

# Tequesta

THE JOURNAL OF THE HISTORICAL  
ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHERN FLORIDA

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## Editor's Foreword

This issue of *Tequesta* offers readers three diverse essays beginning with Christopher F. Meindl's "On the Eve of Destruction: People and Florida's Everglades from the late 1800s to 1908." Meindl is an assistant professor of Social Science and Florida Studies at the University of South Florida, St. Petersburg. In this article, which chronicles the discussion and opinions surrounding drainage of the wetlands, Meindl provides insight into a little known but important aspect of a the state-sponsored drainage program. The article is especially timely because the proposed "restoration" of the Everglades is a major news story. I believe Meindl's article will serve as an important reference for understanding the buildup to a project that dramatically reduced the size of the "River of Grass," altered the environment of South Florida, made possible a vast population surge, and led to the creation of Everglades National Park.

Jacqueline E. Clancy's "Hell's Angel: Eleanor Kinzie Gordon's Wartime Summer of 1898," offers an interesting look at a heretofore ignored element in the story of Camp Miami, the jerry-rigged, tented facility that stood north of downtown Miami in 1898, and served, briefly, as home to seven thousand soldiers during the Spanish-American War. Eleanor Gordon, Clancy's protagonist, labored tirelessly in establishing and administering a convalescent hospital in the camp. Clancy, who teaches American History at Columbia College, Fort Stewart, gained access to both the Gordon Family Papers and the Spanish-American War Journal of Eleanor Kinzie Gordon in preparing this article. Few scholars have seen this material.

William M. Straight, M.D., Florida's preeminent medical historian, retired internist, and a frequent contributor to *Tequesta*, brings us, "Early Miami through the Eyes of Youth," a brief account of the city's early years by Ethel Weatherly Sherman, who arrived in Miami at age ten in 1896. Straight has carefully edited and annotated a rough, elliptical manuscript authored by Sherman, and transcribed an interview with her, to provide readers with an invaluable look at the nascent city that arose on the banks of Biscayne Bay and the Miami River at the end of the nineteenth century. First person accounts of early Miami are rare, which makes Sherman's observations, and Straight's contributions, even more valuable to us.

Many thanks to Sara Muñoz, managing editor of *Tequesta*, for her inestimable work in preparing this edition of the journal for publication. Sara has again been ably assisted by Kelly Geisinger, copy editor. Finally, I encourage our readers to visit the Historical Museum, which continues to enhance its already splendid offerings. “Tropical Dreams: A People’s History of South Florida,” the Museum’s permanent exhibition, remains a popular attraction, especially with the fossils and artifacts that were added to its “First Arrivals” segment little more than one year ago. Also available is *First Arrivals, The Archaeology of Southern Florida*, an insightful, wonderfully illustrated work that examines the increasingly more bountiful and complex archaeological heritage of Miami and southeast Florida. We know you will enjoy and learn from all the Historical Museum has to offer, as well as from this edition of *Tequesta*.

Paul S. George  
Editor, *Tequesta*