

Tequesta:

Miami Beach Reaches the Half Century Mark

By RUBY LEACH CARSON

As the City of Miami Beach on March 26, 1965, celebrates the fiftieth anniversary of its incorporation, its 38,023 registered voters, (living south of the 87th Terrace boundary line), make an interesting contrast in numbers to the 33 voters who founded the city in 1915.

The city's present estimated population of 65,000 makes it the third most populous city in Dade County and the eighth most populous in the State of Florida. State census figures place the city of Miami Beach one step ahead of Pensacola, which celebrated in 1959 the quadricentennial of the first Europeans to settle there. And in population Miami Beach is far ahead of America's oldest city, St. Augustine, where 1965 is its quadricentennial year. Miami Beach, in surveying the years which have led to her Golden Jubilee, is obliged to measure progress in terms of decades — not centuries, as do Pensacola and St. Augustine.

As this "playground of the world" enters the Golden Jubilee year, what has been its progress in the last ten years? A visitor returning to Florida for the first time since 1955 is struck with amazement as he proceeds across Biscayne Bay toward the city of Miami Beach. Three changes are visible, whether his approach is made by air, boat or motor vehicle. They are: the new Julia Tuttle causeway connecting Miami's Northeast 36th street with 41st Street at Miami Beach; the 35-foot-high bridge spans at each end of the MacArthur causeway, and the unexpected view of high-rise apartment buildings along the skyline of Miami Beach.

If the visitor is enlightened briefly on these improvements, he will learn

that the 14-million dollar Julia Tuttle causeway, which links Miami and Miami Beach, was opened to the public for travel in December, 1959. From the western end, the causeway is a continuation of the expressway system of Greater Miami and when built it was estimated that 35,000 vehicles daily would take advantage of the six-lane, high-span, 55-mile-an-hour scoot across Biscayne Bay. Thanks to the Miami Women's Club, the causeway was named for Julia Tuttle, "the mother of Miami", whose memory had not been honored previously, except by a historical marker in Miami.

The improvements on the MacArthur causeway make it possible for many boats to pass under without the lifting of bridges. In 1957, two years after Miami Beach had celebrated its fortieth birthday, the east span on the causeway was rebuilt to clear the water by 35 feet. The span replacement at the west end, with similar clearance, was finished in 1960.

As for the new skyline on Miami Beach, the dominant trait in construction during the 1955-65 decade was the building of high-rise apartments. Sixty-five per cent of the construction was of this type. By this time the visitor has crossed the bay and is driven through the picturesque city for a close-up view of this type of construction. He is suddenly enthralled by another innovation—the Lincoln Road Mall. What was formerly Lincoln Road, a bustling, unimaginative avenue of commerce, had become a landscaped parkway of tropical splendor—Lincoln Road Mall. Traffic is eliminated on Lincoln Road for the eight blocks of the promenade which extends from Alton Road at the west end, to Washington Avenue, near the Atlantic Ocean, on the east. Parking lots are available on the north and south, back of stores which now display their world-famous merchandise to the delighted pedestrians along the Mall.

Sparkling fountains, lily pads in artistic pools, flower beds which provide blooms for each season, and landscaped garden spots with inviting garden seats are irresistible attractions on the Mall. Tourists and citizens find loafing there a wonderful pastime. The Mall was designed by two Miami Beach men of great talent—Morris Lapidus, the noted architect who lives in Miami Beach; and John Poulos, director of Miami Beach city parks.

The Mall was opened in 1960 and was financed by funds provided by a municipal bond issue for \$600,000 which was approved by the Miami Beach taxpayers. The 200 stores facing it claim the distinction of carrying the most desirable merchandise to be found in the U.S.A. For the tired

visitors, little trams are provided for a slow ride along the parkway. The price for such a ride is one dime. "The Lincoln Road Mall is a new development for Miami Beach," reported the Beach Chamber of Commerce, "but it still retains Miami Beach's original and oldest aim — to make the visitor's stay here more comfortable and more delightful than ever before."

If the visitor who's been away for ten years thinks that now he has seen all the changes — he has more surprises coming. Northward from Lincoln Road — at 1700 Washington Avenue, is the Miami Beach Convention Bureau with its Convention Hall which seats over 16,000 persons. It was opened in 1958. Its size and the available hotel facilities make Miami Beach one of a half-dozen American cities capable of accommodating enormous meetings, such as the Shriners, Rotary and American Legion conventions. These groups are among those that have met in Miami Beach during the last decade. Close by the Convention Hall is the Miami Beach Auditorium, which seats about 3,500 persons — and which Jackie Gleason has made world-famous. Here is the Jackie Gleason story:

Hank Meyer, the Beach public relations consultant described by this author in "Forty Years of Miami Beach", read in Earl Wilson's column early in 1964 that "Jackie Gleason loves golf so much he'd like to play 365 days a year . . ." Meyer got busy and persuaded Gleason and his manager, Jack Philbin, to bring their cast to the Miami Beach Auditorium to produce thirty shows. Through Meyer's efforts, Miami Beach had already been on TV through stars like Arthur Godfrey and Ed Sullivan, and he had been responsible for bringing the Miss Universe show to Miami Beach. The Gleason contract resulted in thirty Saturday night TV shows from Miami Beach within a year. It was estimated there would be 32 million TV viewers each week of the series.

How did the press react to this? Hy Gardner's column in the Miami Herald on October 12, 1964, included these comments: "The origination of a top-rated weekly TV-network program makes Gleason a daring and forward-looking pioneer in a field troubled with tradition.

"His presence and sincerity is contributing immeasurably to the reputation, the morale, the public image and the economy of a resort once notorious as the sun-kissed corral for Cadillacs, minks, gin rummy, horse players . . . and a long line of luxury hotels . . . Gleason's studio audience, all 1600 lucky ones who can attend each taping and ten times that number who must await

their turn, react to Jackie's jokes, pantomimic perambulations and farcial facial expressions with the ardor of a paid Met Opera claue. We haven't seen or heard so enthusiastic an audience since the heydey of the Brooklyn Dodger rooters."

The Gleason ovation was mentioned by Ralph Renick on his WTVJ Channel 4 newscast on September 2, 1964.

"When Jackie Gleason decided he'd move his television show to Miami Beach from New York," said Renick, "the reaction of the network, the cast, the advertising and talent agencies and sponsors was to say the least, not enthusiastic.

"But Gleason was not to be turned aside. He not only desired Florida's climate and golf courses but the idea of pioneering something appealed to him. He's been used to succeeding where others have yet to even try. This week the second of his one-hour Gleason shows was videotaped at the Miami Beach Auditorium. The city spent 262 thousand dollars to convert the auditorium into what Gleason terms 'the finest TV studio in the country'. Gleason received a standing ovation from the Miami Beach audience — something which has never occurred in New York. The ovation was deserved.

"The Gleason origination could well be the beginning of Miami Beach's reputation as a TV capital.

"Perry Como, Johnny Carson and Ed Sullivan have shown interest in doing shows here this winter. We have had one-time specials and now-and-then originations in the past. These have all been immensely valuable, but the continuing series of top-rated shows originating from Miami Beach can do more than anything else to promote this area.

"On his first show Gleason mentioned Miami Beach twelve times, Miami twice and the American Scene Magazine title features a palm tree background. When Arthur Godfrey brought his radio show here in 1952 four boom tourist years followed. Gleason and others to come are bound to have a most beneficial effect. All this in addition to the permanent payroll this *new* industry has created.

"So consider this a salute to a visionary pioneer — a man we're glad to have in our town — Mr. Herbert John Gleason. He's glad to have you call him Jackie."

September 24, 1964, marked Hank Meyer's fifteenth year of service to the City of Miami Beach and 542 admiring friends honored him with a luncheon at the Fontainebleau Hotel. Sponsors were business and civic leaders, the Presidents Council of Miami Beach and the Miami Beach Chamber of Commerce. Meyer is a native of New York City, but had moved to Florida when he received his bachelor of business administration degree at the University of Miami of which he is now a member of the Board of Trustees. During World War II he served in the Navy as a chief petty officer, and in 1949 he was named Public Relations Director for the city of Miami Beach. In 1953 he was made director of the city's Publicity-News Bureau, and in 1956 he was retained by the city for the position he now holds — that of Public Relations Consultant.

Newscaster Gabriel Heater, one of Miami Beach's celebrity residents, was toastmaster at the luncheon for Meyer; and the Miami Beach Daily Sun gave the event special notice with a headline that declared: "IT HAPPENED AT HANK MEYER BEACH".

Other publicity experts have given valuable assistance in the development of Miami Beach. Among them are S. W. (Bill) Matthews, director of the city publicity staff; W. Bill Glick, who is Special Events Director; and Allan Cass, who retired in 1963 after serving in the publicity department of Miami Beach for 13 years. Previously he had been Sunday editor of the Miami News. Margaret Nedeau also is a talented member of the staff.

The Golden Jubilee year finds a few changes in the newspaper field. George B. Storer of the Storer Broadcasting Company sold the *Miami Beach Sun*, (now the *Miami Beach Daily Sun*), to the *Miami Herald* on May 31, 1963; and on the following day Rolfe Neill replaced Parks Rusk as its editor and publisher. From a column in the *Sun* come these biographical comments: "Mr. Neill attended public schools in North Carolina, Georgia and Mississippi, is a graduate of University of North Carolina with an A.B. degree in history. He has been in the newspaper business almost all his life. He . . . is married and the father of five children." Neill's managing editor is Edgar F. Seney, Jr., an experienced Florida journalist, winner of a Nieman Fellowship, and author of a recently published book, *The Gregarian Invasion*. Among the *Sun's* columnists is the popular radio commentator, Larry King, heard nightly on WIOD.

The *Miami Beach Times*, the oldest newspaper in Miami Beach, is still owned and edited by James Wendler. His wife, Mrs. Alice Wendler, is secretary and treasurer. This weekly paper is mailed to subscribers.

The president of the McAskill Publishing Company is Leon C. McAskill, a former publisher of the Miami Beach Sun. Although McAskill's *This Week in Miami and Miami Beach* first appeared as a weekly in 1924, it did not become a continuous publication until 1953, and now appears separately as *This Week in Miami*, and *This Week in Miami Beach*. To these weekly information-type publications, McAskill has added *This Week in Fort Lauderdale* and *This Week in Hollywood*. Their purpose is to inform visitors where to find entertainment and points of interest. McAskill also publishes *The Southern Innkeeper*, a monthly trade publication for the hotel, motel and restaurant interests.

The *Miami Beach Reporter* was started December 1, 1961, by Paul Bruun, who had been with *The Sun* for twenty-five years. *The Reporter* is a weekly newspaper with hotel and door-to-door circulation. Its managing editor is Mrs. Rae Gilder.

Although the semi-monthly *Miami Beach Visitor* had been started in 1932 by Frederick Findeisen, its companion magazine, *Beach and Town*, a monthly, did not appear until 1963. The Visitor Publishing Company still publishes *Guest Book*, a magazine for hotels. It was first published in 1932. Mrs. Helen Findeison is secretary and treasurer of the Company, and Mrs. Lois Cowart Tanner is a vice-president and general manager.

The visitor who likes to do his reading in a public library and who seeks the one he used to go to before 1962 — is in for a really terrific surprise. Miami Beach's new Public Library, located at 2100 Collins Avenue, was dedicated in November, 1962. It is east of the old library building and faces a beautifully-landscaped ocean-front park. The building is a one-story, dark red granite structure covering 28,000 square feet. The glass wall on the east side of the large public reading room gives a full view of the park and ocean, and the chairs in the reading room are comfortable.

Oscar C. Everhart, chief librarian, came to Miami Beach in 1958 from Indianapolis. Five years ago a North Shore branch of the Library was opened on 71st Street, just off Dickens Avenue; and in March, 1964, a

South Shore branch was opened at 225 S. Washington Avenue. These were city designed and city financed. "New at the South Shore branch this year," stated Everhart, "is an extensive collection of books in the Yiddish language." Counting the five thousand volumes at the South Shore branch and the four thousand at the North Shore branch, the Miami Beach Public Library has a total of 104,000 volumes. "We need more," said Everhart. He produced the following figures to show the Library's progress in the last ten years: Circulation — 169,792 in 1955-56 compared to 351,081 in 1964-65; budget—\$83,659 in 1954-55 compared to \$248,000 in 1964-65.

The Library runs a bookmobile which carries 4,500 volumes and which makes nine stops. One of the most popular features of the Library is the connecting auditorium which seats one hundred and which is used by community groups. The outside of the round structure is decorative.

But what about the old Miami Beach Public Library building? This is the most overwhelming surprise of all to the visitor who has not visited the Beach for several years. The old building has become the Bass Museum of Art and is one of the few places in Florida where paintings by the Old Masters can be seen. It opened April 7, 1964 and by the following September 24, a total of 14,915 visitors had registered.

Thanks to Mr. and Mrs. John Bass of New York and Miami Beach, this gift of 63 paintings gives the City of Miami Beach a collection that includes works of such artists as Botticelli (1440-1510), Rubens (1577-1640), Frans Hals (1580-1666), Van Gogh (1835-1890), El Greco (1541-1614), Modigliani (1884-1920), and modern French Impressionists. The gift includes also numerous examples of wooden sculpture, (some of it dating back as far as the fourteenth century); and two of the largest and most unique tapestries in the world. They are forty by sixteen feet in size and were made in Malines, Belgium. These tapestries, "The Start of the Hunt" and "The Return From the Hunt", occupy two walls in the Tapestry room which was built for them. This room is lighted by a valuable Venetian chandelier which was a part of the Bass collection.

This city-operated museum is housed in the old Public Library building which was reconstructed for the purpose, by the city, at a cost of \$160,000. The multi-million dollar Bass collection occupies the first floor of the building, while the second floor is reserved for travelling exhibits. Admission for

adults and children is reasonable, even free for those who call between 10 and 11:30 a.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays. Entrance fees are charged between 1 and 9 p.m. Tuesdays through Fridays, and 1 to 5 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays. Student groups, accompanied by teachers, are admitted free of charge. The place is closed on Mondays.

Those in charge report that the public has shown its appreciation of this magnificent gift to the city—for attendance by visitors and residents has been steady. The city librarian, Mr. Everhart, administers the Museum and its staff of five. In November, 1964, seven paintings by Georges Roualt and Armand Guillaumin were added to the collection by Mr. and Mrs. Bass.

The work of local artists and musicians was exhibited at the Roney Plaza Gardens November 7 and 8, 1964, by the Miami Beach Board of Music and Fine Arts. Assisting Reyna Youngerman, chairman, were board members Mrs. Max Dobrin, Monsignor Barry, Joseph Goodman, David Hochberg, John Howard and Mortimer Wien.

The Golden Jubilee finds Miami Beach with new parks and with old parks enlarged and improved. Jack Woody, director of recreation, has them listed in three categories—recreation parks, ocean front parks and adult recreation sites.

The recreation parks are: Crespie Park, on Crespie Boulevard at 76th Street; Flamingo Park, from 11th to 14th Streets on Meridian Avenue; Fisher Park, on 51st Street and Alton Road; Normandy Isle Park, on Rue Granville and 71st Street; Fairway Park, South Shore Drive; North Shore Park, Dickens Avenue between 72nd and 73rd Streets; Polo Park, 43rd Street and North Meridian Avenue; Stillwater Park, 85th Street and Stillwater Drive; Washington Park, Washington Avenue and 2nd Street; South Shore Park, Alton Road and Biscayne Street; Tatum Waterway Park, Tatum Waterway Drive and 81st Street, and Sunset Island No. 4, on West 21st Street at the bridge. City swimming pools are in Flamingo and Normandy Isle Parks.

The ocean front parks follow: Collins Park, between 21st and 22nd Streets; Eightieth Street Park, from 79th to 81st Streets; Lummus Park, from 6th to 15th Streets; Sixty-Fourth Street Park, between 64th and 65th Streets; North Shore Park, from 72nd to 73rd Streets; Ocean Terrace Park (name not official), 74th to 76th Streets; Tier Park, Ocean Drive at 1st

Street; South Beach Park, Ocean Drive at 3rd Street; Forty-Six Street Park, on Collins Avenue; Government Cut Park at Inlet Boulevard, *an exclusively Boy Scout Camp*, Thirty-Fourth Street Beach, Collins Avenue; and street ends on beach areas which are open to the public.

Adult recreation sites: Twenty-First Street Community Center, Washington Avenue; Seventy-Third Street Community Center, Collins Avenue; Tenth Street Auditorium, where an active Serviceman's Center also is located, Ocean Drive; Pier Park Bandshell, Ocean Drive at First Street, and the Municipal Fishing Pier on First Street and Ocean Drive.

The Miami Beach Girl Scout Camp is located opposite the North side of the Convention Hall Parking Lot.

Miami Beach Golf Courses have not been neglected. Besides its two municipal 18 hole courses — the Normandy Isle and Bayshore, the city now has one par-3 golf course.

In two of the city parks are tennis clubs: The Flamingo Park group and the North Shore Park group.

The Miami Beach Garden Center & Conservatory, located behind the Convention Hall at 2000 Garden Drive, is considered by garden experts to be one of the outstanding attractions of Miami Beach. It is city financed but in its incipency Miami Beach Garden Club members took part in promoting the project. There are four active Garden Clubs in the city now: The Miami Beach Garden Club, the Tropical Garden Club, the Palm-Hibiscus Islands Garden Club and the Mt. Sinai Garden Club. All are proud of the Conservatory, where plants have been brought from all the known jungle areas in the world. And the accent, they say, is on air plants. It is open to the public seven days a week — from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Also new, since Miami Beach celebrated its fortieth birthday, is the development of 41st street as a business and shopping center, and its getting a new name, in 1958, by an act of the city council. The new name is Arthur Godfrey Road, given in appreciation of the nationwide publicity the TV star gave the city each year when his show was telecast from Miami Beach. Early in 1964 the Miami Beach Chamber of Commerce moved its headquarters into this district, at 3921 Alton Road; and two years ago the Chris-

tian Science Church moved into its beautiful new edifice near 40th Street on Pinetree Drive.

While there was a general feeling of regret over the old Flamingo Hotel getting demolished, these emotions changed to admiration early in 1960 as Emil Morton began construction of the 612-unit, fourteen-story apartment building on the 13-acre site. Morton Towers is now one of the show places when viewed not only from the bay but from Bay Road. Another hotel which replaced a much-loved landmark was the Seville Hotel & Cabana Club, referred to as the "Hotel of the Year 1956", as it opened in December of 1955. It was built on the site of the former Grossinger-Pancoast Hotel by Irving Kipnis, Ted Kipnis, Arthur M. Lowell and Morris Becker, according to the February 10, 1955, issue of the Miami Beach Sun. Building permits that year totaled \$23,536,000. The highest peak for building permits in the last decade was for the year 1957, when they totaled \$32,868,000. The next highest was the sum of \$28,990,000 for 1962. A year later, in 1963, the total had dropped to \$13,169,000.

E. M. Hancock was the city's building inspector until he retired in 1958 after twenty-eight years in office. At one time he served as assistant city manager.

In the matter of education, Miami Beach is keeping up with its growth. Besides its private schools, it had in September, 1964, five elementary schools, two junior high schools and one senior high school. The enrollment at these totaled 6,349. Enrollment in September, 1954, was 6,640.

Citizens of Miami Beach are noted, too, for their humanitarianism. No welfare drive is neglected there, nor are their three great hospitals — Mount Sinai, St. Francis and the Miami Heart Institute neglected. The city donated land for the public health center which Dade County opened at 615 Collins Avenue on October 26, 1964. The building costs of \$172,000 were paid by the county. Sydney Ansin was general chairman for the 1964 United Fund Drive at Miami Beach and Paul Seiderman was named business development chairman of the Miami Beach division of the Fund.

Sam Gertner, the chief administrative executive at Mount Sinai Hospital at Miami Beach since 1949, was installed on November 6, 1964, as president of the Florida Hospital Association. "Under his professional direction," said

the Miami Beach Daily Sun, "the hospital has become an outstanding institution for the sick and an excellent working facility for the doctors and surgeons. It is many times remarked, by our own citizens as well as visitors, how blessed Miami Beach is with first-rate medical facilities. (Give a cheer, too, for Miami Heart and St. Francis). Now, Sam Gertner's been elected president of Florida Hospital Association, the statewide group of administrators. He was installed Friday at the annual meeting in Clearwater. Thus, a jury of his peers has measured him and found him an outstanding man . . ."

Through his efforts, a teaching program at Mount Sinai includes residences and internships for forty young doctors. He was one of the originators and founders of the South Florida Hospital Council which works on accreditation standards for public hospitals, and he was the Council's president in 1955. As a national consultant, he helped in the organization of Four Freedoms, a high-rise retirement home built by the AFL-CIO on Miami Beach. His home is at 2325 Magnolia Road, Keystone Point.

A top project of the sixteen groups in the Miami Beach Hadassah Chapter is aid to the Hadassah Hospital in Israel. These groups are concerned also with the task of saving Jewish children who are behind the Iron Curtain and in Moslem countries. Another project for Israel which is receiving help from Miami Beach supporters is the expanding educational program of Hebrew University, which now has five campuses in Israel.

A number of Miami Beach citizens have given distinguished service to their own community during the last decade. One group is the Civic League of Miami Beach which has played an important part in the growth of Miami Beach since its inception in 1935. Its president is Al Nason, civic leader and business man. Another group is the Washington Avenue—South Shore Association, which has spearheaded the modernization of the South Shore area. Its officers are: Nathan S. Gumenick, owner of Southgate Towers, president; Ray Redman, executive vice-president; Samuel J. Halperin (the first president), Max Boderman, Carl T. Hoffman, Joseph M. Rose, Jack Stein and Newton H. Bollinger, vice-presidents; Marcus O. Sarokin, treasurer; Hyman P. Galbut, secretary, and a fifty-member board of governors.

The first board of trustees of Mount Sinai Hospital reads like a list of Miami Beach V.I.P.'s. On the list were: Sam Blank, Baron de Hirsch Meyer, Mrs. Max Dobrin, Samuel Friedland, Moses Ginsberg, Abraham Goodman

and Dr. Morris Goodman. Also: J. Gerald Lewis, Stanley Myers, Max Orovitz, Monte Selig, William D. Singer, Alex Van Straaten, Carl Weinkle, Henry D. Williams, Mitchell Wolfson and Arthur A. Unger.

Important city officials during the last ten years have been: Mayors Kenneth Oka, D. Lee Powell and Melvin J. Richard; City Managers Claude A. Renshaw (who served thirty-five years in this office), Morris N. Lipp (who resigned in 1962 to become chief engineer of Interama), and O. M. Pushkin.

Distinguished Miami Beach residents, not already mentioned, whose influence extends beyond the city limits include the following: Attorney Harry Simonoff, author of five books, the latest being "The Chosen One"; Metro Mayor Chuck Hall, also Metro Commissioner; Elliott Roosevelt, elected as Florida's National Democratic Committeeman; Robert Z. Greene, a trustee and founder of Mount Sinai Hospital; Jack Gordon, banker and Dade County School Board member who was appointed to assist Senator Hubert Humphrey stage his successful campaign for the vice-presidency; and Shepard Broad, president of the Miami Beach Chamber of Commerce.

While the years rolled along after Miami Beach passed its fortieth birthday, area developments marched ahead with a minimum of friction as opposing groups revealed a capacity for civic, economic and political agglutination. An exception to this came with the aggressive efforts of a group of civic officials, business men and hotel men to have the State Legislature separate Miami Beach from Dade County for the creation of a Miami Beach County.

The promoters failed to get a bill passed by the 1961 Legislature although a \$50,000 legal fee was paid to the Millard Caldwell's Tallahassee law firm; and William Gibb, the present administrative assistant to Senator Frank Smathers, was employed as lobbyist. Although the entire Dade County delegation was opposed to the move, it was the county's only State senator, W. C. (Cliff) Herrell whose voice was heard. "He took the Senate floor on a point of personal privilege," stated the Miami News on April 21, 1961, "and said: 'I am confident that the real force behind this move is by those who desire to create a Miami Beach Las Vegas. It is true that state laws *should* be sufficient to protect against this . . .'"

Backers of the move denied the claim that gambling interests were behind their desire to create a Miami Beach County. The April 27, 1961,

issue of the Miami News quoted Miami Beach Councilman Kenneth Oka as saying that the creation of a separate Miami Beach County would provide 100 million dollars in ten years to improve the resort city. "In 1960-1961 Miami Beach paid 24 million dollars in taxes," he said, "eight million to the city and sixteen million to Metro . . . and of the sixteen million, the Beach got back less than three million in services."

Two days previously Councilman Mitchell Wolfson, former mayor of Miami Beach, was quoted in the press as saying he did not believe the formation of a Miami Beach County would lower taxes for the average homeowner of Miami Beach. "Nor will it inure to the benefit of the people of Dade County . . . If Miami Beach should separate itself from Dade County, what about Palm Beach from Palm Beach County, Fort Lauderdale Beach from Broward County, Daytona Beach from Volusia County, and Jacksonville Beach from Duval?" He said that the making of a new county out of Miami Beach would be "starting a precedent to which there would be no end."

Dade Representative Carey Matthews, who opposed the plan to split Dade County, withdrew his urban renewal bill for Miami Beach in the 1961 session of the Legislature, claiming he did so at the request of Miami Beach officials who said that after paying heavy taxes to Metro, Miami Beach "did not have anything left for rejuvenation." Although the issue was dead for the 1961 session, two amendments were added to the bill "to make it easier" when it would be introduced in the 1963 Legislature. Although the bill was not introduced in the next legislature, the two suggested amendments are of interest. One was for a local referendum for the creation of a new county from another county. The other amendment would permit a city to annex new territory by a majority vote of those to be taken in. The land would not have to be contiguous, as at present, but would have to be adjacent. "This would let Miami Beach take in the keys below it and then go on over and annex areas in South Dade, if those people voted to come in," said Representative Matthews. "This would enable the Beach to answer the arguments re 'no cemeteries, no water supply, no diversification of economy'."

No bill for the new county was introduced in the 1963 legislature. A Miami News poll on November 22 of that year showed that fourteen of Dade County's sixteen-man legislative delegation "was strongly against a separate Miami Beach County." While Senator Herrell declined to give support

because he had been elected by the county-at-large, which opposed the plan, he was the only member of the delegation to a meeting called at the Beach on November 20, 1963, to discuss the matter. To the gathering of about 150 Miami Beach civic leaders, Mayor Melvin J. Richard "unveiled his plans" to make Miami Beach a separate county." He proposed paying the State ten million dollars for publicity over a ten-year period if the separation takes place. Senator Herrell protested, saying Mayor Richard's plan "is not the answer."

In a signed letter to the editor of the Miami News, Mayor Richard on November 21, 1963, summed up his views as follows:

"Editor Bill Baggs in the Miami News decries my desire to see Miami Beach a separate county. Metro has proved itself to be ineffective, inefficient, vacillating, confused and expensive. Miami Beach, separated from the rest of the county by a natural barrier of four miles of water, strives to exist on a tourist economy not incompatible with the economy of the rest of the county. Yet Miami Beach is forced to pay 20 percent of the county taxes, little of which is spent in Miami Beach.

"An independent survey by the University of Miami demonstrated that Miami Beach could more effectively provide all of the services now provided the Beach by Metro for \$4 million a year, while the Beach is contributing to the county annually more than \$16 million.

"If Miami Beach had control of those funds a considerable portion would be spent on publicity, advertising and promotion which is the life-blood of the economy of the community. But those who run Metro have not been able to see or hear our pleas for help on those areas. How much of that 16 million is spent for tourist promotion and how much for capital improvements at Miami Beach, which the city needs so badly to attract tourists?

"Mr. Baggs and others whose financial destiny lies on the West side of Biscayne Bay, fail to appreciate that this financial drain of Miami Beach by Dade County will eventually destroy the goose that lays the golden eggs, that the success of Miami Beach lies in its being able to run its own show and that when Miami Beach thrives, the rest of the county will likewise thrive. MELVIN J. RICHARD, Mayor, City of Miami Beach."

If Miami Beach were to become a county, there would be a much bigger payroll for employes than there is at Miami Beach City Hall at present. For the year ending June 30, 1964, the number of persons on the payroll at City Hall was 1,369. The number has been practically the same since 1960. Beachites are looking to Interama, the 500 million dollar Inter-American Trade and Cultural Center, as a prospective economic shot-in-the-arm. While it will be north of the city limits, it will, according to Congressman Claude Pepper, create 50,000 jobs and attract a minimum of fifteen million tourists a year. It was Pepper who, as U.S. Senator in 1939, first introduced a bill in Congress for Interama. Its present chairman, Dr. Irving Muskat, has been aided not only by Representative Claude Pepper, but by Senators Spessard Holland and George Smathers, Governor Bryant and Governor Elect Haydon Burns in the promotion of an 18.5 million dollar federal loan for the project.

According to the Miami Beach publicity bureau, the city now has lodgings for 140,000 visitors in 370 hotels and 2,800 apartment buildings. Its guests number over 1,500,000 annually, coming from every part of the United States, Canada, Latin America and many European nations.

A real tourist attraction is the now famous "Surfside Six" which has become known throughout the country as the base of operations for a TV serial. It is located just in front of the Fontainebleau Hotel on Indian Creek.

A forecast of events which will precede a centennial celebration by Miami Beach cannot be made by estimating the city's potential according to past performances. Although dreamers about the future will undoubtedly be inspired by achievements of their predecessors, the innovations of the space age can cause them to foresee a fantastic continuation. Permission has been given this writer by the *Miami Beach Daily Sun* to quote Hank Meyer's dramatic forecast describing Miami Beach after another half-century. The article appeared in Ted Crail's column on September 21, 1964, under Hank Meyer's name. It follows:

"What will Miami Beach be like 50 years from now? It would be fun to be around in the year 2014 AD when Miami Beach celebrates its 100th anniversary . . .

"At that time Miami Beach will probably have fewer hotels, but more rooms. Something close to 100 hotels, individually averaging from between

1,300 to 5,000 rooms . . . each with its own rocket landing pad . . . located on multi-acred Convention-Recreation Hall roofs.

“The trip to Miami Beach from New York will take ten minutes. The City will be twenty minutes from London and twenty-five minutes from Bali. Travelers will be flying by rocket and the only noise they will make will be a soft ‘swoosh’. Each rocket will be powered by anti-gravity mechanisms and will require landing area of only 250 square feet. They will be landing at a rate of one a minute, which should bring in enough tourists to keep the City fully occupied every day of the year.

“Because of the short travel time from New York, Miami Beach will become the favorite ‘suburb’ for commuters from that city, and our towering apartments will house the families of the men who run the giant industries, banks and financial houses.

“New hotels will be shining glass towers reaching sky-ward . . . where guests could get their tan before getting out of bed. Buildings will soar thirty or forty stories high, because technology and science have enabled man to conquer hurricanes and substitute constant cool breezes from the Caribbean.

“Miami Beach will be the TV center of the world (thanks to the pioneering of the goodwill ambassador Jackie Gleason), beaming the story of our world back to the moon and the planets . . . and the winner of the Miss Universe Contest that year will, of course, be Miss Venus, who most folks will agree will be out of this world.

“Miami Beach will have a School of Tourism (Branch of the University of Miami) giving undergraduate and graduate degrees in every phase of resort operation. It will boast over 10,000 students from all over the Universe who will be trained in the modern Hotel University Center on the techniques of every phase of resort management. Our entire educational program will be a model of excellence for the entire nation.

“Electricity will be transmitted by Laser Light. Miami Beach will be the first city in the world to be so electrified. The folks will be campaigning to get the underground wires (wot?) removed. There will be underwater nightclubs, restaurants, and recreation areas off-shore which will be reached by scenic submarines. Even local kennel clubs will shift to that scene of

activity, featuring racing porpoises. . . . Miami Beach buildings will be huge, stretching high into the sky, with immense ground space devoted to beautiful flowers, trees and spacious recreation areas.

“On the south shore area of Miami Beach there will be a mammoth Olympic Stadium, all-weather, with reversible top, which will be used for major international sporting events and large conventions . . . adjacent to the Miami Beach Convention Hall there will be an international championship tennis stadium which will feature the world’s professional and amateur tennis greats.

“Surrounding the tennis stadium will be an International Botanical Garden and that will lead directly to the ‘International Plaza’ where buildings will headquarter major companies from all over the world for the purpose of using the Miami Beach environs as a testing ground for everything from food products to pillow cases. Based upon the company’s test tube screening here, product improvements and merchandising campaigning will be born.

“Yes, in 2014 AD Miami Beach will celebrate 100 years . . . not its past 100 years . . . but its future . . . unlimited in its horizons . . . with the best of Mother Nature combined with the best of man’s ingenuity. Miami Beach will be discovered and re-discovered as not only the vacation capital of the world but a community with great depth, purpose and meaning!

“There will be a great Inter-American Medical Center here . . . meaningful research on tropical life . . . an Inter American Communication Center where people throughout the world will study and improve means of communicating with each other to benefit the entire world. Aside from the economic and cultural, Miami Beach will have a spiritual re-awakening giving greater meaning and depth to its existence as a resort community that serves the world. People will always love Miami Beach because Miami Beach will always love people.

“What better way to start celebrating Miami Beach’s 50th Anniversary than planning for Miami Beach’s 100th Anniversary and getting started with all of the dreams, plans, ideas and innovations that someday will become a reality if we all start working toward that goal now!”

The foregoing prophecy entitles Hank Meyer to have the last word. And so, with a “*Happy Golden Jubilee, Miami Beach!*”, this brief history of the city during the last decade comes to an end.

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