

Tequesta

THE JOURNAL OF THE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHERN FLORIDA

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THE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHERN FLORIDA

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On the Cover—Luis Ares, one of the children of Operation Pedro Pan, looks out on to Biscayne Bay from the sea wall at Mercy hospital, 1963. Luis, age 13, left his parents and two sisters in Cienfuegos. Courtesy of the Archdiocese of Miami.

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Editor's Foreword

In the expansive era following World War II, Greater Miami, like communities elsewhere in America, experienced rapid population growth triggered by explosive suburban development. However, the tremendous influx of Cuban refugees, the shifting fortunes of tourism, and the ultimate emergence of a New World Center helped set the area apart from other urban centers. Each of the articles in this issue of *Tequesta* examines, to varying degrees, elements of mid-twentieth century Greater Miami. Indeed, the time has arrived for an examination of that era since enough years have elapsed to bring the proper historical perspective to a watershed period in the city's and region's history.

No one has paid more attention to the issues, events, processes, and personalities of mid-century Miami and southeast Florida than Raymond Mohl, one of the profession's preeminent urban historians, as well as a prolific chronicler of Florida history. In a series of seminal articles appearing in a wide array of scholarly journals and focusing on Miami's African American communities, the impact of I-95 on inner city neighborhoods, local labor and political radicalism, and the civil rights movement, Mohl has brought the scholarly study of Miami's rich history up to the recent past. In "Elizabeth Virrick and the 'Concrete Monsters': Housing Reform in Postwar Miami," Mohl, a professor of history and chairman of the department of history, University of Alabama, Birmingham, provides the reader with a perceptive article on a remarkable reformer and the causes she espoused in her lengthy career as a civic activist in the Magic City.

Tequesta readers may recall the illuminating article by Francis Sicius, a Professor of History at Saint Thomas University, entitled, "The Miami-Havana Connection: The First Seventy-five Years," which appeared in this journal in 1998. With "The Miami Diocese and the Cuban Refugee Crisis of 1960-1961," Dr. Sicius focuses on the critical role of the fledgling Roman Catholic Diocese of Miami, which, almost alone in the early 1960s, answered the cries for assistance from thousands of refugees fleeing Castro's Cuba for Miami. In "Chapman Field—The Evolution of a South Dade Army Airdrome," Raymond G. McGuire explains the vicissitudes in the uses and fortunes of a widely-coveted parcel of real estate in south Miami-Dade County. Readers will marvel over the plans for that parcel, as well as its actual utilization,

since the era of World War I. Dr. McGuire, who holds a Ph.D. in Plant Pathology from the University of Wisconsin, Madison, served as a research scientist at the United States Department of Agriculture's Subtropical Horticulture Research Station at Chapman Field before turning to teaching. Presently, he teaches biology at South Dade Senior High School.

Earlier this year, the Florida Historical Society, which traces its origins to 1856, presented the 2001 Hampton Dunn Award for Print Media to *Tequesta*, as the state's top history journal. The Historical Association of Southern Florida is both proud of and humbled by this award. We are also gratified by the warm responses of many of our readers to the 2000 issue of *Tequesta*.

Paul S. George
Editor, *Tequesta*