

Tequesta THE JOURNAL OF HISTORYMIAMI

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Cover: Hollywood Boulevard under construction, 1921.
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Editor's Foreword

Tequesta and HistoryMiami are nearing their seventy-fifth years of bringing history to a community that has changed 180 degrees, in size, composition, and direction, since 1940, the year of the institution's inception. I have had the good fortune of working with HistoryMiami in various capacities for nearly forty of those years, including more than twenty-six years as its historian and as a tour guide, as well as nearly twenty years as editor of *Tequesta*. It has been a rewarding journey. Working with *Tequesta* has opened for me a great vista into articles of deep interest and importance and has placed me in contact with authors of surpassing talents. Our readers have been the beneficiaries of their work.

This, the seventy-fourth issue of *Tequesta*, offers readers Raymond Mohl's "The Origins and Early History of the Dade County Community Relations Board." A frequent contributor to *Tequesta*, Ray Mohl, who recently retired from his position as professor of history, University of Alabama at Birmingham, is an eminent historian of ethnic, immigration and urban American history. He has also been a long standing mentor of mine. Mohl's powerful article looks at Miami-Dade County's Community Relations Board, created more than fifty years ago to serve as "an escape valve for community pressures and as a mediator in community controversies," and especially the role of its "chief architect," Seymour Samet, in its development. The board has been tested again and again in a community marked by racial and ethnic problems.

Vivien Miller, Associate Professor, American and Canadian Studies, University of Nottingham, offers, from the vantage point of an English historian, "Respectable White Ladies, Wayward Girls, and Telephone Thieves in Miami's 'Case of the Clinking Brassieres,'" the story of an intriguing mid-twentieth century criminal justice case involving several women who stuffed in their brassieres coins, amounting to many thousands of dollars, from long distance telephone calls in the counting room of the downtown Miami headquarters of Southern Bell. The author applies a broad construct, including the presence of women in the work place, consumerism, and crime, in her examination of this case. The uniqueness of the case, the charges, court hearings, media coverage, and its ultimate disposition, caused a stir in an area and era at least more outwardly prim and proper than that of today's Miami.

Robert Louis Semes, a retired historian living in California, brings us in “The Boom, The Blow, and The Bust: One Man’s Memories,” the account by, his late father, Louis “Larry” Semes, Jr., of the latter’s long ago encounter with 1920s-era southeast Florida, an area enmeshed in an incredible real estate boom, followed by a sharp economic downturn exacerbated by the killer hurricane of 1926. Louis Semes was a young boy at the time, and his account, which has been brought to light by his son, chronicles the family’s migration from the North to Miami in that era, a journey that thousands of other persons and families undertook in quest of new opportunities and even dreams of quick fortunes. The Semes family spent a few years in both Dania and Miami, experiencing in the former the horrors of the hurricane and the trying times following it. The senior Semes’ graphic story of the storm and its aftermath will captivate readers with its account of destruction, courage, and renewal.

HistoryMiami is abuzz with programs, exhibitions, talks, symposia, fairs and other offerings. Please visit us in our expanded facilities, or join us for one of our many history tours. In the meantime, I hope you will enjoy reading the offerings in this number of *Tequesta*.

Paul S. George, Ph.D.
Editor, *Tequesta*