

Among Miami Beach's early visitors the most important, for the area's future, were Henry B. Lum and his 15-year-old son, Charles, from New Jersey. They first saw what is now Miami Beach in 1870 — just 90 years ago — and were impressed by ~~seeing~~<sup>the</sup> coconuts growing along the shore.

Coconuts in those days were a real money crop, gathered from the far tropics for their oil. When the Lums returned home it was with visions of a coconut plantation closer to the New York market than any other place in the world. It was a dream in which they promptly interested their neighbors.

The result was a venture that finally included practically all the oceanfront from Cape Florida to Jupiter, some ~~70~~<sup>80</sup> miles northward. It was to be one, vast coconut planting and the land was purchased for 75 cents to \$1.25 an acre. The first plantings began ~~about 1882~~ around what is now Lummus Park.

The coconut kings <sup>(in 1882)</sup> shipped wagons, mules, tents, a portable house and other equipment and provisions from New York to Key West by steamer, off-loaded their supplies at Key West to a schooner and sailed back to Miami Beach. They unloaded at Lummus Park, which was a small, natural clearing in the jungle, floating part of their cargo ashore and transferring the remainder by small boat from the schooner.

It must be remembered the site was as dense a jungle as to be found anywhere in the world. Mangrove covered the lower lands in a near-impenetrable barrier. Higher ground was thick with other native growth. Except for two or three Indian trails, ~~progress~~ exploration could be accomplished only behind an ax. Tents were pitched and the house erected in the clearing, then the 25 men, promoters and laborers, started <sup>to</sup> the work ~~of clearing land~~.

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Officials, civic leaders and just plain citizens gathered by the thousands in Miami Beach today to celebrate the famed resort city's 45th anniversary -- and to take a quick look into what some can see in store for the community during the next 45 years.

Perhaps no more impressive testimonial to Miami Beach's growth could be conceived than the place in which the ceremonial luncheon was housed -- the city's new and ultra-modern Convention hall. This big auditorium, designed to seat up to 15,000 persons, it was pointed out, stands not only for achievement, but also for confidence in things yet to be achieved.

Old residents and new from all walks of life made up the cosmopolitan gathering of people paying tribute to their town. Some were present who could remember Miami Beach almost from its inception, others who might be said to be almost strangers. But this was as it should be, for their town is young and modern, changing almost from day to day; living in, not tradition, but ~~in~~ the flexibility demanded in a world that in the same breath is shrinking leagues into steps, yet expanding into space.

One thing in common drew this diverse congregation into the Convention hall: a creature preference for living in a kindly climate and a steadfast faith that no <sup>other</sup> city, anywhere, holds a sounder debenture on the future. In this they were of the same mind as the 31 pioneers who some 46 years ago voted to ask the next session of the Florida legislature to incorporate a strip of land on the eastern side of Biscayne Bay as the Village of Miami Beach.

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They find themselves in the midst of change, and that is good, for without change ~~there~~<sup>there</sup> is no progress, and without progress Miami Beach has no future. They know their city, for the present at least, is limited to an area of some 17 square miles, more than half of which is water. They know that room for growth now is upward, not outward.

They know, too, that growth is reaching upward. The new hotels are bigger and taller than the old ones they are replacing. The new apartment buildings house hundreds of families where the older ones served a score.

They know that from being dependent upon visitors for a three-months season, Miami Beach has grown into a 12-months resort. They know that in the very hall in which they meet will come in the next few months hundreds of thousands of convention delegates whose organizations, until the hall was completed, could not meet in Miami Beach because there was no adequate meeting place for them.

And they know that Miami Beach is part of an urban complex that, for living and working, is one of the most favored in the land. They may be depended upon to make it the best part of that complex.