

The Association's Historical Marker Program

By OLIVER GRISWOLD

The program of the Historical Association of Southern Florida to erect markers at historical sites has resulted in the placing of three handsome markers.

The Association has a list of 22 additional sites as the basis for continued activity. This may be considerably extended.

Undertaken as a testing or exploratory program, it has met with considerable approbation by the public and the press. Local officials have cooperated wholeheartedly.

Funds for the markers have been raised through many private donations in modest amounts.

All of the markers have been cast aluminum, enameled with gold lettering against jet black background, with the addition of cobalt blue in the Association's seal. So far, the materials have stood up under the sun and weather, but the Association awaits further ageing to decide the degree of permanence.

The plan is to continue the standard size of 42" by 26", with the text on both sides in lettering large enough to be read by a halted pedestrian or motorist at about 25 feet. The markers are erected on aluminum-sheathed, concrete posts.

The first marker was erected in Bayfront Park, Miami, August 3, 1951. Former State Senator F. M. Hudson made the dedication address. The marker text reads:

TEQUESTA

Indians lived at the mouth of the Miami River (200 yards south west of this spot) for more than 15 centuries before White man came. The principal town of the Tequesta Indians, including six mounds used for dwelling, burial, and religious rites, was discovered here by the Spaniards. They built in it the earliest White settlement in S. E. Florida, a fort and Jesuit mission, in 1567. When the British obtained Florida in 1763, most of the Tequestas departed with the Spaniards to Havana and thereafter vanished as a tribe.

HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHERN FLORIDA, 1951

The second marker was dedicated October 28, 1951, at Meacham Field, Key West, with an address by Roger Wolin, Director of Public Relations, Latin American Division, Pan American World Airways. The marker text reads:

MEACHAM FIELD

The first regularly-scheduled international flight by a United States airline was made from here to Havana Oct. 28, 1927. This inaugurated Pan American World Airways which later spread through the Caribbean, around South America, and across the Atlantic and the Pacific.

The first Clipper was a wooden-winged Fokker F-7 capable of carrying 10 passengers 85 m.p.h. On the maiden flight, it carried a crew of two and a few bags of mail to the Cuban capital in an hour and ten minutes. Passengers were carried beginning Jan. 16, 1928.

HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHERN FLORIDA, 1951

Former U. S. Senator Scott M. Loftin made the dedication address July 25, 1952, for the third marker in a small park renamed Tuttle Plaza at S. E. First Avenue and Third Street, Miami. The marker text states:

Mrs. Julia D. Tuttle of Cleveland, O., acquired 644 acres on the north bank of the Miami River in 1891. She resided in the remodelled officers' quarters of old Ft. Dallas 100 yards S. E. of this spot until her death Sept. 14, 1898.

With rare foresight and energy, she persuaded Henry M. Flagler to extend his railroad to Miami in 1896.

As inducement, Mrs. Tuttle gave him 100 acres for a railroad terminal and hotel and 263 acres in alternate city blocks (more than half her land), thus earning her fame as 'The Mother of Miami'.

HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHERN FLORIDA, 1951

Other sites scheduled for marking in 1952 and 1953 are Miami International Airport; the House of Refuge, Miami Beach; and Dinner Key.