April 2, 2025

TO: Anna Pernas, Director, Coral Gables Historical Resources and Cultural Resources Department Kara Kautz, Asst. Preservation Officer, Coral Gables HRCA Department Joanne Meagher, Chairperson, Coral Gables Merrick House Governing Board

FROM: Gay Bondurant, Docent Coordinator, Coral Gables Merrick House

RE: MARCH 2025 Coral Gables Merrick House Activity Summary

Well, it's been a long and busy month of March at the House. We had five weekends, a special event, two special tours, vandalism at the pond, and conducted 28 regular tours where the average is 16 per month.

The Ides of March (March 15, 2025) saw the House sporting vintage items of all kinds for sale on the lawn and porch creating the **Coral Market**. The weather was lovely. According to all reports, the vendors and the shoppers were happy. The organizer, **Ms. Carolina Castro** proprietor of the **Potted Palm,** took much of the burden away from our Organizer-in-Chief, Joanne Meagher, by contacting and bringing in the vendors. Rumor has it that we may try to do this again later this year. The House was open for full tours and admission was charged. We welcomed 32 visitors and collected $151 for the one day.

Expedition South Florida, one of our regular sources of visitors, escorted in another small group of potential hospitality workers on **March 4th** to be introduced to the House as a place of interest which guests may be encouraged to visit.

A class of students from **FIU** was brought by their instructor and one other adult (18 students and 2 adults) to visit the House on **March 25th**. Ms. Meagher and I provided tours for the group which we split into two smaller groups. We were told by the instructor that the group would be spending a month in Spain and would be interested in learning about George Merrick's connection with said country. Ms. Meagher, having recently been there, enthusiastically shared some of her experiences

In the late afternoon of **Saturday March 22, 2025,** there occurred an **episode of vandalism** at the **fishpond**. A female person (photo taken on security camera) apparently decided that she had consumed enough of her salad for the evening and thought it would be appropriate to toss the remainder of it along with a partially eaten fried chicken drumstick and a condom into the pond in the grotto. This was discovered by Ms. Meagher when she arrived for her docent shift at about 12:45pm on **Sunday March 23rd.** She immediately set to work with a pool skimmer and other implements to clean the water of edibles, the scum from the salad dressing which now covered the surface of the water, and various and sundry other items. A bit later Ms. Kautz and spouse arrived to lend a hand in ameliorating the situation. *Pond Doctor* was alerted. On **Monday** the situation was much improved.

TALLIES AND RECEIPTS

VISITORS=148: 52 Adults, 46 Srs, 1 Ml, 33 Stn +12, 6 Stn +6, 4 Chn-6, Merch=1bk Lndsps of CG, 3=Pty Bk, 1 CRDL, 1=Postr, Tips=$65. **TOTAL= $782.00.**

Submitted by: Gay Bondurant Docent Coord. Coral Gables Merrick House