



# MIAMIBEACH

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER  
LTC # 178-2007

## LETTER TO COMMISSION

TO: Mayor David Dermer and Members of the City Commission  
FROM: City Manager Jorge M. Gonzalez  
DATE: July 25, 2007  
SUBJECT: CANNON DISCOVERED AT BELLE ISLE

RECEIVED  
2007 JUL 26 PM 12:21  
CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

On Tuesday, July 24, 2007, at approximately 10:00 AM, during an excavation process at the City's construction site at Belle Isle, a cannon was discovered by a construction crew in a three-foot entrenched area adjacent to the Standard Hotel (formerly the Lido Spa), located at 40 Island Avenue. Upon its discovery, City staff contacted the Historical Museum of Southern Florida (HMSF) immediately to verify its authenticity.

Subsequently, Mr. Jorge Zamanillo, curator from the HMSF acknowledged that the cannon may have historical significance. Mr. Zamanillo stated that the burial may have resulted from the wreckage of a Spanish ship. He added that the cannon's style dates to the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. The cannon may have been previously a part of a private estate that was located on the site. It is possible that it was placed on the waterfront and later removed to the front of the Monterey Inn, when the property was purchased. It appears that the cannon may have been abandoned by the Lido Owners when they constructed the Hotel over the demolished Monterey and they buried it in the right of way.

According to the curator, the cannon is in need of conservation. Electrolysis is a method that is commonly used to remove the corrosion and stabilize the artifacts. The State Bureau of Archaeological Research, which assisted with the preliminary identification of the cannon, recommends that if the City intends to display the cannon in a public property such as a park, the State may assist with preserving the cannon for a reduced fee. However, the City would have to arrange to have it delivered to Tallahassee at their headquarters.

Per the County's recommendation, the cannon was reburied below the water table for temporary preservation at Belle Isle. Additionally, Mr. Zamanillo and the State will further their research on the cannon and will update the City on their findings. The City's Historic Preservation Officer will continue to determine the historical significance of the artifact, to evaluate its preservation and to determine an appropriate location for its exhibition.

JMG:THUEChOAJ

Attachment

c: Tim Hemstreet, Assistant City Manager  
Jorge Chartrand, CIP Director



07/24/2007



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