

# HISTORICAL RESOURCES REPORT

FOR:  
1060 OCEAN DRIVE  
MIAMI BEACH, FL. 33139

JUNE 27, 2017



E C H E V E R R Í A  
D E S I G N                      G R O U P

■ COMMERCIAL    INTERIOR DESIGN    SPACEPLANNING ■

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**BON AIR HOTEL**  
**1060 OCEAN DRIVE, MIAMI BEACH**

**I. Original Construction**

This three-story, Mediterranean Revival style building occupies Lot 1 of Block 15 in the Ocean Beach Addition Two Subdivision of Miami Beach, one of the oldest sections of the City, platted in 1913 by the Lummus brothers' Ocean Beach Realty Company. Situated on the corner of Ocean Drive and 11th Street, it was built on a vacant lot in 1934. Today it is a Contributing structure in both the National Register and locally-designated historic districts.

Originally named the Bon Air Hotel, it was designed by architect Henry H. Moloney for the Standard Realty Company. No biographical information has been found on Moloney, but the Romer archive in the Miami Public Library includes his photograph, and notes that he also worked in New York. Moloney designed well in both the Mediterranean and Art Deco styles. His other buildings in Miami Beach, dating from 1927 to 1938, include:

- Anglers Hotel                      634 Washington Ave.
- Lafayette (Blue Moon)          944 Collins Ave.
- Evans Hotel                        953 Collins Ave.
- Rose Maisonettes                1409-1411 Collins Ave.
- Shelley Hotel (La Salle)        844 Collins Ave.
- Charles Hotel                      1475 Collins Ave. (demolished)

The Bon Air had 50 rooms, an elevator, rooftop solarium and a coffee shop and cost \$40,000 (in the midst of the Depression). The original design by Maloney was a completely orchestrated façade, full of detail and balanced in composition.<sup>1</sup> Moloney's plans, though mostly illegible, were found on Microfilm #6209 in the Miami Beach Building Department. The building's original appearance is also documented in archival postcards and photographs. Several of these were found in the Curt Teich Postcard Archive, including a 1934 rendering, a 1937 photo that was made into a postcard and an especially informative brochure from 1937 that includes a view of the lobby.

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<sup>1</sup> Thorn Grafton, RA, OCEAN COURT: A Historic Rehabilitation Project, City of Miami Beach Historic Preservation Board Submission, October 1, 2001

The upper stories still retain their original design, with decorative elements on the front façade that wrap around the north and south elevations a short distance: sash windows with ornamental surrounds, with rounded arches and twisted columns on the third floor and a bracketed balconet on the second floor front; decorative bas-relief panels at the cornice, and a rooflet of clay barrel tile.

The real attention-getter, though, is the bracketed pavilion dormer with triple-arched alcove, fleur-de-lis plaques, round medallions and more twisted columns. The curving parapet gets the last word, ending in a curlicue flourish.<sup>2</sup>

The front elevation of the first floor, which has since been altered, was originally flush with the upper stories. The center round-arched doorway had an ornamental surround. On the front façade to either side of the entrance was a round-arched niche (perhaps a planter bin) with a fence of metalwork, and a pair of round-arched windows, separated by a twisted column and set into a round-arched recess with a trio of decorative medallions. A short extension of the front wall at the southeast corner of the building, with a curved cornice and decorative medallion, had a round-arched gate giving access to the open terrace and parking lot on the south side of the building.

The original lobby, pictured in the 1937 brochure, is also of Mediterranean style. There is a fireplace, tapering to the ceiling, on the south wall and a stairway at the southwest corner. Along the west wall are the round-arched elevator, a round-arched central corridor, and the reception counter. Typical of many of the small hotels of the period, the first level rooms were walk-up; the elevator connected to the 2nd and 3rd floors only.<sup>3</sup>

The windows (casements) and front door have round arches and fan windows. Freestanding square columns support the ceiling, which is paneled and has elaborate brackets and dentil molding along the west wall. The floor is a geometric pattern of clay quarry tile, covered with oriental rugs.

In April 1942 the Bon Air became one of about 300 Miami Beach properties that were leased by the US Army-Air Forces during World War II, and it served as a barracks for troops in training. The Permit Card notes that the Bon Air returned to civilian use on June 7, 1944. At that time it was purchased by Ed Singer, who owned it for only a year and briefly named it the Edsinger Hotel.

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<sup>2</sup> R. and V. Beaubien, Discovering South Beach Deco; Domani Press, 2004, p. 75.

<sup>3</sup> Thorn Grafton, RA, OCEAN COURT: A Historic Rehabilitation Project, City of Miami Beach Historic Preservation Board Submission, October 1, 2001



## **II. 1944 Remodeling**

Singer had built an earlier Edsinger Hotel, designed by architect Albert Anis, at 1244 Ocean Drive in 1937. Anis (1889-1964), who later remodeled the front of the Bon Air/Edsinger in 1944, was born in Chicago and attended the Armour Institute of Technology there, 1908-10.<sup>4</sup> He worked in Miami Beach from the mid-1930s to the mid-‘50s, designing dozens of exemplary buildings in the Art Deco, Streamline, and Postwar Modern styles. His buildings include:

- Mercantile Bank Building      420 Lincoln Road
- Lincoln Building              350 Lincoln Road, and the following hotels:
- Avalon                            700 Ocean Dr.
- Clevelander                    1020 Ocean Dr.
- Leslie                             1244 Ocean Dr.
- Waldorf Towers                860 Ocean Dr.
- Winter Haven                 1400 Ocean Dr.
- Berkeley Shore                1610 Collins Ave.
- Traymore                        2445 Collins Ave.

Singer sold the original Edsinger in 1944, at which time it was renamed the Leslie Hotel, and Singer used the proceeds of the sale to buy the Bon Air, which he renamed. In July 1944 Singer was issued a Building Permit for “Remodeling front of building and addition of 5-foot terrace to the back of the property line 4 inches above grade.” Anis, who had designed Singer’s earlier hotel, was architect for this project. One page of plans was found on Microfilm #18641. It shows that the first story of the east elevation was cut away to form an open arcade supported by six plain, square masonry pillars.

The revised design by Anis was an attempt to draw visitors to sit on the front porch and view the ocean from the lobby. This was a common urge at the time – most late thirties and early forties buildings were designed with this in mind to some extent. The elimination of most of the walls of the first floor to achieve this end sacrificed architectural integrity of the Mediterranean-Revival building.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Keith Root, Miami Beach Art Deco Guide; Miami Design Preservation League, 1987, p.32.

<sup>5</sup> Thorn Grafton, RA, OCEAN COURT: A Historic Rehabilitation Project, City of Miami Beach Historic Preservation Board Submission, October 1, 2001

The upper stories remained unchanged. The new exterior wall of the lobby was ornamented with fluted pilasters. Several photographs document this alteration: one published in the *Miami Daily News*, April 26, 1945; another dated 1945 in the Teich archive that was used to make a postcard; and another from circa 1980 in the HistoryMiami photo files.

Singer sold the Bon Air/Edsinger in 1945 and it was again renamed as The Waves<sup>6</sup>. In the 1980s, together with two neighboring buildings, it was renamed the Adrian for then-owner Dr. Adrian Alexandru. Still later, this three-building complex was renamed the Strand.

### **III. Post-1944 Remodeling**

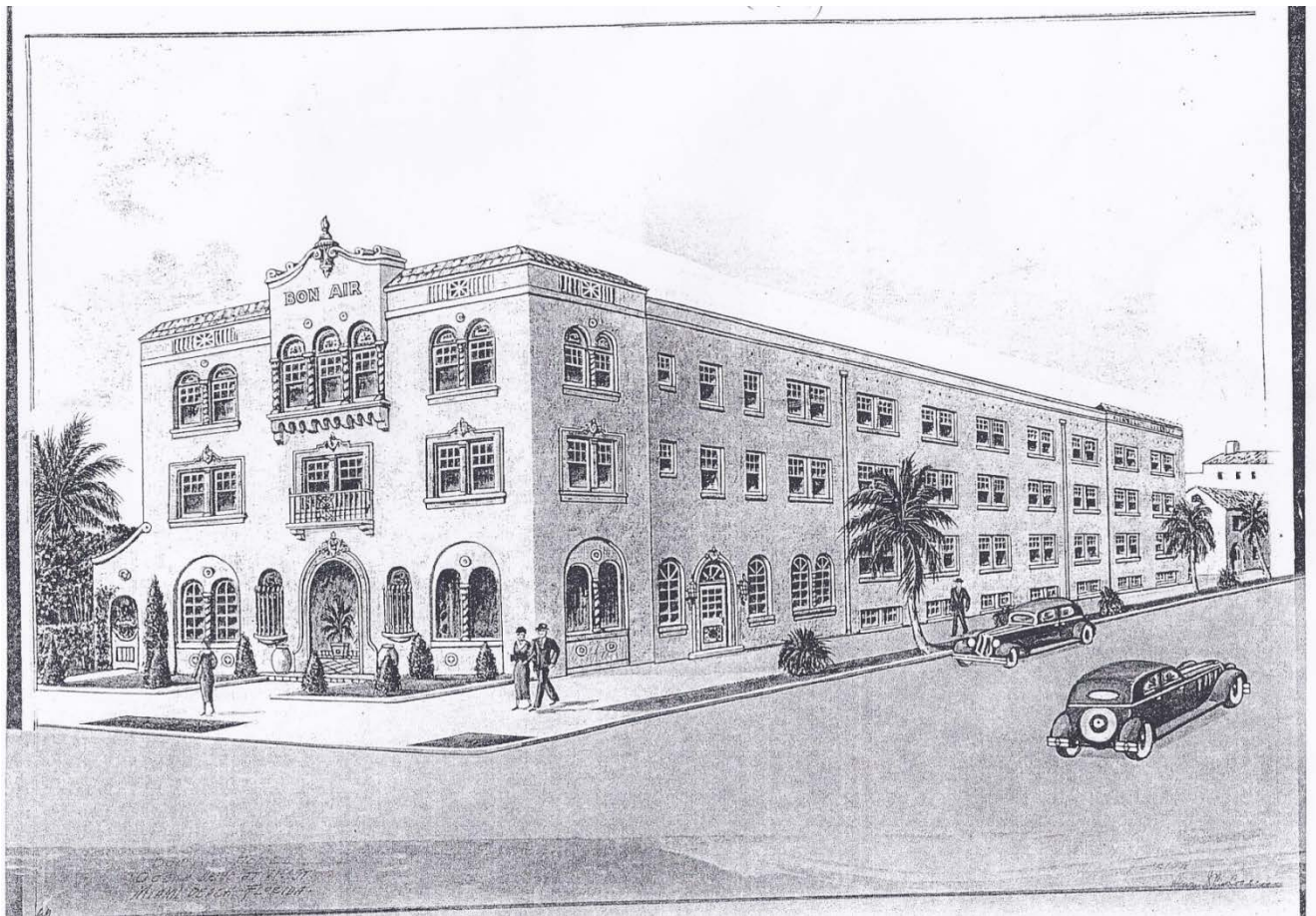
The present exterior detailing has generally been restored by Kobi Karp Architects Interior Designers in 2004 to the original 1934 design with a few exceptions. The front porch was originally part of the hotel lobby (see pg. 5, “1937 Bon Air Hotel brochure – interior photograph: lobby”). The entry awning has been omitted. Most of the original exterior single hung windows show the correct three over one configuration but have been replaced with modern aluminum impact resistant reinterpretations. The lobby wood casement windows have also been replaced with similar aluminum fixed impact resistant windows. The rear stair tower which was originally open has been closed off solid.

Since the 1990’s, the interiors have been significantly altered numerous times both from the original 1934 design and the 1944 modification. The most recent is the alteration of the hotel guest rooms. The original 50 guest rooms were modified to 18 suites in or around 2004. The lobby mezzanine and basement areas have also been altered. The mezzanine which once consisted of 14 hotel rooms is presently a vacant space with a large portion of the mezzanine floor slab removed. The basement, which originally contained kitchen facilities and other ancillary hotel amenities, is now vacant. Portions of the kitchen facilities were converted into electrical, fire pump and trash rooms serving the present hotel. A portion of the basement was used as a pool hall in the 1990’s.

The lobby remains mostly intact per the 1944 alteration. Some attempts have been made to restore or re-expose the cornice detailing. The west section of the lobby leading to the basement area has had numerous if not awkward alterations. Presently steps lead downward and a slab extension was added to a handicap accessible lift that allows vertical movement from the lobby ground floor to both the basement and mezzanine levels. The floor tile in this area has either been damaged or removed, altering the original tile floor and steps.

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<sup>6</sup> *Miami Daily News*, April 26, 1945.



Top:  
1934 rendering of the  
Bon Air Hotel  
(Curt Teich Postcard Archive)

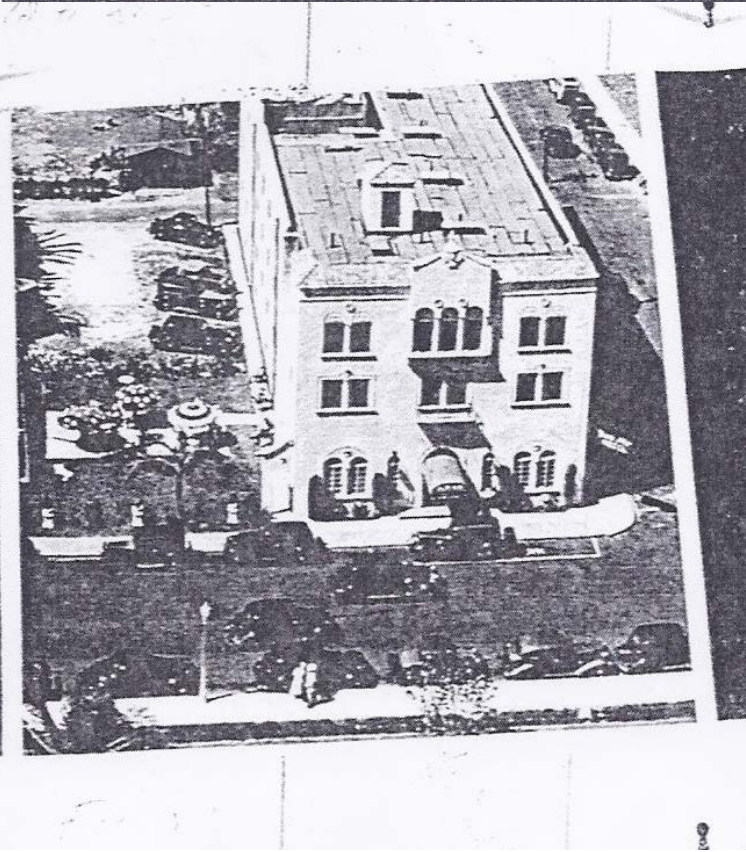
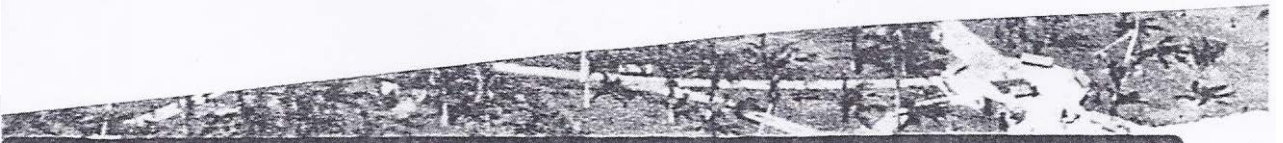
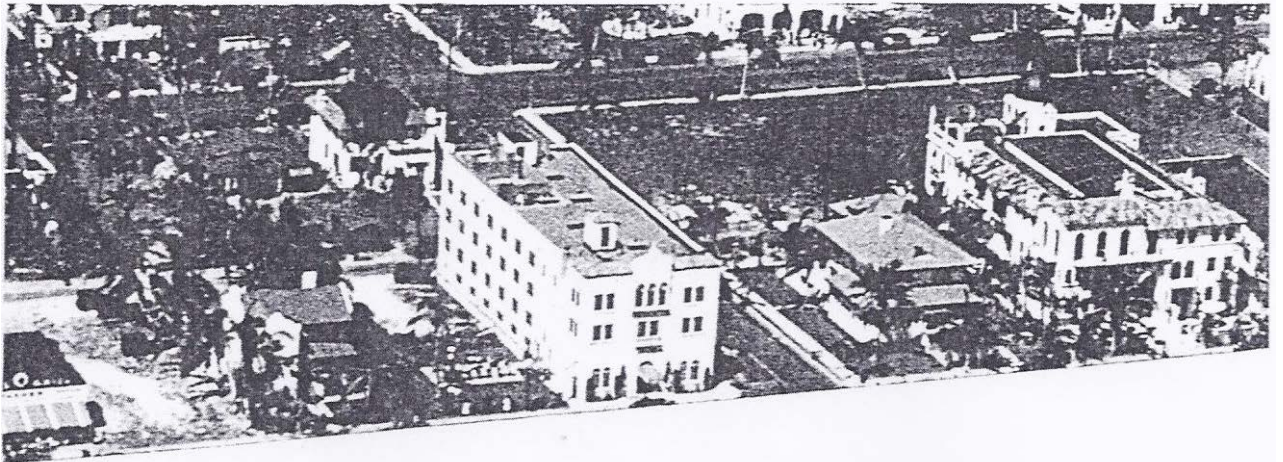
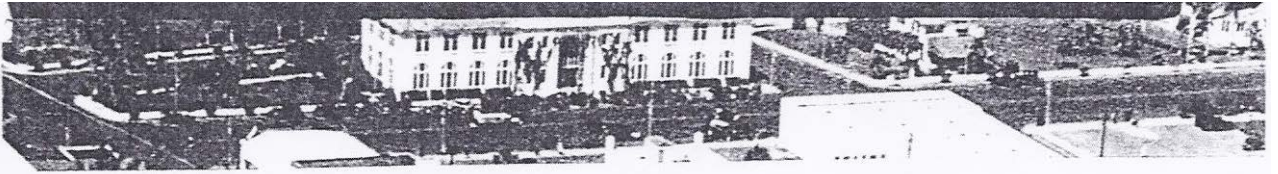


Left:  
Photograph of architect  
Henry H. Moloney  
(Miami Public Library,  
Florida Room)

M 519

Moloney, Henry H., Registered Architect of Miami and New  
York.





Circa 1937 aerial photographs  
of the Bon Air Hotel.

(Curt Teich Postcard Archive)



BON AIR HOTEL By-the-Sea

Ocean Drive at 11th St.

MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA



Overlooking Beautiful Park and the Atlantic Ocean

9A-H580

Top: 1939 postcard using previous 1937 aerial photographs.

Bottom: 1938 postcard

(Curt Teich Postcard Archive)

BON AIR HOTEL By-the-Sea

OCEAN DRIVE AT 11TH ST., MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA



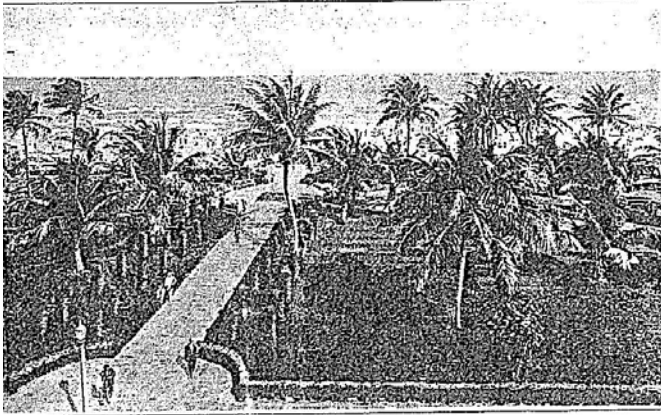
OVERLOOKING BEAUTIFUL PARK AND OCEAN

5A-H675

# Bon Air

## H O T E L

OCEAN DRIVE AT 11TH STREET -- MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA



A VIEW OF THE PARK AND OCEAN  
FROM THE BON AIR HOTEL



• European Plan in its operation, The Bon Air is distinctly a modern Winter Home on America's finest Riviera, offering the most typically discriminating facilities and accommodations at a tariff that invites an extended seasonal sojourn.

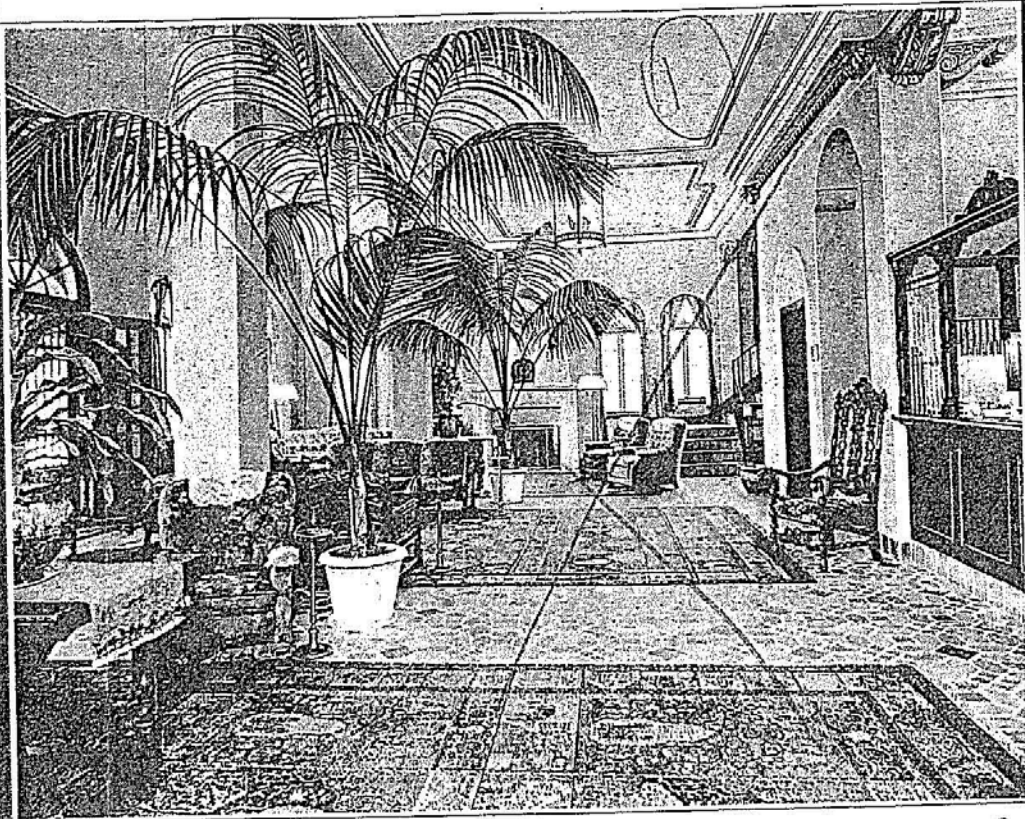
• THE BON AIR at Miami Beach offers every invitation and inducement to make this your Winter home. We'll be waiting for your visit: Write for rates and further facts.

• Majestically fronting the ocean, The Bon Air Hotel, from its setting at the edge of its charming park locale, provides the fastidious Winter visitor a retreat of complete relaxation.

REPRODUCED BY CURT TEICH & CO., INC., CHICAGO, ILL., U.S.A.

1937 Bon Air Hotel Brochure  
(Curt Teich Postcard Archive)





LOBBY

• With each room affording a sweeping panorama of the sea, every detail of appointment and accommodation at The Bon Air is designed to assure the visit of the guest being one of utmost enjoyment and contentment.

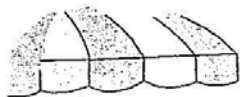
• Charmingly arranged and ideally furnished rooms lend the atmosphere of recreating rest. The wholesome sturdiness of solid oak furniture, aided and abetted by the newest inner spring mattresses and box springs induce serene slumber. Decorations of Mohair Spreads, Venetian Blinds, Arabian Rugs, suggest the harmony of companionship with everyone's personality.

• No less distinctive is the lavishness of the lobby's comfort and attractiveness. The conveniences include modern elevator service. No less individual is the sun bathing and surf bathing from rooms, or the service of the solarium atop the roof, with skilled Lady and Gentlemen attendants in waiting. The spacious, tropical sun patio has a lure of its own for relaxation -- the Coffee Shop affords the satisfaction to desires for fine food, subtle service at reasonable rates.

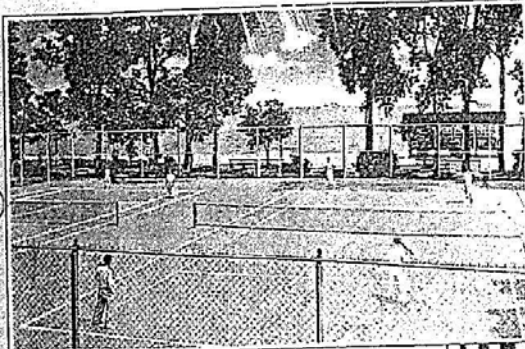
## THE BON AIR HOTEL

OCEAN DRIVE AT 11TH STREET -- MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA





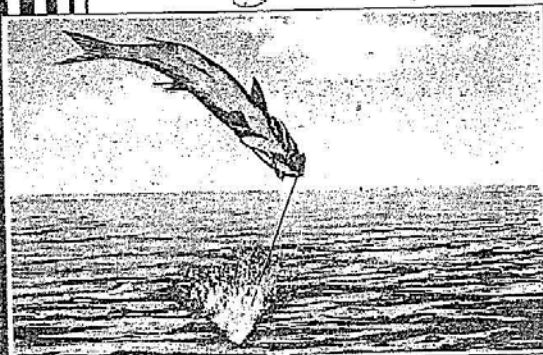
MIDWINTER TEA DANCE



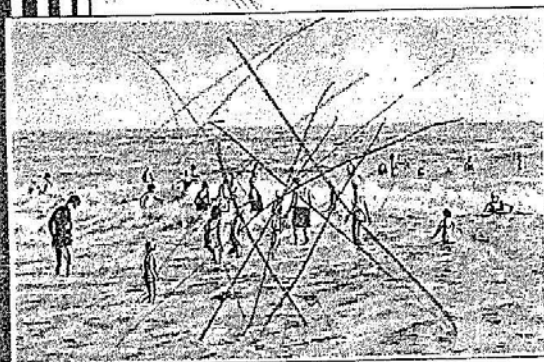
TENNIS IS PLAYED IN PICTURESQUE SETTINGS



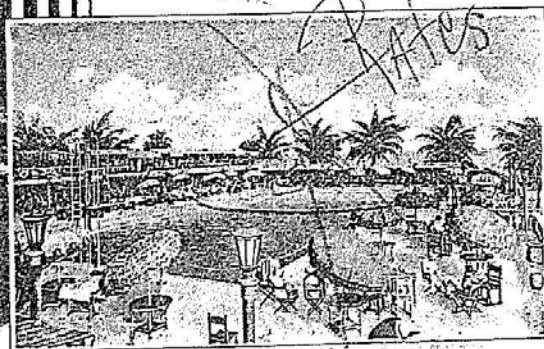
ONE OF ELEVEN SPORTY GOLF COURSES



WHEN MR. TARPON, THE SILVER KING, STARTS GOING PLACES



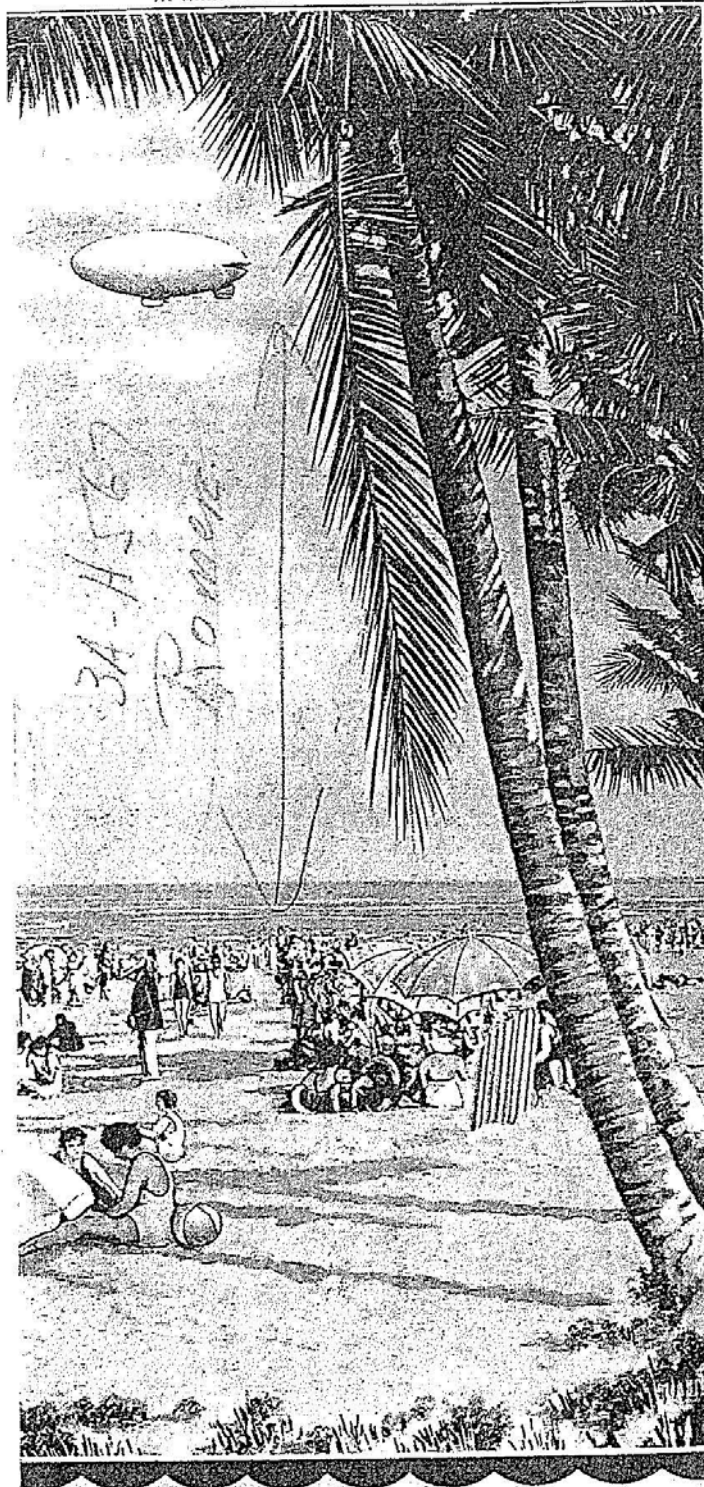
A DAILY BEACH SCENE, JANUARY OR JULY



ONE OF THE CABANA CLUBS

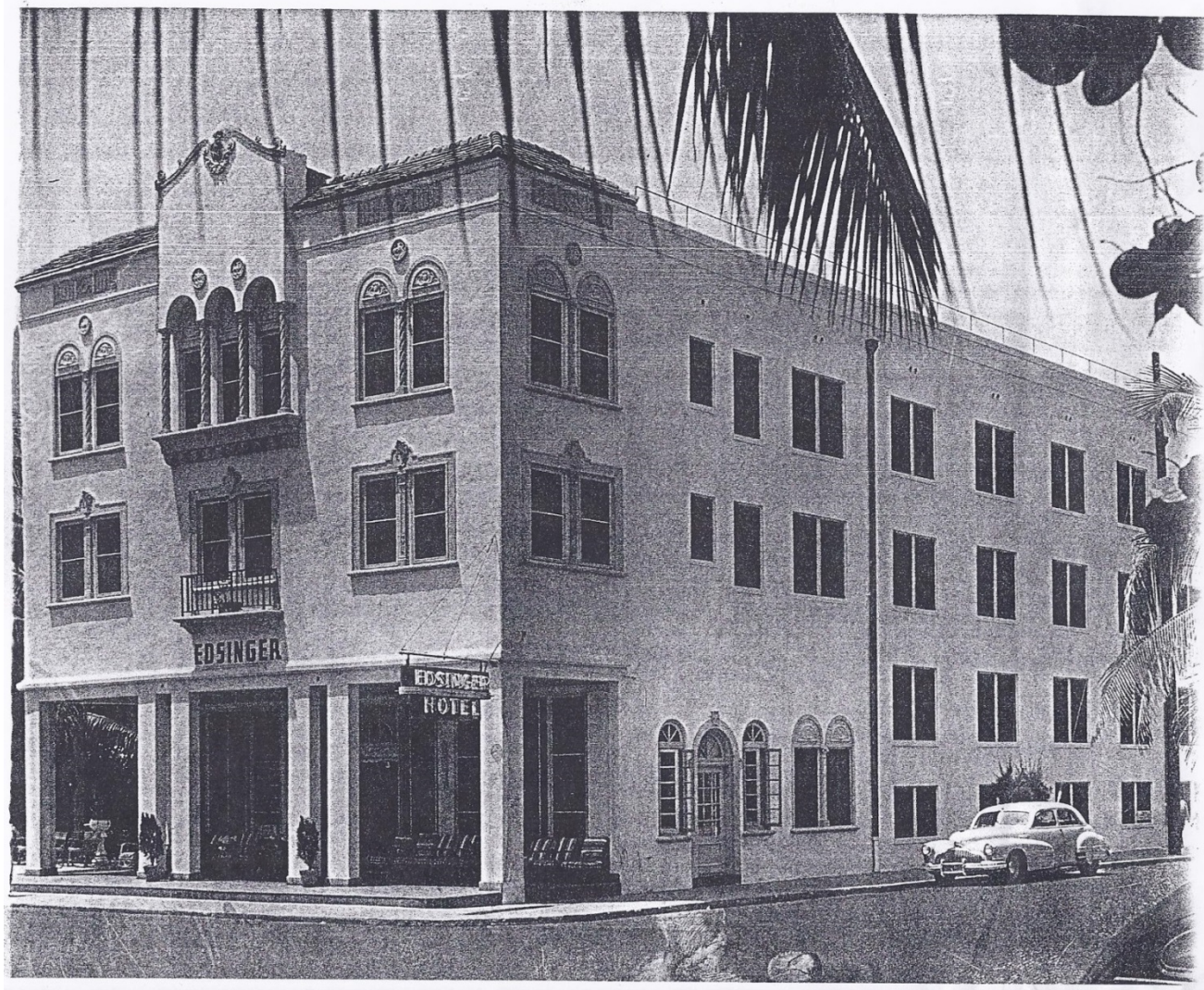
D-3795

ENJOYING MIDWINTER BATHING AND SUNSHINE  
AT MIAMI BEACH



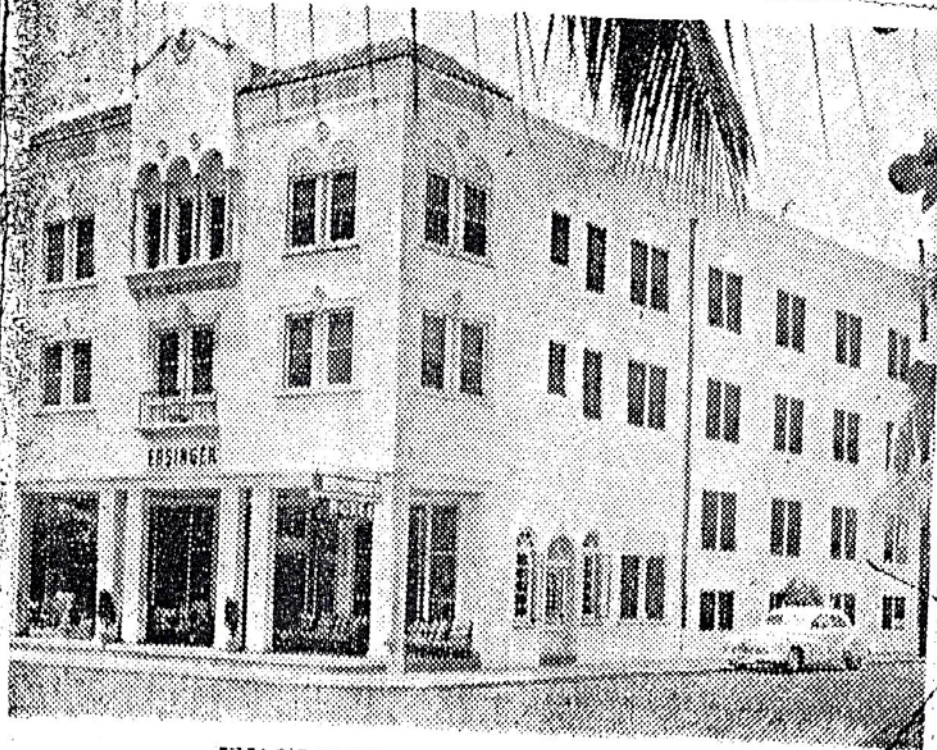
1937 Bon Air Hotel Brochure  
(Curt Teich Postcard Archive)





Circa 1944 photograph of the Edsinger Hotel  
(HistoryMiami, Miami News file)





## EDSINGER HOTEL SOLD Miami Beach Resort Brings \$220,000

# Edsinger Hotel Sale Announced

By CHARLIE LEYDEN  
(Daily News Real Estate Editor)

The Edsinger hotel, Northwest corner of Ocean drive and 11th st., Miami Beach, has been sold for \$220,000 to Max Frank Weiner of Baltimore and Irving Kamens of New York city. It was purchased from Mr. and Mrs. Ed Singer.

Bettye L. Sater, realtor, 420 Lincoln road, negotiated the sale and the sellers were represented in the transaction by

Attorney Henry D. Williams.

The new owners will take possession of the hotel on May 1 at which time the name will be changed and it will be known as the Waves hotel. It was formerly called the Bon Air and at that time it was owned and operated by Fred Siegel and William Harrison. It was purchased by Mr. and Mrs. Ed Singer about a year ago.

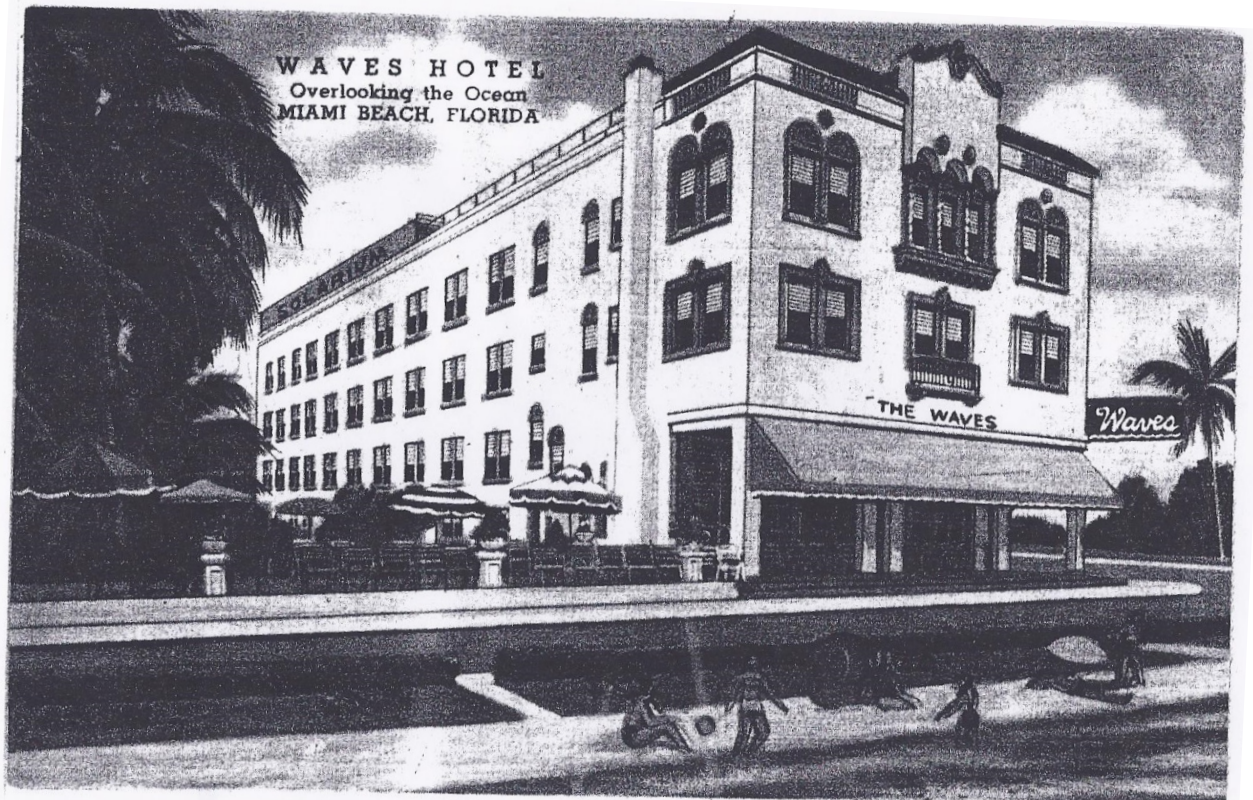
The Edsinger was used for some time by the army and was returned to civilian use about a year ago. The new owners, Miss Sater said, will make extensive improvements and alterations and will operate it throughout the summer.

Circa 1944 photograph of the Edsinger Hotel  
(Miami Daily News, April 26, 1945)





Top: circa 1945 photograph of The Waves Hotel  
 Bottom: 1945 postcard  
 (Curt Teich Postcard Archive)

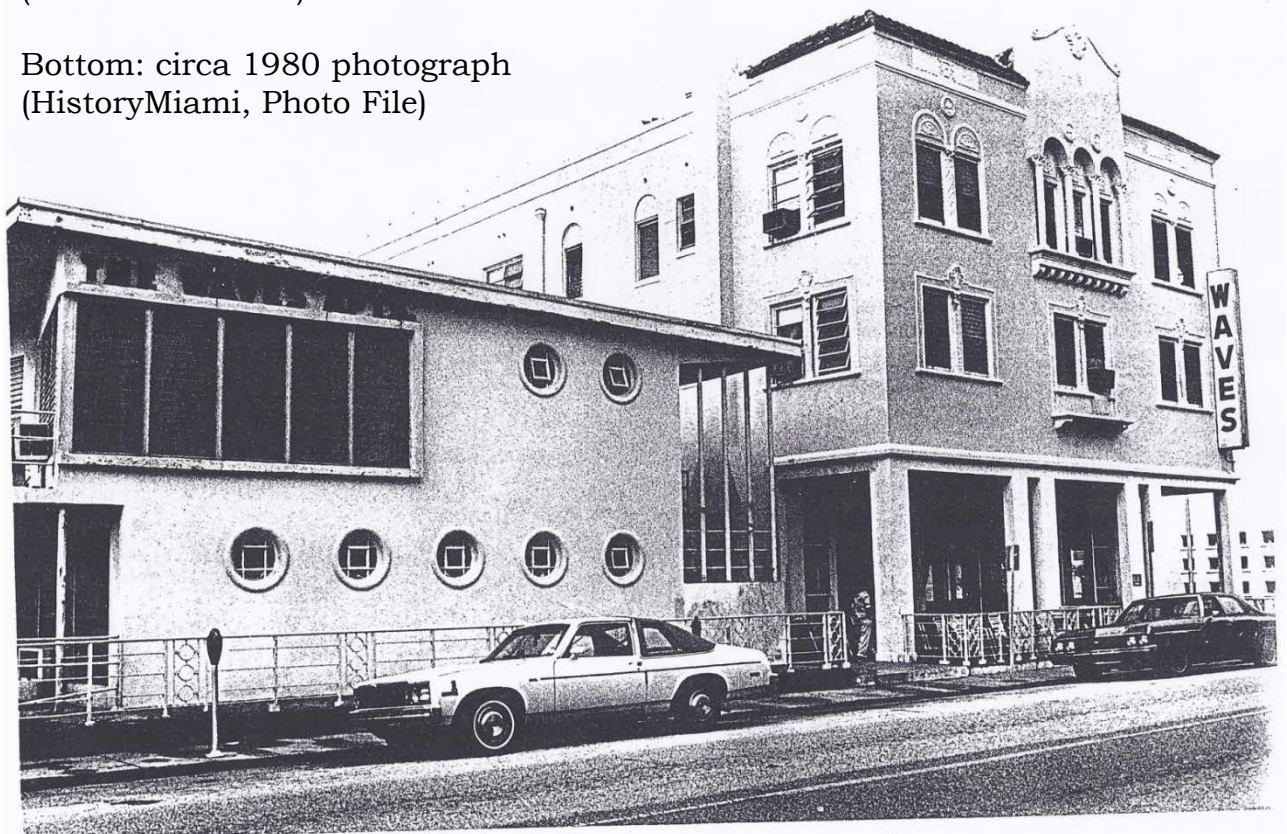






Top: 1953 postcard featuring a photograph of The Waves Hotel  
(Private collection)

Bottom: circa 1980 photograph  
(HistoryMiami, Photo File)







Top: circa 2001 photograph,  
East (Ocean Drive) elevation

Right: circa 2001 photograph  
Front Porch

(Photographs: Arquitectonica, Thorn  
Grafton, Architect)





Right: circa 2001  
photograph, Lobby  
Interior: view to south  
showing original  
fireplace



Left: circa 2001  
photograph, Interior: view  
to west into lower level

Right: circa 2001  
photograph, Interior: view  
to west at lower level



(Photographs: Arquitectonica,  
Thorn Grafton, Architect)



Right: circa 2001  
photograph, Lobby  
Interior: view to north



Left: circa 2001  
photograph, Lobby  
Interior: view to  
southwest

Right: circa 2001  
photograph, Lobby  
Interior: view to southeast



(Photographs: Arquitectonica,  
Thorn Grafton, Architect)



Below: circa 2001 photograph, Lobby Interior: front desk



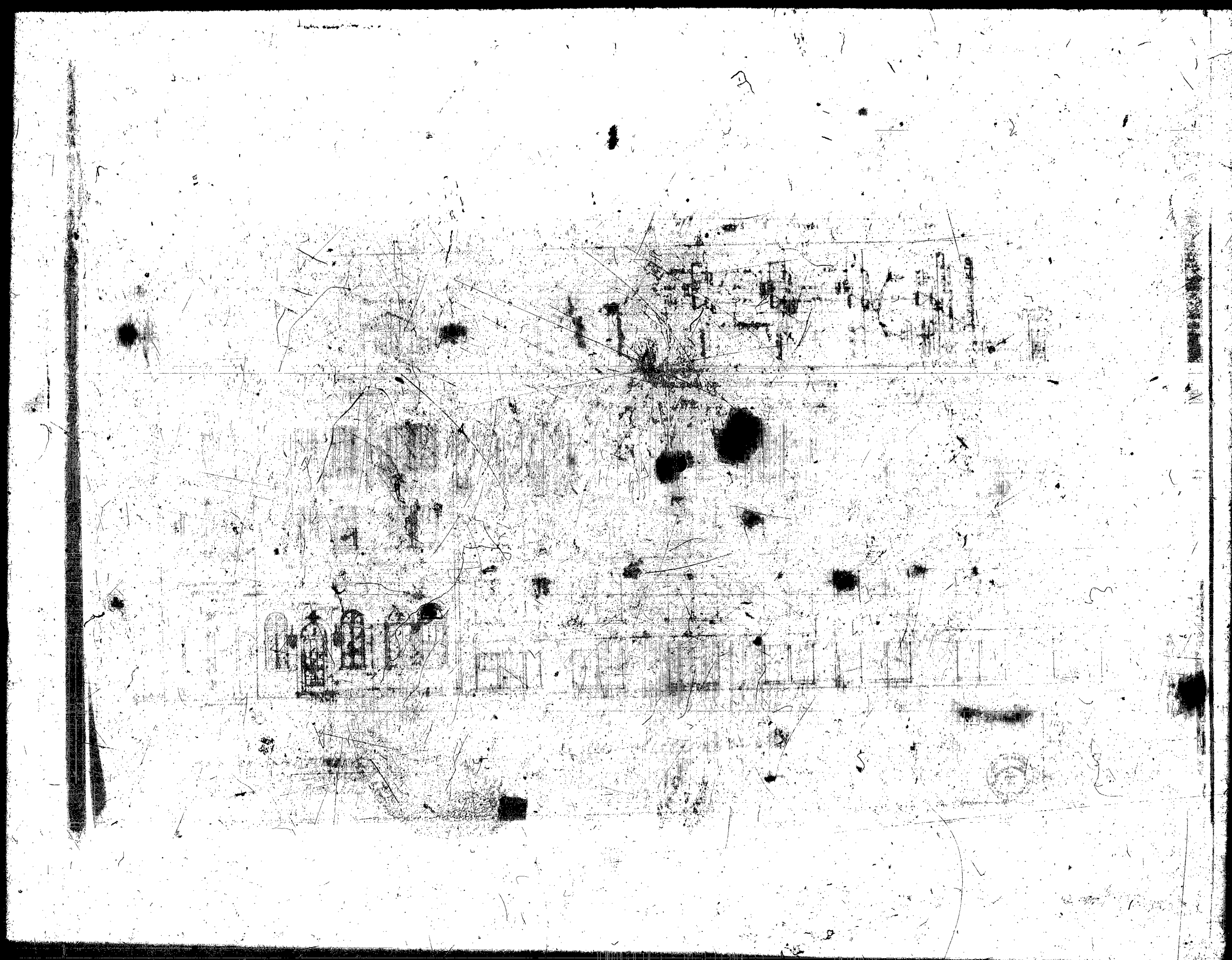
Below: circa 2001 photograph,  
Lobby Interior: view to southwest  
showing the main stair

(Photographs: Arquitectonica, Thorn Grafton, Architect)



Below: circa 2001 photograph,  
Lobby Interior: view to west with  
steps to the 2<sup>nd</sup> level rooms









50 ROOM  
HOTEL BUILDING  
CORRELATION AT FIVE MINUTES  
MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA

MODERN

