

Tequesta

THE JOURNAL OF THE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHERN FLORIDA

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Cover—Syd Pollock's barnstorming team, the Miami Ethiopian Clowns, combined excellent baseball with slapstick entertainment, sometimes playing with painted clown faces, ca. 1940. Courtesy of the National Baseball Hall of Fame Library, Cooperstown, N.Y.

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Editor's Foreword

Because the “reach” of the Historical Association of Southern Florida is South Florida, I have looked north, since assuming the editorship of *Tequesta*, to Broward County and beyond for potential articles for the journal. I became aware of the rich history of Broward County, especially that of Fort Lauderdale, its flagship city, after serving for five years as director of a countywide historic preservation board there and writing extensively about the city and county's past. Accordingly, when William Crawford submitted an article, entitled “The Papers of Albert Sawyer and the Development of the Florida East Coast, 1892 to 1912,” we were happy to consider it for publication. Crawford is a native of Fort Lauderdale, a practicing attorney, president of the Fort Lauderdale Historical Society and a commissioner for the Broward County Historical Commission. He is also a talented avocational historian who has published several impressive articles on Broward history. In “The Papers of Albert Sawyer...,” Crawford examines the critical role of the Florida Coast Line Canal and Transportation Company and its related enterprises in the development of Florida's east coast, especially the coastal areas of Broward and Dade Counties.

Raymond Mohl, Professor of History at the University of Alabama, Birmingham, and chairman of the Department of History, is a frequent contributor to *Tequesta*. A prolific historian with a mastery of several areas of local, state, and American history, Mohl has provided our readers, in this issue of *Tequesta*, an article entitled “Clowning Around: The Miami Ethiopian Clowns and Cultural Conflict in Black Baseball.” “Clowning Around...” is more than an article about a group of athletes cum entertainers who barnstormed the country, providing large doses of slapstick comedy along with traditional baseball activities before large, enthusiastic crowds. It is also the story of black baseball in an era of segregation, of sports as entertainment for a wide audience, of the opposition by regular black baseball teams to entertainment perceived as perpetuating race stereotypes demeaning to African Americans, and of the simmering dispute between black team owners and Jewish booking agents.

Christopher Eck, formerly executive director of Miami-Dade County's Office of Historic Preservation and now the administrator of the Broward County Historical Commission and the county's historic

preservation officer, provides, with “South Florida’s Prelude to War: Army Correspondence Concerning Miami, Fort Dallas, and the Everglades Prior to the Outbreak of the Third Seminole War, 1850-1855,” a rare insight into the personalities and activities at Fort Dallas, which stood on the north bank of the Miami River near its mouth, prior to the outbreak of the Third Seminole War (1855-1858). Eck, an archaeologist, attorney, and historian, has utilized the vast collections of the National Archives for an article containing military correspondence, never before published, that sheds new insights into that trying era in the history of the area. Even more important for southeast Florida history enthusiasts, the letters provide a wealth of interesting, sometimes graphic, information on the wilderness that is today’s Miami and South Florida. One of the key buildings comprising Fort Dallas, a converted slave quarter, stands today in Lummus Park on the northwest edge of downtown Miami.

My thanks to Sara Muñoz and Kelly Geisinger for their invaluable assistance in preparing this issue of *Tequesta*. Finally, I hope you will visit the Historical Museum of Southern Florida where a treasure trove of South Florida history awaits your senses. In particular, you will find “Tropical Dreams: A People’s History of Southern Florida,” which represents the permanent exhibit upstairs, to be especially appealing and rewarding. In recent years, the museum has added several key elements to the exhibit, including “First Arrivals,” which offers fossils and artifacts spanning more than ten thousand years of our history, and “Gateway of the Americas,” which focuses on the expansive period from the end of World War II to the recent past.

Paul S. George
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