

January 1960

landmark tower on the boulevard

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Recommended Citation

Dunn, Hampton, "landmark tower on the boulevard" (1960). *Hampton Dunn Phototouring Florida Collection*. 228.

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Photouring Florida

By HAMPTON DUNN



THE LANDMARK TOWER ON THE BOULEVARD

By HAMPTON DUNN

MIAMI --- At the height of the dizzying Florida real estate boom in the mid-1920's, a new and beautiful landmark punctured the skyline along Biscayne Boulevard. The "Governor" was building a fancy new home for his newspaper.

The Governor was, indeed, a former Chief Executive: James M. Cox, ex-Governor of Ohio and unsuccessful candidate for President of the United States with Franklin D. Roosevelt as running mate, in 1920.

Cox, after that disappointment, came to Miami, and for a million or more purchased the old Miami Metropolis, the city's first daily newspaper, founded in 1896 when Miami was an infant.

The new publisher announced immediately that he would build a mammoth Spanish-style building on Biscayne Boulevard to house the paper, which he had renamed the Metropolis-News.

Surely enough, he kept his pledge, erecting a Spanish-style tower at 600 Biscayne Boulevard. (In the late 1960's and the '70's, after The News had vacated the structure, it was used as the Cuban Refugee Center---and called "The Freedom Tower").

Marking opening of the new home, the newspaper came out with its biggest-ever edition --- 504 pages --- on July 26, 1925. More than 50 carloads of newsprint had gone into the edition, enough paper, it was said, to pave a path from Miami to Canada. A reporter boasted: "This ponderous edition, in its precedent-shattering completeness, is a great ambassador representing the Magic City as no municipality has yet been represented." The same architect who designed the Tower also designed Miami Beach's Roney Plaza and Coral Gables' Biltmore Hotel.

