

# LIBERTY SQUARE: 1933-1987 THE ORIGINS AND EVOLUTION OF A PUBLIC HOUSING PROJECT

By Paul S. George and Thomas K. Petersen

## I. REACHING FOR UTOPIA: 1933-1936

*This project will be one of the greatest blessings that Miami ever had. It will not only eliminate the possibility of fatal epidemics here, but also fix it so we can get a servant freed from disease.*

John Gramling,  
October 17, 1934

The First Administration of Franklin Roosevelt was barely nine months old when in December 1933, Miami attorney John Gramling, along with six other lawyers and businessmen, formed the Southern Housing Corporation for the purpose of developing a “negro colony” on one hundred and twenty acres of land on Miami’s northern outskirts. Their inspiration was the recently-created United States Reconstruction Finance Corporation, which provided low-interest loans for slum

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clearance and the construction of low-income housing for the poor.

The application of the newly formed corporation stated the problem:

*The only site on which a negro might live in the City of Miami is in what now is known as negrotown in the heart of Miami. That area consists of 343 acres of land and according to the United States census of 1930, there are 25,116 colored persons living in that area. This population is living in one-story negro shacks and there are from three to fifteen shacks on a city lot of 50' x 150'. The sanitary conditions are a menace to the whole city. The living conditions are inconceivable and are a shame and a disgrace to the responsible citizens of Miami. This area is principally owned by white people who have erected these small shacks and get exorbitant rent from them so that they pay for themselves every two to three years... Many houses have no toilets connected with the house, no bathrooms, nor bathing facilities...<sup>1</sup>*

Gramling, a former municipal Judge and prominent attorney who arrived in Miami in 1906 from Alabama and the beneficiary of early and lucrative investments in Miami public utilities, seemed an unlikely champion of the impoverished and overcrowded residents of Colored Town, the city's first Black community. Yet irrespective of the purity of his motivations, his message was powerful. The principal concern, stated emphatically and repeatedly in correspondence from Miami to the Housing Section of the Public Works Administration (PWA) in Washington as well as in the press, was the threat of the transmission of disease by servants to the white homes in which they were employed. In one of his innumerable letters to the PWA, Gramling wrote of the high incidence of tuberculosis in the negro quarters: *From this cesspool of disease the white people of Greater Miami draw their servants.* The weekly (Miami) *Friday Night*, on January 12, 1934, sounded the same theme in no uncertain terms:

*The people who hire negroes in their homes should come forth with their protest. A protest against allowing the maid that cares for their children, the cook that prepares their food, and the wash woman that does their clothes, from bringing into their homes the disease germs that flourish in the present negro district.<sup>2</sup>*

Two days later, apparently in step with the submission of the application of the Southern Housing Corporation to Washington, a *Miami Herald* editorial echoed the same theme:

*Lovers of Miami have long decried the condition in which the colored people here are compelled to live. Attention has been led, frequently, to conditions that are not only a source of embarrassment but are actually a health menace to the entire population...With the help of the P.W.A. it might be possible that conditions in colored town could be materially improved...<sup>3</sup>*



### Newly completed Liberty Square.

Two years later, in the summer of 1936 when the construction of the project was well underway, the concern relative to the transmission of disease recurs in the context of kitchen facilities. “The tenants of the project,” wrote Clarence Coe, the district manager for the Public Housing Administration who worked closely with the Advisory Committee established to oversee construction and tenant selection, “if within the proper income group, will in many cases desire to do washing for people outside of the project. It is the belief of the Committee that the stationary tubs in the kitchen of each apartment would not be sufficient or satisfactory to carry out such work in any volume.”<sup>4</sup>

Later in 1936, now in the context of tenant selection, Coe wrote that “Many of the employers of domestic help have personally made request

that quarters in the project be reserved for their help. Health certificates," Coe announced, "would be required as part of the tenant application process."<sup>5</sup>

Another requirement in the admission process, related to the pervasive concern over infection, may well have proven more of a burden to the incoming residents than obtaining health certificates. "Fumigation and extermination for household goods of incoming tenants," wrote H. A. Gray, the PWA Director of Housing, in a letter to Miami chemical companies requesting bids, "would be a requirement."<sup>6</sup> Two responding companies suggested cyanide as the fumigation agent. A third, alluding to dangers of the use of cyanide, suggested a more expensive yet less toxic alternative. Gray chose cyanide on the basis of cost.<sup>7</sup>

Concerns related to infectious disease may also have doomed the swimming pool which had been included in the original blueprint for Liberty Square. Dr. Marvin Smith, a physician serving on the all white Advisory Committee, suggested in early 1936 that a swimming pool represented a risk of transmission of syphilis and thus should not be included in the project.<sup>8</sup> Although the PWA Housing Director disputed Dr. Smith's assertion and countered with the opinion of his own expert ("Dr. Von Derlehr was very much surprised at Dr. Smith's statement... He further said that he had never heard of syphillitic infection from a swimming pool."), the local view prevailed and Liberty Square, the public housing project, opened without a swimming pool.<sup>9</sup>

During much of 1935, however, considerations relating to tenant selection and the project blueprints lay well in the future and, for a time, it appeared that John Gramling's plan for a "negro colony" was doomed. At the same time, Liberty City, located just west of the proposed site of the housing project, was a small, isolated black enclave north of Sixty-Second Street and west of Seventeenth Avenue. The area to the east of Seventeenth Avenue was sparsely settled by whites, although density increased substantially between Northwest Second Avenue, where the all-white Miami Edison High School stood, and Biscayne Bay.<sup>10</sup>

In the spring of 1935, after several months of silence during which time the government moved toward acquisition of the property, white opposition to negroes residing east of Seventeenth Avenue flared in the form of the Nor'West League. Headed by Rodger Herndon and a vocal constituency, the League wrote President Franklin D. Roosevelt on behalf of "hundreds of families to whom hurricanes, banks and the Depression have left nothing but their booms, modest homes. "Won't

you, "it implored the President, "help us - the not so-rich folks of the rural northwest area of Miami?" The League warned that extending the negro area to the east "would cause infinite strife and bloodshed."<sup>11</sup>

In July 1935, the Nor'West League generated a petition bearing the signatures of 2,600 white property owners which was widely circulated. Florida Senators Park Trammell and Duncan Fletcher, as well as Congressmen W. J. Sears and A. B. Wilcox, upon receiving the petitions, expressed their reservations regarding the project in separate communications to the Department of Interior.<sup>12</sup> On July 12, the Dade County Commissioners adopted a resolution opposing the project, as did the city of Miami Commission the following month, notwithstanding a prior resolution, passed in the less turbulent atmosphere of 1934, in support of it.<sup>13</sup>

This opposition took the PWA's Public Housing Administration by surprise and work on the project came to a halt during the spring and summer of 1935. A memorandum signed and approved by the Director of Housing, Colonel Horatio B. Hackett, tersely announced: "This project has been temporarily suspended. It has been decided to cease work on it until further notice."<sup>14</sup>

Soon after this announcement, Angelo Clas, a midwest architect, replaced Hackett as Housing Director. Clas' public career would last only two years. Fortunately for John Grambling's project, those two years included the summer of 1935.

Shortly after assuming this post, Clas delivered an ultimatum to the Nor'West League :

*I am so firmly convinced of the justice of our carefully and deeply considered decision that I can see only two alternatives in this matter. One, that the project proceed on its present site; or two, that the project be abandoned and that Miami lose the benefit of the substantial sum which will be expended, and the great benefit to local labor and the building industry in general.*<sup>15</sup>

Clas sent copies of the letter to Senators Fletcher and Trammell and to Representatives Sears and Wilcox . The politicians fell silent and the Nor' West League folded its tent in the autumn of 1935.

In 1936, the all-white Miami Advisory Committee on Housing began to meet regularly. At its first meeting, the Committee discussed the role of the yet to be identified project manager, as reflected in the minutes:

*The duties of a manager of the project were discussed in that he should possess mechanical knowledge as to the installations of equipment, be his own auditor, select the tenants and see that they are comfortably situated and provided with various facilities, satisfactorily handle numerous operating agreements with municipal authorities. Colonel Coe assured the committee that the manager would be a white man.*<sup>16</sup>

One week later, emphasizing the latter point, Coe wrote to Angelo Clas: "You will note also again the Advisory Board have placed themselves as definitely on record as being opposed to a colored manager of the sixty second street project."<sup>17</sup>

Coe's evident sensitivity on this point may have been inspired by the presence in his office of James E. Scott, a World War I veteran referred to tangentially in correspondence as "the colored student attending management school."<sup>18</sup> It apparently did not escape notice that Scott would be a logical person to play a role in the new housing project.

Nor did the relative absence of black participation in the planning process totally escape attention. Discussion of the appointment of a black advisory group began during the Spring of 1936, as construction of the 247 unit project neared completion. Colonel Coe's attention would appear to have been drawn more to form than to substance in creating this body. He wrote:

*There are good psychological reasons why the name 'colored' or 'negro' should be left off in designating the membership of this Board, and by bringing the Housing Manager in between would prevent any contact between the two Boards except such as the Housing Director may deem necessary.*<sup>19</sup>

The black advisory group was appointed and would consist of John Culmer, chairman, Kelsey Pharr, Dr. W. B. Sawyer, Charles Thompson and, after some hesitation, attorney T. R. Toomey. The task assigned to it was to bestow a name upon the project.<sup>20</sup>

Despite the reservations over his appointment to the Board, Toomey maintained his enthusiasm for the project. He promptly wrote to the Director of Housing in Washington that his group had decided upon the name "Utopia" as first choice with "Toomeyville" as second choice.<sup>21</sup> The Housing Director informed Toomey that "Utopia" was too general and that, while he, Toomey, was to be applauded for the high esteem in

which he was evidently held by his peers, the name selected should not be that of a living person.<sup>22</sup>

The final name selection was ultimately made by the all-white Advisory Committee, apparently with little regard for the input of the Culmer-Toomey group. Dr. Marvin Smith, who had earlier successfully blocked construction of the swimming pool, offered the name eventually adopted, that being "Liberty Square."<sup>23</sup>

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John Gramling died in Miami in 1967 at the age of seventy eight. His wife Irene still lives in the same home, near Twelfth Avenue and Coral Way, where the Gramlings resided fifty years ago. Their nearest surviving child, Claire Alice, lives in Savannah. Neither Irene nor Claire Alice, recall details relative to the origins of Liberty Square and none of John Gramling's files or correspondence have survived him.



**One hundred yard dash held during the Miami Air Technical Service Command's family day picnic at Liberty Square, on December 20, 1944.**

Both women, however, clearly recall their father's motivation for serving as the guiding force behind the project's genesis. His principal client, Floyd Davis, was a wealthy property owner who owned much of what is today Liberty City as well as other properties stretching from

Broward County to the Keys. It was John Gramling's function to facilitate the sale of much of this land and it was this relationship which was to inspire the creation of the Southern Housing Corporation's venture. The Corporation's application to the federal government failed to mention Floyd Davis and "midwestern land company". The relationship that in fact existed between Gramling and Davis is nowhere even hinted at in the surviving files at the National Archives.

## II. PARADISE GAINED: 1937 - EARLY 1960s

*Here the United States government has extended its hand to lift 243 negro families out of squalor and filth and disease and place them in clean, comfortable yet unelaborate quarters at reasonable rents. There are no frills at Liberty Square, but there is sanitation and light and air and harmony of simple architecture. There is room to expand, room for children to play, provision for elemental community life.*

Editorial, *Miami Herald*

October 16, 1936.

During the winter and spring of 1936-1937 the first tenants trickled into the housing project. A choir from Saint John's Baptist Church sang Christmas carols outside the newly completed community center building during that holiday season. In March 1937, the first baby born in Liberty Square, and in public housing in America, LeClair Lambert, entered the world at 6228 N. W. 14 Court.<sup>24</sup>

Fifty years later, at the ceremony in the community center commemorating the dedication of the project in late 1936, Mr. Lambert, now an historian in Saint Paul, Minnesota, reflected upon the early days at Liberty Square:

*I'm proud to be here because history is a continuum...What an honor to be here today to once again, some forty plus years later, walk through this area that brings back so many fond memories...What an honor to be able to recapture the memories of growing up as a Cub Scout, and then a Boy Scout, in this very same hall. And what a pleasure to remember the fun I had with the annual roller skating venture on Sixty-Third Street every Christmas Day! How well I remember those bruised knees and elbows in trying to*

*imitate the skating movements the big boys used to do so well.*

*And if these walls could talk, they would tell you that all of us who lived here were guided and positively educated in the strong need to care for each other ..To share ideas.. And dreams ... And fantasies that someday would be reality... These walls would tell you that for so many, a job was well done in giving us a sense of purpose and a sense of direction in life. And for that, I am proud<sup>25</sup>*

Henry Clarke, Jr., who has worked as a maintenance supervisor at Liberty Square since 1949, recalled the early years:

*Residents cooperated then, really cared about the project Liberty Square was much prettier then, and it was crime free. By the late 1950s and 1960s tougher people moved in and it began to go down... In the early days politicians used to come out to the project and campaign. They used the community center. The center was also used for marriages, movies for youngsters, dinners, parties and religious services...At one time Liberty Square had its own park director, black patrolmen walked a regular beat in and around the project. There was a project drugstore here, and a grocery store and a library. The place was really alive then.<sup>26</sup>*

Rosalie Harris, who has lived in the project since 1940, recalled:

*Liberty Square in its early days was beautiful then, with plenty of coconut palms and no litter. We didn't know what crime was in those days and we slept with our doors open. Things began to get bad in the 1960's when those people started to come from Overtown. I look at this place now and sometimes it puts tears in my eyes.<sup>27</sup>*

Liberty Square's principal selling point, as correctly identified by John Grambling, had been the assurance of servants free of disease. Each morning in those early years jitneys transported new residents to domestic and service jobs on Miami Beach, in downtown Miami and points east and south. As promised, they were servants ostensibly free of disease.

The early residents were hard working, upwardly mobile domestics and laborers. Forty-five randomly selected files of residents who moved

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into Liberty Square between 1936 and 1949 revealed no unemployment: of thirty-five couples, whose average ages were 32 for husbands and 25 for wives, all of the men were employed as were fifteen of their spouses. Their occupations included the following:

<b>Married Males</b>		<b>Married Females</b>	
Laborer or janitor	17	Maid	11
Porter or waiter	9	Laundry or dry cleaning	1
Chauffeur or truck driver	6	Cook	2
City of Miami sewer or sanitation	3	Dressmaker	1

In six of fifteen files of the early couples, the reasons for eventually leaving Liberty Square was the purchase of a home or an income level which exceeded the allowable maximum (today, residents are not required to leave public housing irrespective of their income levels, although they must pay one third of their annual income in rent). At that time, rent at Liberty Square was set at approximately one-fourth of monthly income; the average rent was \$12 to \$15 monthly, although in some cases as high as \$35 per month. (Were that same policy in existence today, a welfare recipient's monthly rent would be approximately \$150 in public housing, instead of the current average of about \$20.) Indeed, one couple left after finding "a residence with cheaper rent."<sup>28</sup>

While two-parent families were dominant in Liberty Square in the early years, single parent female households were present as well. They too were upwardly mobile, hardworking, and engaged in the service trades. Ten of the forty-five resident files, or twenty-four percent, reveal the head of household to be a single woman, whose average age was 37 with 2.5 children.

All of the ten were employed; their occupations included the following

Maid	7
Waitress	1
Laundress	1
WPA Worker	1

Of nine files of single parent women which indicated their reasons for leaving Liberty Square, after an average stay of twelve years, five of them left to buy a home or because their income exceeded the allowable maximum, which represents a higher percentage than in the sample of married couples.

The files reveal hard-working, admirable servants ostensibly “free of disease” and to that extent the Liberty Square experiment had achieved its articulated objective. Yet the files also reveal a harsher side, including examples of undiagnosed mental illness and acute alcoholism in men and women who worked sixty to seventy hours weekly as laborers and domestics for menial wages. Two of the files revealed children who were withdrawn from elementary school in the 1940s due to “bad eyes”, a term apparently synonymous with a need for eyeglasses. In 1960, the son of Henry and Edna Stephenson, Joe Louis Stephenson, who was eight years old when his parents moved into Liberty Square in 1948, was killed in the perpetration of a gas station robbery. These, however, were diseases of a different sort.<sup>29</sup>

### III. PARADISE LOST: EARLY 1960S - PRESENT

*Among the true necessities that all people require to maintain a life of dignity and respect is safe and decent shelter. Recent stories by Herald writers... painted a devastating picture of the Dade housing authority's failure to maintain in livable condition units in which poor and elderly people must live. Such unacceptable conditions must be righted not only in the county's oldest public-housing project, Liberty Square, but wherever they exist.*

Editorial, *Miami Herald*,  
May 18, 1986.

Looking back from the littered, barren landscape of Liberty Square in the winter of 1986-1987, with crack cocaine rampant and a gas heater explosion which killed a young woman in one of project's original 243 units the prime topic of conversation, it is difficult to visualize the early years.<sup>30</sup>

To the pioneer residents, now in their seventies and eighties, the early to mid-sixties appear to have been a watershed. Rosalee Harris pinpointed the “transfer” of Overtown residents to Liberty Square as the result of the razing of the area now occupied by Interstate I-95. She and others referred to them as “those people.”<sup>31</sup> Mary Salmon recalled that “the project was all fixed up around 1965, but it has been going downhill since then.”<sup>32</sup> Henry Clarke, Jr., associated that year with an increase in young single parent families.<sup>33</sup>

The view that those forced from Overtown by the construction of Interstate 95, with little notice and no compensation, changed the complexion of Liberty Square is not supported in the files of tenants admitted to the project from 1965 into the early 1970s. Those who came to Liberty Square as the result of the expressway construction were generally elderly couples or single persons receiving Social Security, disability or a pension. This was not the group that changed the character of Liberty Square.

The first signs of the group responsible for the change appear in the files of late 1965: an influx of young single women raising children without employment and subsisting on the small monthly AFDC (Aid to Families With Dependent Children) checks paid to non-working mothers living alone with children below the age of eighteen. While some came directly to Liberty Square from overcrowded apartments in Overtown, an equal number or more moved from tenements throughout Liberty City, which had probably served as stopping points in journeys once begun in Overtown. These files invariably contain notices of eviction as opposed to announcements of condemnation or demolition. There in those files commencing in late 1965 lie the roots of the urban phenomenon now termed the "feminization of poverty."

A review of seventy-one randomly-selected files of Liberty Square tenants who moved into the project between the years 1965 and 1979 revealed the following characteristics:

Family composition	Number
Couples	10
Single Males	10
Single Women - no children	5
Single Women - with children	46

Of the forty-six women with children, only seven were employed at the time of tenant selection with the remaining thirty-nine, of two-thirds of all admissions, being unemployed welfare recipients. The fact that all of the ten couples admitted were over the age of 40, with seven beyond age 65, further illustrates the virtual disappearance of two-parent families from the project during this period.<sup>34</sup>

As the years passed, the average age of the single parent welfare recipients decreased from 29 in the period 1965-1969, to 23 in the years from 1975-1979. Meanwhile, the lengths of residence decreased during

these years with stays of a year or less no longer unusual. The reasons for leaving were almost invariably presented as "left without notice," often followed by a note indicating the absence from the unit of the refrigerator and oven, as well as the tenant.

While the new wave of tenants was generally unemployed, the employment that existed was of a decidedly different nature than the domestic and service jobs of the early years. The seven single female parents who were employed (the ten single males are in all cases elderly or handicapped and unemployed) at the time of admission held the following jobs:

Sales clerk	2
Fast food waitress	1
Caseworker aide	1
Home health care aide	1
Manpower trainee	1
Food stamp worker	1

The files of the 39 women who were unemployed at time of tenant selection reflect in many instances brief periods of employment interrupted by periods during which welfare was the lone income source. The jobs were almost invariably of the same nature as the seven given.<sup>35</sup>

It would appear that the nature of Miami's job market changed dramatically and that the disappearance of the domestic worker positions has never been adequately compensated for by either the emergence of other employment opportunities appropriate to the new residents or by the development of an effective means for training and equipping these young women for the contemporary job market. During the late 1960s and early 1970s, the abundance of federally funded training programs is evident in the files: seven women were at one time enrolled in such programs, yet in each case the young woman eventually left or completed the program and returned to welfare. Only one of the seven appears to have acquired a position for which she received training. She too eventually returned to welfare.<sup>36</sup>

The files also reflect policy changes since the earlier years which appear to abandon forever the notion of public housing as a temporary respite for those in need. There is no longer an income ceiling which caused the departure of so many upwardly mobile Liberty Square tenants in the early years. Moreover, a family separation policy permits growing families to occupy additional space in which to plant roots in

public housing. There are no policies or procedures evident in the files which prepare or encourage tenants to aspire to a future outside of the project.<sup>37</sup>

The questions raised by the reviews of the files are many, and suggestive of the need for additional research which will combine the skills of the historian, the economist and the sociologist in attempts to answer perplexing issues of the recent past. The ineffectiveness of federal manpower programs emanating from the era of the Great Society suggested in this small sample of files, for example, raises the important question of whether or not in fact the nation did lose ground in its attempt to create a more equitable society.

The disappearance of the domestic positions coupled with the emergence of the phenomenon of the "feminization of poverty" and welfare dependency suggests the need for the study of the impact of Cuban immigration on the service trades as well as the apparently devastating impact of welfare policies upon the very people these policies were designed to protect.

Perhaps the musty files at Liberty Square contain the clues to these, as well as to other unresolved issues in our recent history.

### Notes

1. "Application of the Southern Housing Corporation, Miami, Florida, to the Administration of Public Works, Division of Housing, Washington, D. C., for Financing Low Cost Housing Project at Miami, Florida," 19 December 1933, Records of the Public Housing Administration, Record Group 196, National Archives, Washington, D. C. (hereafter cited as PHA, RG 196, NA), Box 299.

2. John Gramling to Eugene H. Klaber, 30 March 1934, RG 196, NA, Box 297; (Miami) *Friday Night*, 12 January 1934, clipping RG 196, NA, Box 299.

3. "Clearing Away the Slums," p.6, *Miami Herald*, 14 January 1934.

4. Minutes of Advisory Committee Meeting, 31 August 1936, PHA, RG 196, NA, Box 299.

5. *Ibid*, 30 November 1936, PHA, RG 196, NA, Box 299.

6. H. A. Gray to R. L. Beal, November, PHA, RG 196, NA, Box 299.

7. R. L. Beal to H. A. Gray, 23 October 1936, 7 November 1936, PHA, RG 196, NA Box 301.

8. Minutes of Advisory Committee Meeting, 20 January 1936, 2 April 1936, PHA, RG 196, NA, Box 299.

9. Clarence Coe to Angelo Clas, 17 February 1936; Angelo Clas to Clarence Coe, 24 February 1936, PHA, RG 196, NA, Box 299.

10. Angelo Clas to H. S. Brannen, 11 September 1935; Telegram from H. S. Brannen to Angelo Clas, 9 September 1935, PHA, RG 196, NA, Box 297.

11. Isabella Sanderson to Franklin Delano Roosevelt, 18 May 1935; Rodger Herndon to Colonel Horatio B. Hackett, 11 May 1935, PHA, RG 196, NA, Box 297.

12. Petition of Nor'west League, 12 July 1935; Senator Park Trammell to Angelo Clas, 17 July 1935; Angelo Clas to Senator Duncan U. Fletcher, 25 July 1935, PHA, RG 196, NA, Box 299.

13. Cecil A. Turner to "Chief of Federal Public Works Administration," 11 July 1935, with attached Resolution of Board County Commissioners, 8 July 1935; Angelo Clas to A. D. H. Fossey, 22 July 1935; Angelo Clas to Cecil A. Turner, 19 July 1935, PHA, RG 196, NA, Box 298.

14. Memorandum to Messrs Cramer, Neale, et al from B. M. Pettit, 20 April 1935 (Approved by Colonel Horatio B. Hackett); Colonel Horatio B. Hackett to Dr. Marvin Smith, 7 May 1935, PHA, RG 196, NA, Box 298, 299.

15. Angelo Clas to M. J. Orr, 15 July 1935, PHA, RG 196, NA, Box 299.

16. Minutes of Advisory Committee Meeting, 2 April 1936, PHA, RG 196, NA, Box 299.

17. Clarence Coe to Angelo Clas, 9 April 1936, PHA, RG 196, NA, Box 299.

18. Minutes of the Miami Advisory Committee Meeting, 16 January 1936, PHA, RG 196, NA, Box 299.

19. Clarence Coe to H. A. Gray, 3 August 1936; Clarence Coe to Angelo Clas, 30 March 1936, PHA, RG 196, NA, Box 299, 297.

20. Clarence Coe to Angelo Clas, 15 July 1936, PHA, RG 196, NA, Box 297.

21. R. E. S. Toomey to Angelo Clas, 1 November 1935, PHA, RG 196, NA Box 299.

22. Angelo Clas to R. E. S. Toomey, 14 November 1935, PHA, RG 196, NA, Box 299.

23. Clarence Coe to Angelo Clas, 11 June 1936; Minutes of Advisory Committee Meeting, 4 June 1936, PHA, RG 196, NA, Box 299.

24. Clarence Coe to H. O. S. Reeves, 18 February 1937, with accompanying information on the birth of LeClair Lambert, PHA, RG 196, NA, Box 301. The Lamberts chose LeClair as their baby's first name because it was the middle name of Secretary of Interior Harold Ickes, whose department played a major role in the creation of Liberty Square.

25. "Liberty Square Tenenats Enjoy Golden Moments," *Miami Herald*, p. 1D 16 October 1986; "Liberty Square," *Miami Herald*, p. 1 C, 9 November 1986.

26. Interview with Henry Clarke, Jr., by Paul S. George, 12 October 1986, Miami, Florida.

27. Interview with Rosalie Harris by Paul S. George, 19 October 1986, Miami, Florida.

28. Tenant Files, Cabinets One through Six, Business Office, Liberty Square Housing Project.

29. *Ibid.*

30. "Leaking Gas Explodes, Burning Three at Housing Project" *Miami Herald*, p. 1B, 26 February 1987; The explosion occurred two doors away from the unit where LeClair Lambert was born fifty years earlier.

31. Interview with Rosalee Harris, 19 October 1986; Interview with Mary Salmon by Paul S. George, 3 November 1986, Miami, Florida.

32. Interview with Henry Clarke, Jr., 12 October 1986.

33. Tenant Files, Cabinets One through Six.

34. *Ibid.*

35. *Ibid.*

36. *Ibid.*

37. *Ibid.*