

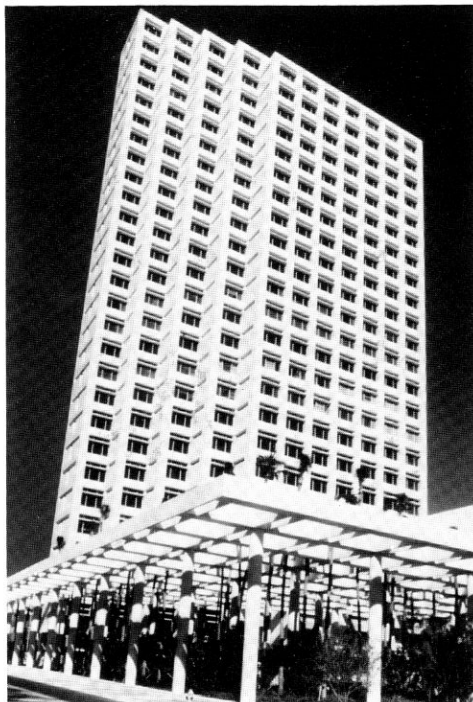
South Florida History

M A G A Z I N E

WINTER 1991 1
A QUARTERLY
PUBLICATION FOR THE
MEMBERS OF THE
HISTORICAL MUSEUM OF
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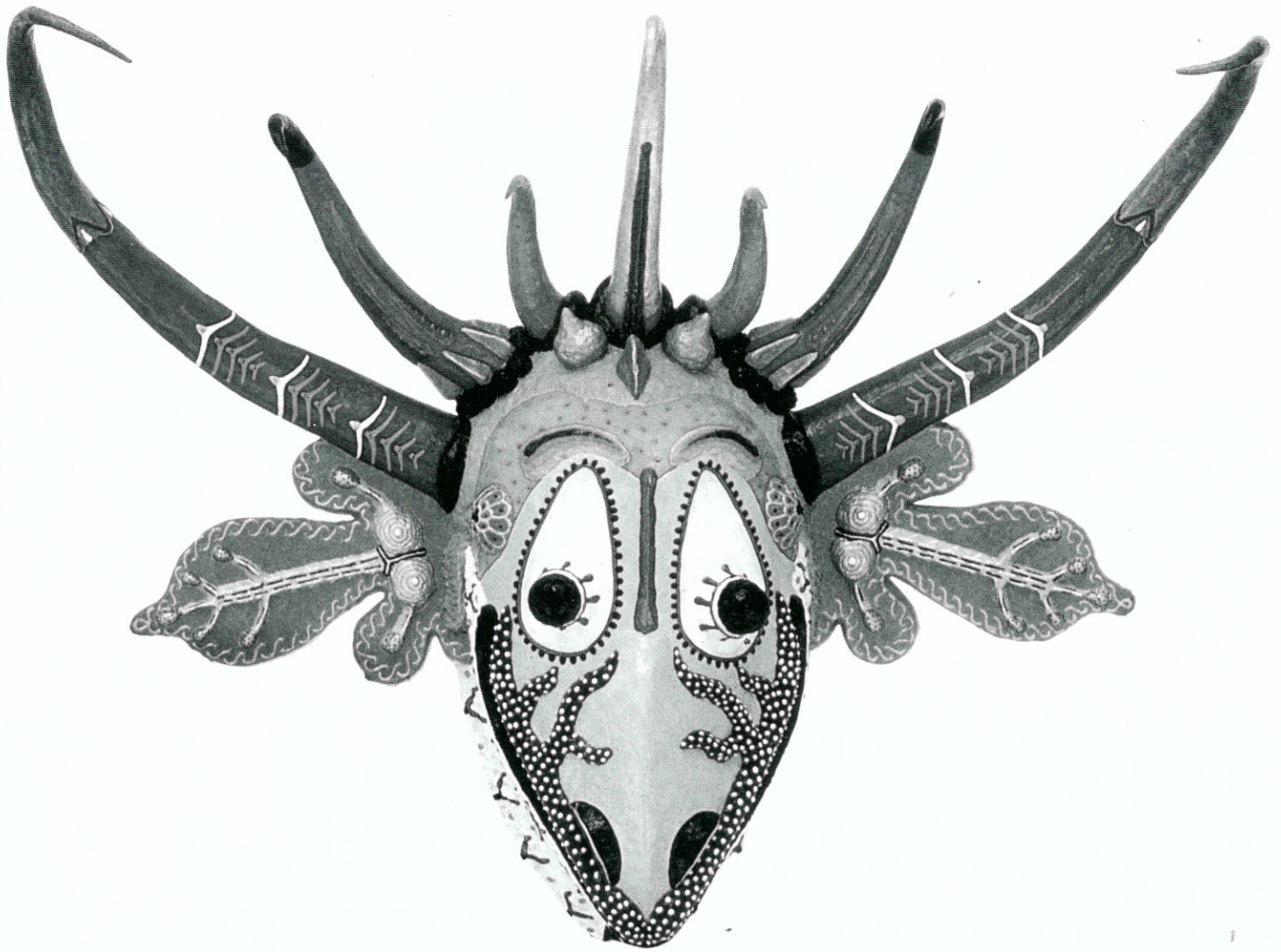
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Tropical Traditions: Southeast Florida Folklife is made possible through the generous support of the Florida Endowment for the Humanities, the Florida Department of State Historical Museums Grants-in Aid Program, the Metro-Dade Cultural Affairs Council Tourist Tax Program, Jonathans Catering, Design Floridian, and WTMI.

Venezuelan Yare' mask by Manuel Albalate. Photograph by Michele Edelson



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THE HISTORICAL MUSEUM OF SOUTHERN FLORIDA

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On the Cover: As this 1963 photograph of the Spring Break demonstrates, Ft. Lauderdale was definitely where the boys were. It makes one wonder where the girls went.

Contributors

Dr. Paul S. George is a regular contributor to Historical Museum publications, and is also known as Miami's Stand-up Historian for his very popular walking tours.

Teresa B. Lenox is Research Historian for Metro-Dade Division of Historic Preservation, a partner in the historical research consulting firm Research Atlantica and a graduate student at Florida Atlantic University.

Remko Jansonius, a native of The Netherlands, possesses a Master's Degree in Cultural Anthropology, and is the Assistant Curator of Objects at the Historical Museum of Southern Florida.

Donald C. Gaby is a retired satellite meteorologist and is one of the foremost authorities on the history of the Miami River.

South Florida History

M A G A Z I N E

Published quarterly by the
Historical Association of Southern
Florida
101 West Flagler Street
Miami, Florida 33130

Editors

Stuart McIver
Tim Schmand

Membership Coordinator
Carla J. Shaw

Advisers

Lee Aberman
Marie Anderson
Jeanne Bellamy
Dorothy J. Fields
Arva Parks
Thelma Peters, Ph.D.
Elizabeth Peeler
Yvonne Santa-Maria
Zannie May Shipley

Printed by
Swanson Printing

South Florida History Magazine is a journal of popular history published quarterly by the Historical Association of Southern Florida.

Receipt of *South Florida History Magazine* is a privilege of membership in the Historical Association, the Ft. Myers Historical Museum, the Collier County Museum, and the Key West Art & Historical Society.

The Historical Association of Southern Florida is a non-profit cultural, educational and humanistic institution dedicated to providing information about the history of south Florida and the Caribbean, and to the collection and preservation of material relating to that history. Association programs and publications are made possible by membership dues, gifts from private sources and grants from federal, state and local agencies.

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ressed to the Editor, *South Florida History Magazine*, Historical Association of Southern Florida, 101 W. Flagler Street, Miami, Florida 33130. All materials should be accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope.

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Editor's Notes

by Tim Schmand

The snow covering the streets in the student ghetto I resided in during my college days would have changed from virginal white to a sooty gray. Normally sane colleagues would be on the verge of becoming drooling maniacs, as they trudged to class bundled like Siberian peasants. Then, as if sent by the hand of the deity, posters would begin to appear at various student gathering places on campus: SPRING BREAK, FT. LAUDERDALE, FLA. In the upper Great Plains the cattle ranchers wait for the warm chinook winds to melt the snow on the ranges providing food for their cattle. I can assure you that the posters sent to lure us to Ft. Lauderdale had essentially the same effect. The posters demonstrated that with the right combination of transportation and funding, we could flee the frozen north, and, if only for a few days, be warm. When Paul George mentioned he had an article that explored the history of Spring Break in Ft. Lauderdale, how could I not be interested? To this day friends will come to visit and tell me that the last and perhaps only other time they visited South Florida was for Spring Break.

Speaking of Parrots

The Research Atlantica crew continues to be an excellent source for articles. This issue features an article about Parrot Jungle by R.A. member Teresa Lennox. It would be this editor's dream if Research Atlantica went statewide so that we would begin to see more articles from the Keys and the West Coast.

What we won't do in the name of research.

With this issue we fulfill a promise made back in the Spring 1990 *SFHM*; we are running the last article exploring folklife in the Keys. This article focuses on the folkways of the Key West Fantasy Fest. Museum staffer Remko Jansonius spent seven grueling days researching the festival, and prepared this article for the magazine. As with so many things, "it was a horrible job, but someone had to do it."

Tourists Redux

Tourism without question is the industry of South Florida. If it weren't for the impact of the dollars that flow through this segment of the economy, it is highly unlikely that Ft. Lauderdale would have pursued Spring Break, that the Parrot Jungle would continue to survive, or that the Key West Fantasy Fest would be undertaken. With that understanding the, Historical Museum of Southern Florida featured a special exhibition, *Tourists: Adventure in a Tropical Paradise*, from May 1, through September 30, 1990. *Tourists*, featured artifacts and photographs that documented the 100 plus years of Florida tourist experience. The images used in the exhibit proved so evocative of South Florida that we felt they would provide wonderful material for this issue's *Through the Lens*. We hope you agree.



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Where The Boys Were

by Dr. Paul S. George



This group of collegians visited Ft. Lauderdale's Spring Break in 1957, a year of relative calm.

A new category of tourist began arriving in Fort Lauderdale in the 1950s, with great consequences for the city. In postwar America, youth began to emerge from the shadows of family and "demand" a separate identity. Fueled (ironically) by monetary support from their families, thousands of college students now embarked annually on a springtime odyssey to sunny climes. Because many collegians had already visited or learned of Fort Lauderdale through its annual Aquatic Forum (a collegiate swim meet held each December since the mid 1930s), the city quickly became a favorite destination. City leaders decided to capitalize on this phenomenon.

In 1953, the Mayor's Hospitality Committee mailed special invitations to student councils at 500 colleges and universities in the eastern and midwestern United States. The institutional response was encouraging, as an estimated 10,000 collegians arrived in the spring of 1953. They brought trouble with them, however, causing the city to cringe at reports of "lewd sex and liquor parties," and incidents involving youths who "showered like ancient Romans under facilities provided for bathers." The worst moment came in 1953, when one collegian lost control of his automobile on Easter Sunday morning and plowed into a group of students returning from a beach party. Two youths died. This

tragic accident and other untoward incidents caused an outcry among some hoteliers and city officials over the presence of large numbers of students in Fort Lauderdale.

Chastened by this experience, Mayor C. Malcolm Carlisle addressed another welcoming letter in the following year to several hundred colleges and universities. While inviting students to visit Fort Lauderdale, the letter warned that they were expected to behave during their stay. Many hoteliers, however, fearful that their business would be hurt by the specter of student



After the 1960 screening of *Where the Boys Are* the number of students attending Spring Break skyrocketed, as demonstrated in this picture from 1964.

rowdiness, asked the city commission to ban collegians from Fort Lauderdale. In the meantime, the city organized an official reception committee, featuring a registration center that dispensed information on housing and recreational opportunities, and placed its police force, consisting of ninety officers, on alert. Eighteen thousand students appeared in Fort Lauderdale in the springtime of 1954. They represented nearly every college east of the Mississippi River. The size of this influx prompted *Holiday* magazine to dub Fort Lauderdale "the greatest college town in the country."

The number of student visitors continued to increase as the decade unfolded, causing further consternation on the part of officials and hoteliers. The city, however, was spared major problems until 1959, when Porkey's, a rollicking bar on A1A, invited patrons to drink unlimited quantities of beer for \$1.50 per person. When



This 1964 Spring Break photograph captures the exuberance of youth combined with good taste in hats.

Porkey's exhausted its supply of beer before the last customers were served, several thirsty youths vented their anger by trashing the bar's furnishings. The police quickly responded from a new beach substation and restored order.

Another observer of the growing springtime ritual was the national print media. In 1959, *Time Magazine* asked a coed why she came to Fort Lauderdale. "This is where the boys are," she replied. Her quote appeared in the newsweekly and later served as the inspiration for the title of a book and movie that led hundreds of thousands of youths to adopt Fort Lauderdale as their annual springtime venue.

The worldwide premiere of *Where the Boys Are* took place at the Gateway Theater on East Sunrise Boulevard in December 1960. Three months after this screening, 50,000 collegians had poured into Fort Lauderdale. Some brought trouble with them or found it upon arrival. Three nights of disturbances in March 1961 led to the arrest of 500 students. The trouble began when a large assemblage of students congregating in front of the Elbo Room, a popular bar near East Las Olas Boulevard and A1A, caused a monumental traffic jam. With assistance from the Florida Highway Patrol, Fort Lauderdale's police finally cleared the area.

Shortly afterwards, George T. Dalluge, a student at Mankato State Teachers College in Minnesota, shimied up a pole supporting a traffic light at the same intersection. Hanging by his knees from the light post, Dalluge led students in a beery rendition of "The Star Spangled Banner." Then, Dalluge demanded that the city permit students to imbibe alcoholic beverages in the streets, and set aside Jade Beach (north of Fort Lauderdale Beach) as an exclusive bathing area for collegiate visitors. The police finally apprehended and

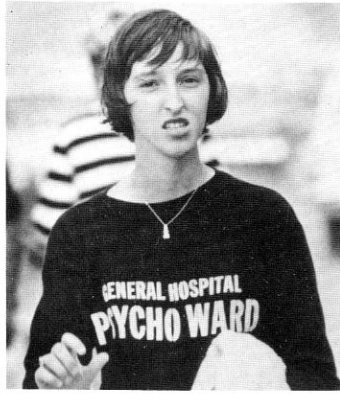


By 1962 Ft. Lauderdale officials began planning activities in an attempt to keep the students from getting out of control.

arrested Dalluge, who received a seventy day sentence for inciting a riot and resisting arrest. One account of the disturbance blamed it on the "unfavorable" ratio for male visitors who reportedly outnumbered women by a margin of ten to one. The remainder of spring break was relatively tranquil, as the city indulged its youthful visitors with block dances, a splash party in the Casino Pool, and a cookout on the beach.

In the months that followed, the Chamber of Commerce's "goodwill ambassadors" found many persons curious about Fort Lauderdale after viewing *Where The Boys Are*, and observing the intriguing spectacle of tens of thousands of students frolicking on its beaches. (*Where The Boys Are* even influenced another segment of the population. Many secretaries reportedly moved to Fort Lauderdale in the 1960s with expectations that it was indeed the city depicted in the movie!) In subsequent springs, large numbers of students continued to pour into Fort Lauderdale. At times, many collegians found themselves in trouble with the law. By the mid-1970s, the student activism that had dominated college campuses in prior years and had dampened the enthusiasm of many students for the frivolity of spring break had diminished significantly. Larger numbers of students

were again directing at least some of their energies toward more frivolous activities, and a spring vacation in Fort Lauderdale appealed to many of them. An estimated 200,000 collegians poured into Fort Lauderdale in 1976. Speaking perhaps for many, one coed explained her presence in Fort Lauderdale: "We've given up on changing the world. The kids tried that and it didn't work. All we ask out of life--at least on



One wonders where this person from Spring Break 1962 is today, and what she would pay for the negatives.



Spring Break, 1967.

our holiday--is to have a good time."

City officials again embraced their young guests with enthusiasm. In the early 1970s, Mayor Virginia Young helped the Greater Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce with its mass mailings of welcome letters to hundreds of colleges and universities. The message was simple: respect us and we will respect you. Mayor Young also visited the beach and talked with many visiting collegians. The day after Young took office as mayor in 1973, the city officials quickly recruited a cadre of visiting students to collect garbage. Young maintained that for many, the compensation for this work helped pay for their vacations.



In March of 1961 a large number of students gathered outside of the Elbo Room a popular bar on the corner of Las Olas and A1A. A riot ensued.

Colorful rituals joined the endless promenading, ogling, winking, whistling, flirting, and occasional mooning on A1A. By the 1980s, enterprising merchants had erected several bars and tents near the bathing area. Within these makeshift facilities, they hosted wet willies, wet T-shirts, and exotic kissing contests. Occasionally, student rowdiness caromed out of control. The police arrested 1,100 unruly students in 1982.

By the mid-1980s, the annual influx of springtime student visitors exceeded 300,000. They contributed more than \$120 million to the local economy. However, increasing complaints from hoteliers, merchants, and senior citizens prompted the commission to enact an "open container" ordinance, which prohibited persons from imbibing alcoholic beverages in automobiles, or in any other manner, along A1A. Within one month of the law's enactment, the police, operating with a significantly larger beach force, had arrested more than 1,500 alleged violators. The city commission also passed legislation providing for the erection in 1986 of a "vehicle

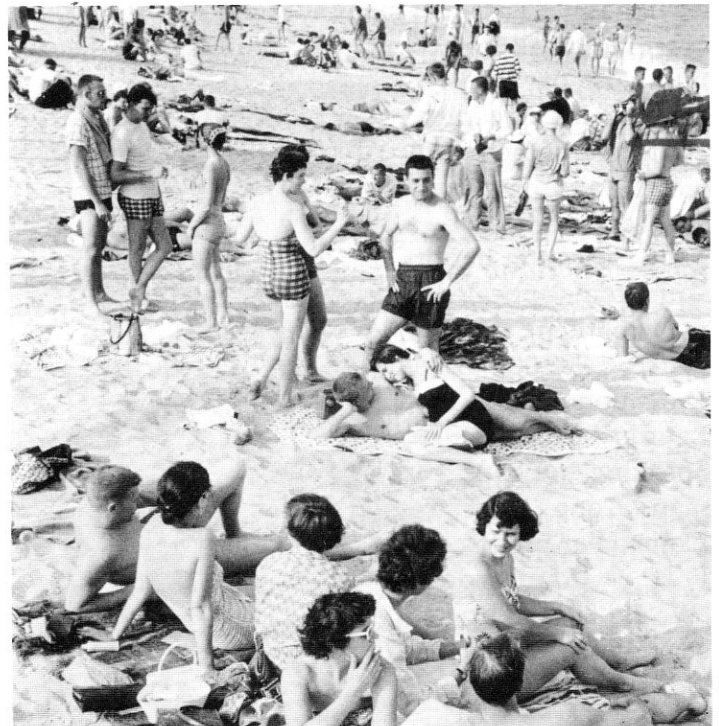


Students rioting during Spring Break 1967.

separator," a concrete fence or wall along the west side of A1A. The fence was topped by chain link. Stretching for more than one-half mile, it effectively separated beach crowds from the busy roadway. Even John Torregrossa, a popular disc jockey, fell victim to the new hardline policies of city officials. The city charged Torregrossa with promoting lewd and lascivious shows at the Button, a busy bar on the beach. Exacerbating tensions were the accidental deaths of two revelers in 1986 (one youth, who was inebriated at the time, plunged off of the sixteenth floor of Pier 66), along with several incidents of hotel vandalism.

Stung by the perceived hostility toward them, many collegians began to look elsewhere, especially toward Daytona Beach and several islands in the Caribbean, as new venues for their springtime pilgrimages. The number of collegiate visitors dropped from 350,000 in 1985 to 20,000 in 1989. Business fell accordingly. Penrod's, a popular beach bistro, saw its annual earnings plummet from \$1.5 million in fiscal year 1984-1985 to \$150,000 for the same period three years later. It closed in the late 1980s. The city had succeeded in ridding itself of the unwanted image of a party town. In 1990, Dick Weaver, president of the Greater Fort Lauderdale Convention & Visitors Bureau, succinctly defined the new tourist strategy: "We're looking at the whole year instead of six weeks." Weaver's agency was marketing Fort Lauderdale as a vacation mecca to

families and conventioners in the United States and abroad. In a curious twist to the traditional spring influx, the city in May 1990 hosted "Spring Break" for thousands of senior citizens who enjoyed concerts, lectures, seminars, and even gambling aboard boats located outside of the three mile limit.



A quiet afternoon during Spring Break 1957.

Parrot Jungle: Miami's Postcard Perfect Attraction

by Teresa B. Lenox

Since the 1920s motorists could find tourist attractions such as alligator farms and sponge-o-ramas sprinkled along the major roadways in Florida. Usually family owned businesses, these eccentric attractions beckoned tourists to stop and view their oddities. Once Interstate 95 was completed and traffic rerouted most of these unusual attractions died. However, that was not the case with Parrot Jungle, one of Miami's premiere tourist attractions. Located a few miles south of Miami, Parrot Jungle has been attracting large numbers of visitors since it opened its gates in 1936. The reason for its success was the vision and care of its founder Francis Scherr and his family.

Francis Scherr, known to friends and family as Franz, immigrated to the United States from Austria in 1911.



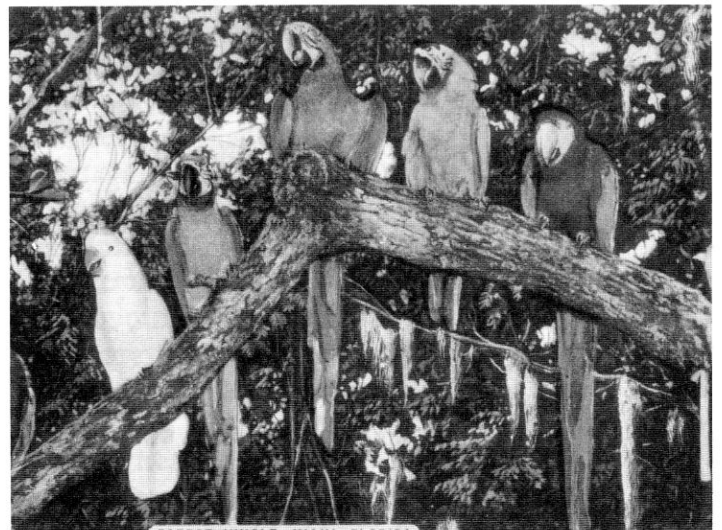
Upon his arrival, Franz began to work his way west, earning a living as a carpenter. After enjoying the scenic beauty of America's western states Franz settled in Chicago where he married Louise and began a brief but very successful career in construction. Louise and Franz had five children: Eugene, Francis, Constance and twins Jerome and Eileen. During South Florida's real estate boom of the mid-1920s Franz moved his family to Homestead, Florida. During the depression of the late 1920s and 30s Franz and his family survived by raising vegetables and fruits on the land they owned. Later, Franz and Louise opened a feed and supply store where they displayed a few parakeets and lovebirds.

Franz had always enjoyed the outdoors and all of nature's riches. Frequently he could be found wander-



ing through South Dade's hammock land enjoying and learning about the natural vegetation. Franz often visited his friend Joe Dumond, owner of Monkey Jungle, always making suggestions as to how Joe could improve his tourist attraction. On one of these visits Joe got fed up and told Franz, "go start your own jungle."

The idea took hold. Franz had noticed how responsive and intelligent the birds were in his feed store and began to plan a tourist attraction where birds could fly free in a natural jungle area. Family and friends had little encouragement for Franz. Everyone thought the birds would just fly away. But Franz was determined to make his dream a reality. With his last twenty-five dollars Franz leased twenty acres of hammock land off





Red Road which previously had been home to a nudist colony.

Franz moved to his jungle and began to prepare for its opening while his family remained in Homestead. Among the first things Franz did was blaze a trail through the hammock taking care to leave the natural vegetation. He began an intense study of sub-tropical

flora learning everything he could about the subject. In addition, he built a pine log structure with a palmetto thatched roof as an entrance building and gift shop. He then began to stock the jungle with the birds he had displayed in the feed store. He also purchased some pheasants and peacocks and ordered twenty-eight parrots.



Billed as the "Only One in the World" Parrot Jungle opened its gates on Sunday, December 20, 1936. One-hundred visi-

tors paid twenty-five cents for admission into the jungle. Franz guided the visitors through, explaining the natural vegetation while they observed the squawking birds. From the start the attraction was a success. Franz lived in the loft above the entrance until 1939 when he built a house on Red Road and moved his family from Homestead.

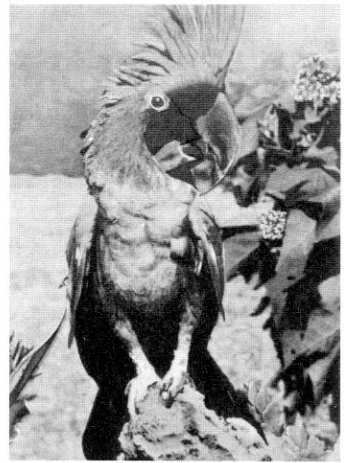
With the first profits Franz bought more birds and began to put into effect his idea of allowing the birds to fly free. At first Franz clipped their wings to make sure



they would be present when the first visitors arrived. By the time their wings grew out the birds began to think of the jungle as their home. Though some of the macaws might take an overnight hiatus they always returned by morning.

Eventually, the Scherrs purchased the twenty acres of hammock land for \$5,000. Franz began to add more

trails, birds, and rustic oolitic limestone structures that blended with the natural feeling evoked by the jungle. In 1946, after a hurricane damaged the roof of the entrance building, a tile roof replaced the thatch and the exterior was faced with limestone. The latter years of the 1940s was a period of growth and expansion for Parrot Jungle. Between 1946



and 1948 oolitic limestone structures were built along the original pathways. The Duck Pond, a small man-made pond full of cranes, spoon bills, swans and ducks, was added in 1946. Another addition in 1948 was Flamingo Lake, where visitors can overlook a beautiful landscaped lake filled with flamingoes. Between 1948 and 1949 two garden cupolas constructed of oolitic

limestone were built around the lake. Franz worked with architect Tony Sherman to plan the new entrance,



which was completed in 1954. The Parrot Bowl amphitheatre opened in 1968. All of the additions were conceived and planned by Franz Scherr.

In the Parrot Bowl visitors are entertained by macaws and cockatoos riding bicycles across a tightwire, chariot races, and a variety of other acts that show off the birds' intelligence. Other birds prefer to sit in the treetops and talk to the tourists.

Today, approximately 1,100 exotic birds call Parrot Jungle home. All of the birds have names. The naming

process is difficult since the sex of a bird can not be determined until they mate. Over the years this has caused confusion - Maxine was originally Mac and Harry was Harriet. Most Macaws are monogamous after a baby macaw is hatched, however, this is not always the case. Freckles, a donation to the jungle by a Miami Beach Hotel, arrived and began





Macaws
in the
Parrot
Jungle,
South
Miami,
Florida

flirting outrageously with Romeo, a scarlet macaw considered to be the biggest and toughest in the jungle. Juliet, Romeo's mate, became indignant and began scrapping with Freckles whenever she came around. One day Romeo flew off with Freckles and Juliet found solace with Ike.

In addition to the magnificence of the birds, the gardens in Parrot Jungle serve as a beautiful background. In 1941, V. H. Andrews wrote in the *American Eagle*, "If there were not a bird on the premises, it would still be worth a visit from the nature lover, as it is one of the wildest spots that I have seen in all South Florida. Forested with a dense jungle of native live oak, cypress, wild fig, cocoplum and other wild growth, a sluggish little tidewater stream winds tortuously through the tract. Gnarled forest trees assume odd and grotesque shapes. The forest stillness is broken only by the shrill cries of gay-plumaged birds that flit here and there through the tree-tops." The gardens have grown and changed since Andrews wrote that passage. Still natural and beautiful, the Scherr family went to great expense adding exotic and rare plants to the landscape. The hurricanes of 1946 and 1965 devastated the jungle, but the Scherrs replanted, and today the jungle is aglow with magnificent color and natural beauty.

Since its opening in 1936 over 12,000,000 people have passed through the gates of Parrot Jungle. Many

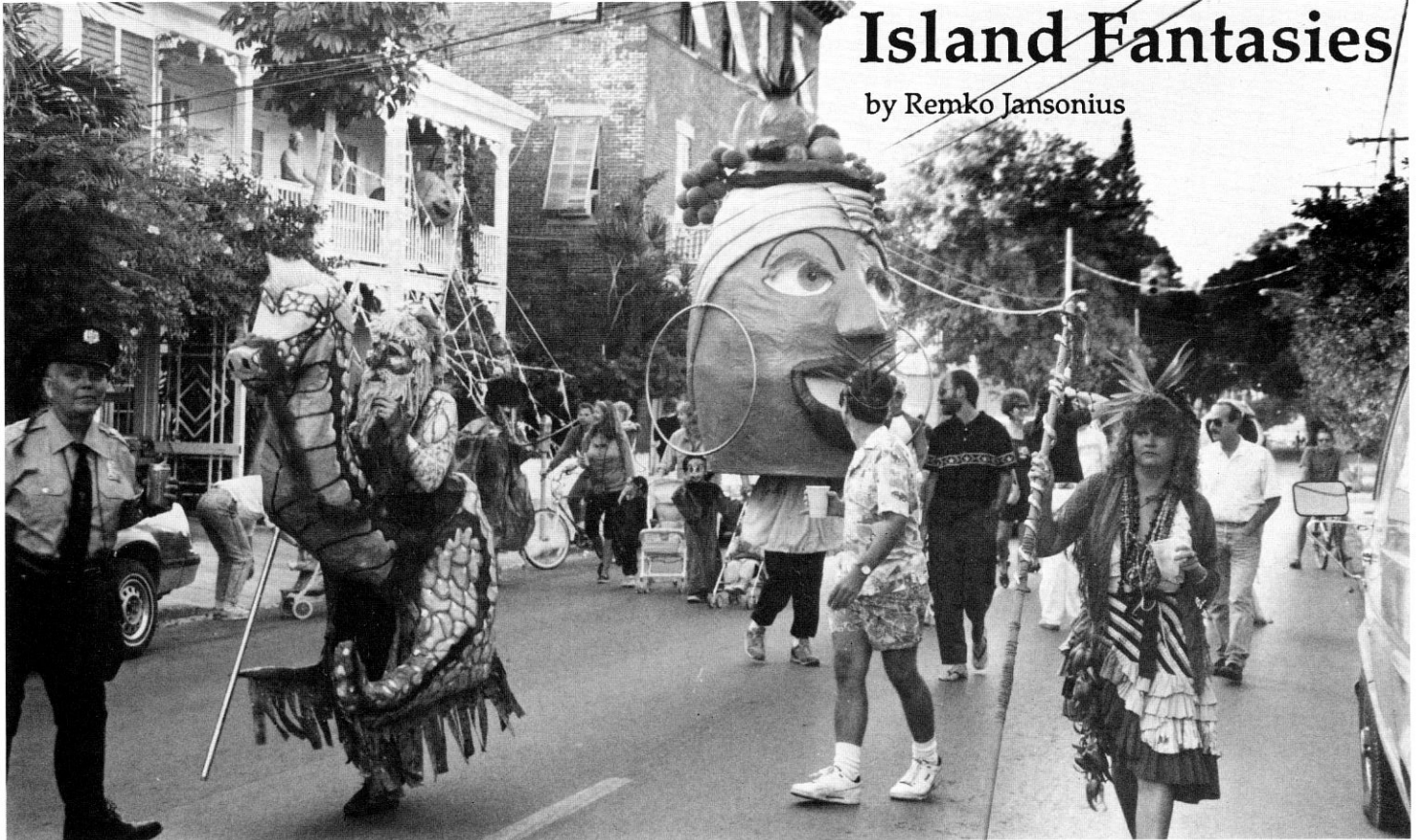
celebrities and government officials have visited there. Winston Churchill visited in 1946 when the rest of Miami was attending the yearly opening of Hialeah Race Track. He told Franz, "I have been all over the world and I have never seen anything like this." Prime Minister Churchill was so taken with the place and Franz Scherr he entrusted him with the care of his pet turkey hen, Winnie.

After Franz Scherr's death in 1973, his son Jerome took over management. For fifty-two years the Scherr family was involved in the business and took great care in its growth and evolution. In 1988, the Scherr family sold Parrot Jungle to businessmen and agriculturists Richard Schubot and Bern Levine, DVM. The name was changed to Parrot Jungle and Gardens. Even after the advent of the larger attractions such as Disney World and Busch Gardens, Parrot Jungle continues to attract visitors from all over the world. Parrot Jungle and Gardens stands as a monument to Franz Scherr and his family. Franz had a dream and the ability to turn a whimsical fantasy into reality. South Floridians who have not yet visited Parrot Jungle and Gardens should take the time.

Parrot Jungle and Gardens, located at 11000 SW 57 Avenue in Miami, is open everyday from 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. For further information dial 305/666-7834.

Island Fantasies

by Remko Jansonius



Tim Kinney dressed as King Neptune marching in the Twilight Fantasy Parade.

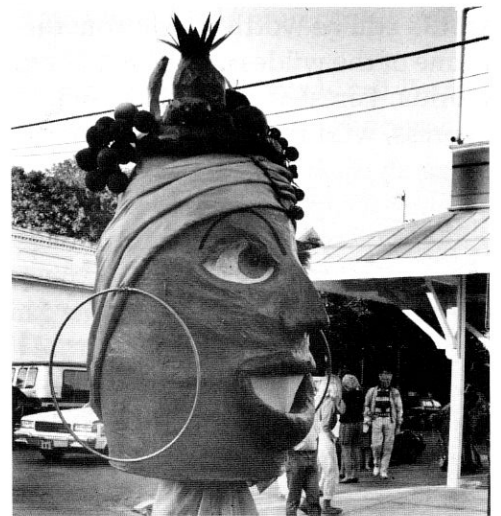
This past October, Key West was the setting for another Fantasy Fest. In 12 years this annual festival has grown from a two-day Halloween event to a ten-day extravaganza which some compare to Mardi Gras in New Orleans or Carnival in Rio.

Some 50,000 people attended the Saturday night closing parade on Key West's Duval Street. Some were merely spectators, while others participated in creations ranging from typical Halloween costumes to outfits created along the lines of this year's Fantasy Fest theme, "Caribbean Fantasies."

Originally, the Key West Business Guild initiated Fantasy Fest to attract tourists during the time when the influx of tourist dollars is normally low: after the summer and before the peak of the Christmas season. They have succeeded. By the end of the festival most of Key West's beds are booked and Fantasy Fest time has become the busiest tourist season next to Christmas. For an island as small as Key West, Fantasy Fest is a major happening.

It all begins with the Goombay Street Festival - a three-day event featuring Caribbean food and music in Bahama Village, Key West's Bahamian neighborhood. A major attraction during the Goombay Festival is the Royal Bahamas Police Band, which travels from Nassau for the festival.

During the week that follows, many different events take place, including the Fantasy Fest King and Queen Coronation Ball (a fund raiser for a community AIDS care service), mask maker workshops, the Masked Madness and Headdress Ball, a pet masquerade and parade, and many more parties and parades throughout the island. On Thursday night, the Pretenders in Paradise compete for best costume at the Pier House. The show takes place on a stage at the beach, and is accompanied by a sound and light show. It is a matter of great prestige to participate in the Pretenders in Paradise contest, and the winner and runners up are given extensive coverage by news-



An oversized Carmen Miranda, one of many Caribbean Fantasies explored during this year's Fantasy Fest.

paper and local TV.

The most popular event of Fantasy Fest is the Saturday night Twilight Fantasy Parade. Here, it all comes together: huge floats roll through the streets, bands parade with hordes of dancing folks behind them, small groups and individual paraders follow in between, and of course, the streets are lined with spectators. Some of these participants have already paraded or partied elsewhere during the week; others have waited until this last night to show off their creations. But on this night everyone appears for the final parade.

The outfits of some paraders tend to be rather daring, with an emphasis on nudity or sexual symbolism. During a previous year the theme of Fantasy Fest was "Fantasy and Flesh," and apparently there was a lot of both, as some parents now prefer that their children not watch this final parade. However, there is a parade and a day of activities organized specially for children.

Obviously, something had to be going on behind the scenes in Key West prior to all these costume parties and parades. Many stores sold costumes and masks, and many booths along Duval Street offered body-painting on the day of the final parade. But the best



Michael Stark, mask maker and Southern Baptist Minister, at work during Key West's Fantasy Fest.

costumes were home-made, reflecting the efforts of many people busy with sewing machines, paper mache, chicken wire, and paint.

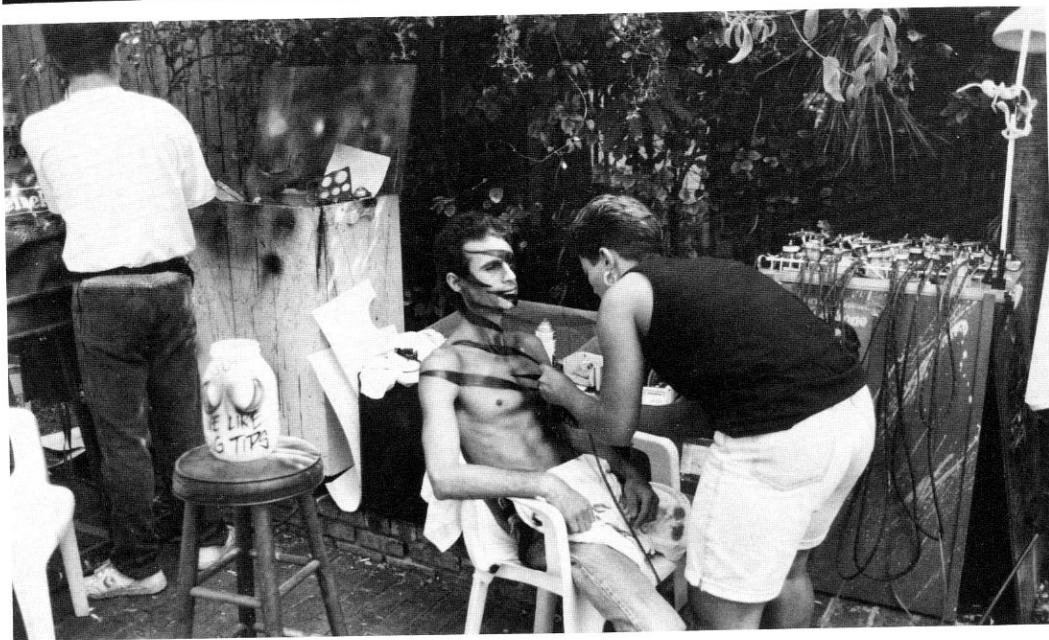
Tim Kinney converted most of the living room of his little conch house into a workshop. His vision for this year's Fantasy Fest theme was King Neptune riding a large seahorse, accompanied by a small tropical fish. While he carried the King's legs and the sea horse's head, his own legs provided the sea horse's lower body, and his upper body the King's upper body (a trick which other two bodied costumes displayed). A twelve year old boy dressed up as the fish, which darted around him. Tim took pride in the fact that he constructed the entire costume himself, mostly out of

inexpensive household materials. Having come from Pennsylvania to Key West after college almost three years ago, this was only Tim's second Fantasy Fest parade. According to him, Fantasy Fest and other costume parties and parades in Key West provide the perfect excuse for never having to grow up.

The story of Emelia Fernandez and her *comparsa* group is unique. Born in Cuba in 1935, Emelia came to Key West when she was 24 and married a third gen-



Fantasy Fest costumes range from the ridiculous to the sublime.



Body painter at work along Duval Street.

eration Cuban American. She is now known as the "Cuban Coffee Queen" and runs a small cantina with the same name on a Duval side street. Some time ago she came up with the idea of starting a comparsa group. Traditionally, a comparsa group consists of as many as 50 women and men dancing to the beat of a group of percussionists. The comparsa itself is basically a four-step dance, embellished with additional steps initiated by the leading couple of the group.

Until sometime in the 1970s there was another Key West comparsa group, which performed at Mallory Square when cruise ships arrived or at special events. Danny Acosta was one of the leaders of this comparsa group. Born in Tampa in 1934 to Cuban parents, he started dancing at age 11; he and his sister became the leading couple of a comparsa group, and some time after the family had moved to Key West, Danny became one of the musicians in the Key West comparsa group. Through the years, however, most of the members got married or left Key West. No new blood came into the group and it ceased to exist.

It was Emelia's idea to revive Key West's lost comparsa tradition. Until recently, however, she was unable to find sufficient support. This year she assembled a group of 18 people, including herself. Most members of the group are women, ranging from ten to 28 years old. Her daughter Irene, who had been a comparsa dancer in the past, is also a member. Most of these dancers are Key West natives, some Cuban American, others Hispanic, African American and Dominican.

When not making Cuban coffee or Cuban sandwiches during the week prior to the parade, Emelia sat in her cantina behind a sewing machine making the colorful costumes for all the dancers. Others helped her

convert a small truck into a palm-hut float. At the parade itself, Danny Acosta and three other conga players sat on the float and accompanied Emelia and her dancers on the drums.

Emelia plans to perform with her group, called the "Cayo Hueso Conga Line," at various events, hoping to preserve Key West's comparsa tradition. The group certainly was a success in the parade. For now, it seems that a Key West tradition has been saved from extinction.

A large component of the paraders and partiers at Fantasy Fest is gay, - as much as 40% according to the estimate of Ann Dickinson, one of the organizers. (It is said that the gay population accounts for 25% of the total in Key West.) Many paraders appear as female impersonators, or as the jargon goes, "in drag."

Alexandre is a French Canadian designer and artist who has lived in Key West for about three years. Dressed as a woman he would not describe himself as "in drag," but rather as a female impersonator. The former, according to Alexandre, presents the woman as caricature, with exaggerated features of the female anatomy accompanied by exaggerated feminine gestures and behaviour. Such examples were prevalent at the parade, always evoking a good laugh among spectators. As a female impersonator, Alexandre presents his impression of what women are, or are supposed to be: ultimately feminine. He realizes that some feminists may not be very pleased with his ideas. On the night of the parade, he appeared in his own creation: a pink 1950s floor length gown, festooned with pearls and black feathers, wearing a long platinum blond wig. He did indeed present an original idea of a man dressed up as a woman, different from that of most cross-dressers in the parade.

Dick and Kathleen Moody, an artist and accountant respectively, lived in Key West for about two years, but they have been coming to Fantasy Fest for five years. This year they and a group of friends formed a "krew" (the Caribbean carnival term for a parade team or crew) to participate in the parade with a float. On the back of a truck they built a large bird cage containing a man dressed up as a typical tourist; on top they constructed a huge egg with the head of a parrot popping



Alexandre preparing his costume.

out; about 16 persons dressed up as parrots were darting around the float, throwing Mardi Gras beads to the spectators.

Before coming to Key West the Moodys had been living in New Orleans for five years and had seen the Mardi Gras many times. The use of beads, both as decoration and to throw into the crowd, and the word "krewe" are clearly elements brought over from New Orleans and other locations with established carnival traditions. The essence of Fantasy Fest and Mardi Gras is in one way the same: to dress up, be somebody else, and take on someone else's character, while nobody really cares. As for the actual parade, however, there is a big difference between Fantasy Fest and other carnivals, according to Dick Moody. In Key West the parade, and Fantasy Fest in general, is business oriented: each business has its own float. In New Orleans, however, "krewe" membership is a much more traditional affair; groups of paraders and floats, or even whole parades, are organized and set up by neighborhoods and ethnic groups, or in some cases by occupational groups.

According to Michael Stark, who is familiar with both Mardi Gras and Fantasy Fest, the festivals are quite different. Mardi Gras has a long history and tradition based upon Catholicism; it has grown to be a tourist attraction, but in the first instance it is part of a religious holiday. Fantasy Fest is a recent invention with the original purpose of attracting tourists and creating business. As far as it is based on any tradition at all, that would be Halloween; but it may well become a local tradition of its own.

Michael Stark is a well known character in Key West. For 10 years he has been coming to the island for several weeks during the Fantasy Fest period to make and sell

masks. His creations are easily recognizable in the street: they are quite elaborate, utilizing many different sorts of material, ranging from glass diadems and feathers to animal bones and alligator skulls. During his stay in Key West, Michael operates out of a small workshop in Fastbuck Freddie's, a large department store on Duval Street. Some of his clients buy whatever is on display, while others enjoy watching him compose his custom-made creations which later sell for \$300 to as much as \$700.

In New Orleans, his home for the last 30 years, Michael is a member of the New Orleans Mask Makers Guild. During occasions such as Fantasy Fest, he works with apprentices. In addition to his professional mask making, Michael is a Southern Baptist preacher. However he hasn't been preaching much due to a severe stroke he suffered about a year ago.

At first instance this might seem an unlikely combination - preaching the gospel and making masks. However, in many different cultures masks have a strong religious connotation; they are used during religious ceremonies and create a reality which is different from the everyday reality - a divine reality. They enhance the participants' and spectators' capability to picture or even experience the divine. Michael Stark's perception is that people need magic in their lives in order to be able to live daily lives which are sometimes boring or miserable. His job as a mask maker is to find that magic, and to create a medium for people to bring out the magic which normally remains hidden. Thus, it is possible to understand the compatibility of the occupations. The preacher offers the audience a reality which is different from the everyday reality. A good preacher is capable of bringing out that "something," that magic in people, so they can experience life in a divine way.

(Continued on page 28.)



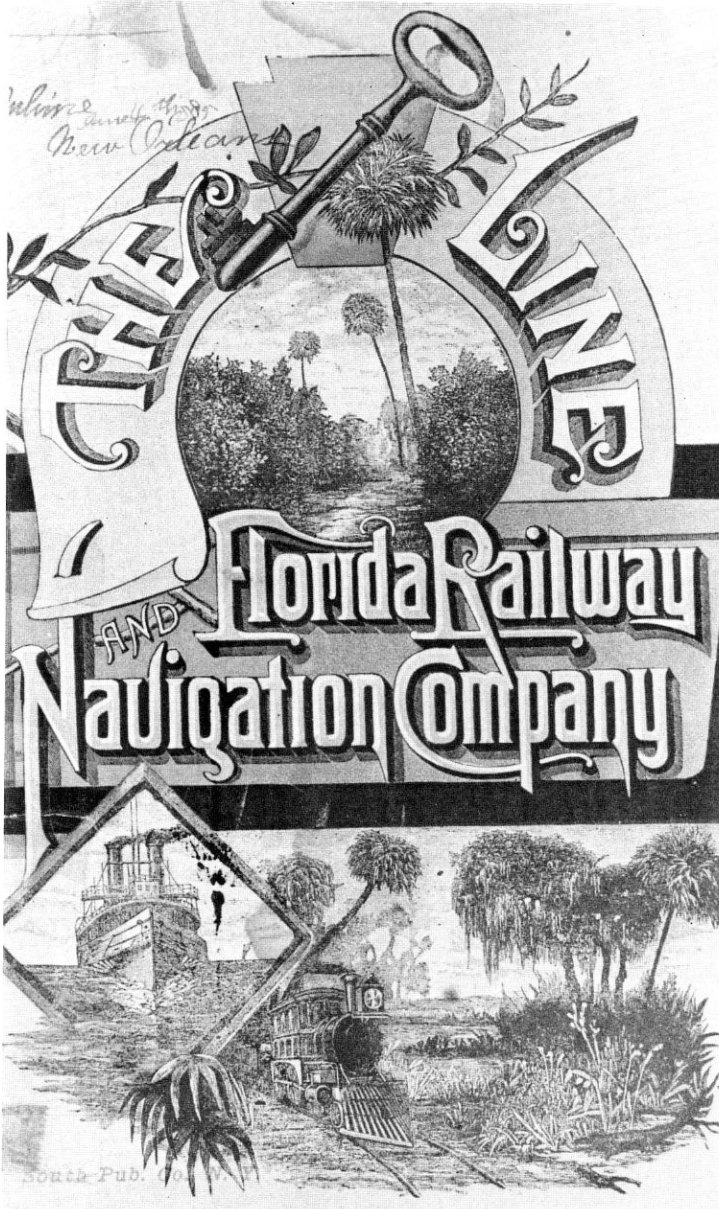
Alexandre posing for the camera.

Through the Lens

Tourists: Adventures in a Tropical Paradise 1840 -1990, was featured in the Historical Museum's Special Exhibition Gallery from May 18 through July 29, 1990. Guest Curator Paul George focused on the importance of tourism, not only as the state's 'premier industry,' but it's importance in the history of Florida's transportation infrastructure. "... Henry Flagler and Henry Plant built extensive tourist "systems" along both coasts of Florida featuring railroads, steamships and hotels." Flagler and Plant's systems did more than encourage tourists to visit, they opened up vast areas of the state to development on a grand scale, that prior to their intervention had been inaccessible. Perhaps, Florida is the state that tourism built.



Tourists in the early 1880s traveled by steamboat through northeast Florida's rivers. This boat is pictured on the Oklawaha River, ca. 1884.



Early Florida tourists were enticed by railroad and steamship company flyers.

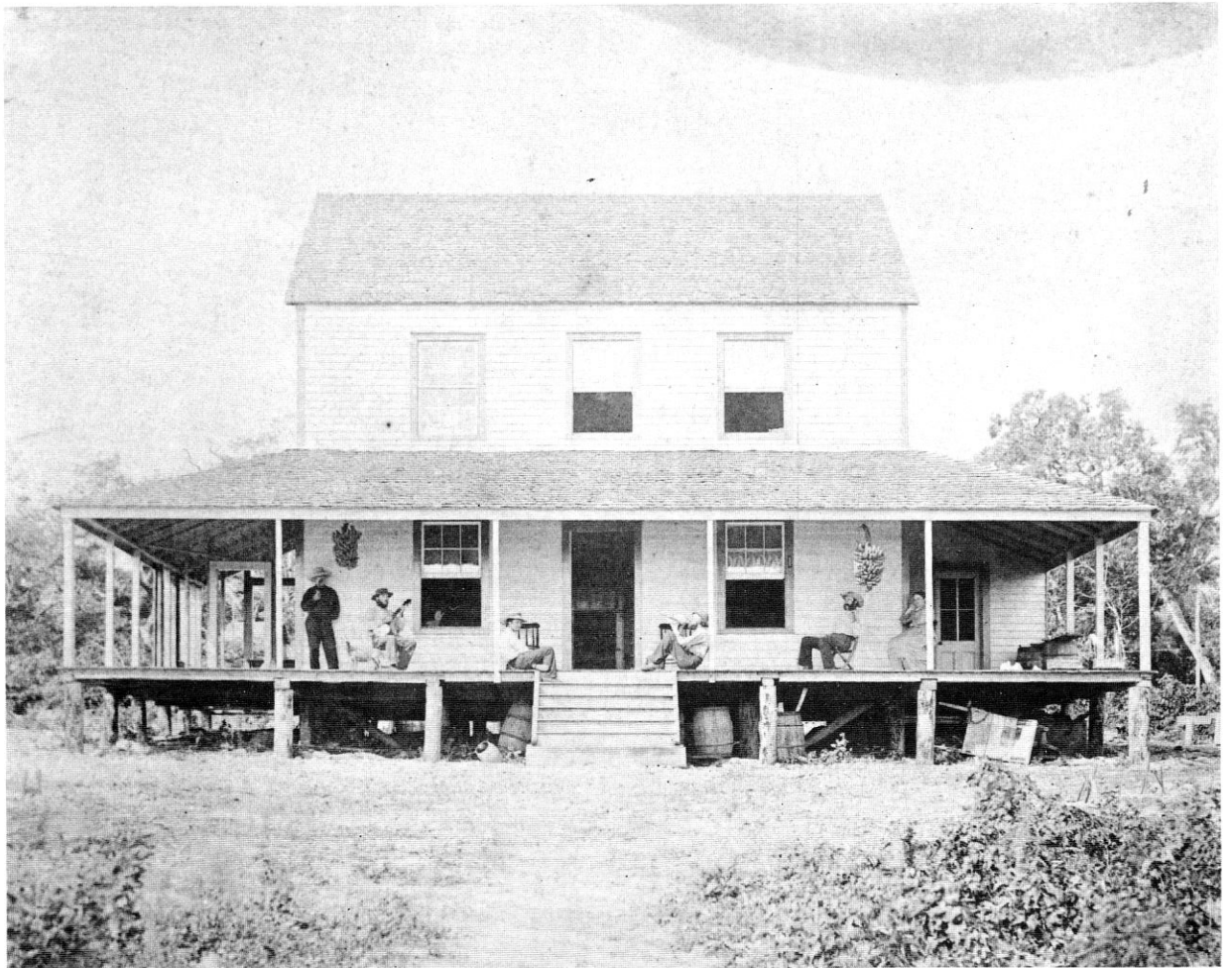


A typical early souvenir, a bottle of Florida water.



Dressed in their play togs, these tourists posed for the camera in Coconut Grove.

The Peacock Inn, Coconut Grove.



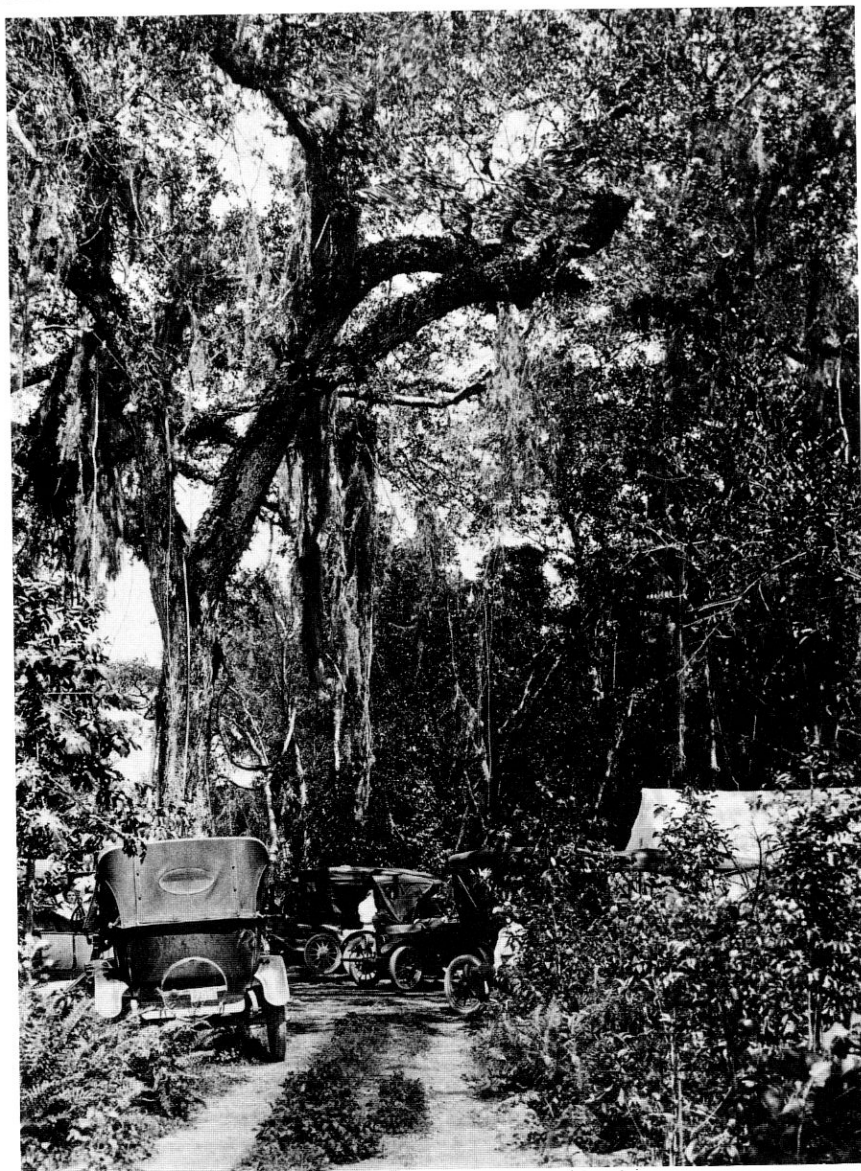
Early promoters knew the benefit of bathing beauties in their advertising schemes.



Once tourists began arriving in greater numbers, attractions were developed for their entertainment.



Early visitors who traveled by automobile were often called "tin-can tourists."



This picture is of Royal Palm State Park, which was acquired by the federal government, enlarged, and renamed Everglades National Park.

A visitor to South Dade's Coral Castle poses atop one of Edward Leedskalnin's sculptures.



Ollie Trout's Trailer Park provided a live band and dancing for the guests.



A Pan American Clipper Ship taking on passengers at Dinner Key .



The Florida East-coast Railway Terminal in downtown Miami.



An afternoon of fishing and a photograph capturing the triumph.



What Would It Cost Today?

by Donald C. Gaby

Under the same title as above, the author provided a crude technique for converting costs in earlier years to 1990 dollars, published in the Spring 1989 issue of *SFHM* and with correction to the graph in the Summer 1989 issue. That technique was favorably received by many, including some historians, but the need to enter the graph for particular values made it inconvenient to use.

Accordingly the author has calculated the appropriate factors for every year from 1900 to 1990 and provided those in a table quite easy to use. To convert costs from any earlier year to 1990 dollars, simply multiply the cost by the appropriate factor for that year from the table. (Rounded values are included for simplicity). For example, an item costing \$1.20 in 1915 would cost $\$1.20 \times 20.9 = \25.08 in 1990. Put another way, an item in 1915 would cost about 21 times as much today.

The technique is further improved by including new conversion factors for the last half of the 19th century using information provided by Kevin Phillips.¹ Those factors reflect that there was essentially no change in the value of the dollar from 1850 to 1892, the period of inflation brought by the Civil War, and the deflationary final three decades.

1. Phillips, Kevin, *The Politics of Rich and Poor - Wealth and the American Electorate in the Reagan Aftermath*, p. 159, 1990, Random House, New York.

FACTORS FOR DETERMINING EQUIVALENT COSTS IN 1990 DOLLARS

1900 = 27.4 = 27	1946 = 10.1 = 10	1900-01 = 27
1901 = 26.9 = 27	1947 = 9.3 = 9	1902-03 = 26
1902 = 26.4 = 26	1948 = 8.5 = 8	1904-06 = 25
1903 = 26.0 = 26	1949 = 7.7 = 8	1907-08 = 24
1904 = 25.5 = 25	1950 = 6.9 = 7	1909-10 = 23
1905 = 25.0 = 25	1951 = 6.7 = 7	1911-13 = 22
1906 = 24.5 = 25	1952 = 6.4 = 6	1914-16 = 21
1907 = 24.0 = 24	1953 = 6.2 = 6	1917-19 = 20
1908 = 23.6 = 24	1954 = 5.9 = 6	1920-23 = 19
1909 = 23.1 = 23	1955 = 5.7 = 6	1924-27 = 18
1910 = 22.6 = 23	1956 = 5.4 = 5	1928-32 = 17
1911 = 22.3 = 22	1957 = 5.2 = 5	1933-36 = 16
1912 = 21.9 = 22	1958 = 4.9 = 5	1937-40 = 15
1913 = 21.6 = 22	1959 = 4.7 = 5	1941 = 14
1914 = 21.2 = 21	1960 = 4.4 = 4	1942 = 13
1915 = 20.9 = 21	1961 = 4.2 = 4	1943-44 = 12
1916 = 20.6 = 21	1962 = 4.1 = 4	1945 = 11
1917 = 20.2 = 20	1963 = 3.9 = 4	1946 = 10
1918 = 19.9 = 20	1964 = 3.7 = 4	1947 = 9
1919 = 19.5 = 20	1965 = 3.6 = 4	1948-49 = 8
1920 = 19.2 = 19	1966 = 3.4 = 3	1950-51 = 7
1921 = 19.0 = 19	1967 = 3.2 = 3	1952-55 = 6
1922 = 18.8 = 19	1968 = 3.0 = 3	1956-59 = 5
1923 = 18.5 = 19	1969 = 2.9 = 3	1960-65 = 4
1924 = 18.3 = 18	1970 = 2.7 = 3	1966-71 = 3
1925 = 18.1 = 18	1971 = 2.6 = 3	1972-77 = 2
1926 = 17.9 = 18	1972 = 2.5 = 2	1978-85 = 1.5
1927 = 17.7 = 18	1973 = 2.3 = 2	1986-90 = 1
1928 = 17.4 = 17	1974 = 2.2 = 2	
1929 = 17.2 = 17	1975 = 2.1 = 2	
1930 = 17.0 = 17	1976 = 2.0 = 2	
1931 = 16.8 = 17	1977 = 1.9 = 2	Estimated factors for the late 19th century. ¹
1932 = 16.6 = 17	1978 = 1.7 = 1.5	
1933 = 16.3 = 16	1979 = 1.6 = 1.5	
1934 = 16.1 = 16	1980 = 1.5 = 1.5	
1935 = 15.9 = 16	1981 = 1.5 = 1.5	1890 = 27
1936 = 15.7 = 16	1982 = 1.4 = 1.5	1880 = 25
1937 = 15.5 = 15	1983 = 1.4 = 1.5	1870 = 23
1938 = 15.2 = 15	1984 = 1.3 = 1.5	1860 = 25
1939 = 15.0 = 15	1985 = 1.3 = 1.5	1850 = 27
1940 = 14.8 = 15	1986 = 1.2 = 1	
1941 = 14.0 = 14	1987 = 1.2 = 1	
1942 = 13.2 = 13	1988 = 1.1 = 1	
1943 = 12.4 = 12	1989 = 1.1 = 1	
1944 = 11.6 = 12	1990 = 1.0 = 1	
1945 = 10.9 = 11		



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(Continued from page 15.)

Each mask maker has his or her own reasons for making and for wearing masks. For some it may be a more conscious process than for others. Probably only a few consciously realize a link between masks and the divine. But all experience the alteration of reality and the "magic" as described by Michael. In fact, masks not only bring out the magic and give people an opportunity to experience the divine; looking at it from a more secular point of view, it also creates an opportunity for an overall relaxation of the restrictions of everyday life. These certainly are reasons why carnival is so popular.

The above descriptions give an idea of some of the people who participated in Fantasy Fest. However, they don't fully represent all of the creative industriousness that must have occupied many on the island for weeks, or the colorful and festive paraders and floats at the Twilight Fantasy Parade itself.

Fantasy Fest may never be anything in size like New Orleans's Mardi Gras or Rio's Carnival; how could it be on an island as small as Key West? It will never have the



Kathleen and Dick Moody with part of their parade float.

tradition that precedes either of those carnivals. But Fantasy Fest is still a great festival, attracting participants and spectators from everywhere and bringing out a creative and magic spirit. Fantasy Fest is well on its way to becoming its own tradition.

WTMI Gets Into Some Rowdy Bars

Flauti
Oboli
Clarinetti In [A La
Fagotti
Corni In [A La
Trombe In [D Re
Timpani In [A E La Mi
Violino I
Violino II
Viola
Violoncello
Contrabbasso

Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
Fg.
Cor.
Tr.
Timp.
Vi. I
Vi. II
Via.
Vic.
Cb.

Allegro con brio (♩ = 72)

These bars open the last movement of Beethoven's Seventh Symphony. Aaron Copland called it "the apotheosis of the dance." We don't seriously suggest you can dance to it. But the way it rollicks along, you may not be able to sit still to it. WTMI broadcasts this rowdy music in a variety of interpretations. One month it may be Mr. Ormandy's; at other times those of Bernstein, Boult, von Karajan, Monteux, Reiner, Steinberg, Stokowski or Toscanini.

(PSSST! There are some bars in Richard Strauss' *Salome* we wouldn't dare print anywhere.)

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