

February 28, 2025

TO: Anna Pernas, Director, Coral Gables Historical Resources & Cultural Arts 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: February 2025 Coral Gables Merrick House Activity Summary

As predicted in last month's report, activity has picked up considerably. The Merrick House has been discovered, thanks to events generated at the House and other publicity surrounding the on-going celebrations focused on the City of Coral Gables Centennial.

ACTIVITY SUMMARY

In addition to our regular tours throughout the month, on Sunday February 2nd, **Ms. Joanne Meagher's 100 Voices program** saw a sold-out crowd of 40 ticket holders gathered for "Miracle Mile, Evolution of a Street," with Mr. George Zain and Mr. Albert Friedman, posthumously, in the spotlight. Other long-time merchants on Miracle Mile were there to tell their stories of doing business, over the years, on Coral Gables' most well-known business boulevard.

Following, on the 23rd of February, Merrick House was host to the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Coral Gables Garden Club. Educational displays as well as selected vendors contributed to the day. Stunning flower arrangements by members of the Garden Club adorned the House, both inside and out. The event drew over three hundred and fifty visitors to the House with many uncounted others who did not visit the House.

Ms. Janine Stanwood, reporter for WLPB, Channel 10, arrived at the House on **February 10th** to interview Ms. Meagher and me around the history of the House and the Merrick Family. Snippets are scheduled to air sometime in June 2025.

On **February 26th**, **Ms. Andrea Brody** arrived with her class of seven journalism majors **from the University of Miami**. The class assignment required the students to do a taped "stand-up interview" (though I was sitting!) focused on the history of the House and the Merrick family, combined with an introduction, and a closing, ostensibly to be used in a television news story.

VOLUNTEER REFRESHER

This month was chosen to take some time to provide feedback to each docent, including me, about our command of the tour information, the professionalism of our presentation and the quality of our interaction with visitors. There have been discussions with five of the eight members of the team. I have had each one give me the same type of analysis. I have little leverage with TeamMerrick as they are engaging in this activity for the pure pleasure and interest in doing it. They have been very reliable. Only in a very few instances, mainly family emergencies or illness, have I had to scramble at the last minute to find coverage. The rub arises regarding all our performances as I am not there every weekend and am not aware of any egregious *faux pas* which might occur. So far, each of them has taken the feedback very well, and they have been gentle with me!

RECEIPTS AND TALLIES

Visitors = 481 (65 for tours, 40 for 100 Voices and 376 for the CGGC event); for tours there were 41 Adults, 21 Seniors, and 3 others. We sold 1 mug @ \$15.00, 3 poetry books for \$45.00, 5 boxes of Tom Spain's cards, 2 @ \$12.00 and 3 @ the discounted price of \$3.00 each and 1 large box of Coral Gables watercolor cards. The total cash was \$412.00.

Submitted by:

Gay Bondurant, Docent Coordinator

Coral Gables Merrick House

