writing. They live in the Cocoa area.*

## THE HARVEST

Nov. 6 and 7

A Real  
Country Fair



was found all over here and still is, and since this was more neutral the men finally decided on Coco, Florida, for the new city. Could be true, even though no one recalls when the "a" got added.

Old Grandpa Hardee says, "Hogwash!" He had his story,



G. S. Hardee came to the Cocoa area around 1868. This photo was taken in 1915. Hardee's story of Cocoa's name revolved around a Baker's Cocoa sign at the riverfront trading post.



Cocoa bicycle riders included Florence Hardee, Hattie Wilkenson, Joe Wilkenson, George Gingras, Emma Hardee, and Mrs. W. G. Pater-son.

too. And if you ask me, well, see what you think.

G. S. Hardee came to this area, down around Rockledge, in 1868. Grandpa's dead now but he told good stories about the early days to anyone who would listen. About Indians and traders and settlers. About towns and people, too. He recalls that on June 15, 1883, Great Uncle R. A. Hardee, who was a trader, filed a claim in Titusville for a

plot of land on the site which is now Cocoa. Great Uncle Hardee was always buying and selling land. He traded in horses, too, and before the War Between the States, some say he traded in slaves.

Anyway, the plot we're talking about was called

himself, named the proprietor Postmistress.

The river carried most of the traffic in those days so that's where the equivalent of the modern-day billboard was placed. Signs and advertisements were painted on the sides of buildings or wooden store fronts facing the river. The general store was popular with traders and hunters who came for supplies and to meet and talk. The traders often brought shopping lists from the settlers up and down the river.

Well, way back there in 1884 Baker's Cocoa was supplying chocolate flavor for chocolate lovers and advertising their product in the near wilderness of Florida. The riverfront trading post was an ideal location for a Baker's Cocoa sign. Once the sign was up, though, no one bothered to repaint or replace it and the tropical rains and humid climate soon took their toll. Funny thing, "Baker's" disappeared but "Cocoa" remained readable. Then it was only a matter of time until this became a landmark and traders, hunters, settlers alike would say, "I'll meet you at Cocoa," "Pick me up a sack of salt at Cocoa," "I saw old Wooten at Cocoa last month."

Hardee's Plat of Indian River City. Now don't confuse that with today's Indian River City, that's another story. Uncle Hardee's plat was divided into lots 150 feet by 150 feet with 50-foot streets or 20-foot alleys separating them. It was a good investment and before you knew it there was a regular shopping center there on the river front. One of the buildings housed a general store and post office. President Ulysses S. Grant,

Everybody identified the landing as Cocoa so when it came time to incorporate, that's what Grandpa said they called it, The Town of Cocoa. Grandpa should know, he was around a long time. He was just 26 years old when he homesteaded on the mainland of Central Brevard. Part of that homestead is now Sears Town, but Grandpa saw it all in another day.



As part of the Florida Exposition Train, three railroad coaches left Miami in mid-March of 1927 on a two-month tour of northern and midwestern cities advertising the agricultural and industrial advantages of "The American Tropics."

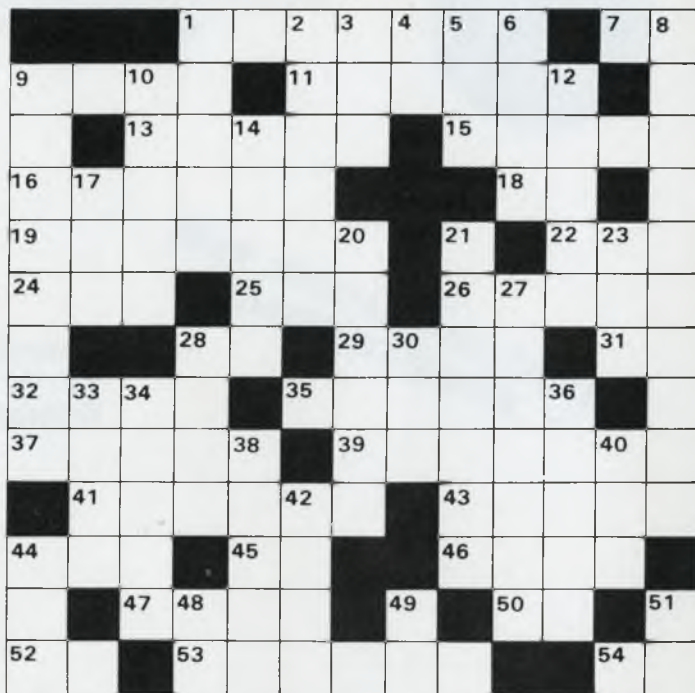


"Tropical products that satisfy." Strange and exotic fruits such as avocados and mangos from the Redlands shared the spotlight with guava jelly and candies. "Shipments made all over the world."



Cultural and educational exhibits included this model for the University of Miami building that was never built. A proposed plan for the campus hangs above it.

## HISTORY IS A MYSTERY



### ACROSS

- 1 Black pioneer of Coconut Grove
- 7 Sometimes followed by "line"
- 9 Only way to the Beach in 1900
- 11 Editor of UPDATE
- 13 Director of HASF Museum
- 15 Ingredient in chowder
- 16 Early bloomer
- 18 "Letter signed"
- 19 Early downtown Hotel
- 22 To barely get by
- 24 Algerian title
- 25 The 22nd letter
- 26 One on the sick list
- 28 Yes
- 29 Sea bird
- 31 Measure
- 32 The kind of pit the Venetian Pool was
- 35 Parts of a barrel
- 37 "Doc" Dammers was expert at this
- 39 Center for French champagne
- 41 The House of Refuge had one
- 43 To make tries at
- 44 Celebrating a Bicentennial
- 45 Some are classified
- 46 Exchanged at Gulfstream Park
- 47 Bridle part
- 50 Like
- 52 -- Portal
- 53 What the liguus collectors wanted
- 54 Initials of Beach developer

### DOWN

- 1 Not fresh
- 2 HASF Publication
- 3 Sunbeam
- 4 Celestial or F.E.C.
- 5 United Daughters of the Confederacy
- 6 Politicians are helped by it
- 8 Word in title of Nixon Smiley book
- 9 Paying guests in a private home
- 10 A DREAM OF \_\_\_\_\_ history of Opa Locka
- 12 Display tripod
- 14 Brazen
- 17 Girl's name
- 20 Breed of dogs
- 21 \_\_\_\_\_ Fair, HASF's big bash
- 23 Largo or Biscayne
- 27 Inaction
- 28 Unusual tropical fruit
- 30 "Pile" to a Cockney
- 33 Popular South Florida trees
- 34 Old-time description of Miami River
- 36 Cold \_\_\_\_\_, pioneer weather word
- 38 Origin of Coral Gables street names
- 40 Not here (abbr)
- 42 Good name for a hurricane
- 44 Employ
- 48 Plural ending
- 49 See 35 across
- 51 Initials of famous poet, Miami resident — T.P.

ANSWERS ON PAGE 12



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*History Is No  
 Longer A Mystery*

ACROSS

- 1) STURRUP
- 7) BY
- 9) BOAT
- 11) PARDUE
- 13) RANDY
- 15) CLAMS
- 16) AZALEA
- 18) LS
- 19) ROBERTS
- 22) EKE
- 24) DEY
- 25) VEE
- 26) AILER
- 28) AY
- 29) TERN
- 31) YD
- 32) ROCK
- 35) STAVES
- 37) SALES
- 39) EPERNAY
- 41) KEEPER
- 43) STABS
- 44) USA
- 45) AD
- 46) TIPS
- 47) REIN
- 50) AS
- 52) EL
- 53) SNAILS
- 54) CF

DOWN

- 1) STALE
- 2) UPDATE
- 3) RAY
- 4) RR
- 5) UDC
- 6) PULL
- 8) YESTERDAYS
- 9) BOARDERS
- 10) ARABY
- 12) EASEL
- 14) NERVY
- 17) ZOE
- 20) SETTER
- 21) HARVEST
- 23) KEY
- 27) INERTIA
- 28) AKEE
- 30) EAP
- 33) OAKS
- 34) CLEAR
- 36) SNAPS
- 38) SPAIN
- 40) ABS
- 42) EDNA
- 44) USE
- 48) ES
- 49) BL
- 51) RF

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