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Otis R. Anthony African Americans in Florida Oral History Project
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La Union Martí-Maceo

Mr. Garcia is a member of La Union Martí-Maceo, the club for black Cubans. In Spanish, he describes some of the significant officers and members. It has about 350 members.

Jose Martí and Antonio Maceo

Martí was a revolutionary from the Cuban war of independence. Mr. Garcia lists several dates in Spanish. Maceo died in San Pedro, Cuba. "He's a colored man, a big man." When Martí came to speak at the cigar factories, people crowded around to talk to him. Martí was white and Maceo was black. Maceo went to Key West, Honduras, and other places.

Martí spoke at many of the cigar factories in Tampa. He was an organizer who made propaganda and collected money for Cuban independence. He also went to New York to do this. He did not have much influence on the other races outside the Cuban community. Martí died fighting in Santiago de Cuba.

For Tampa Cubans, Martí and Maceo's influence is still strong and always will be.

Cigar factories

Mr. Garcia came to Tampa from Cuba in 1922. There were about twenty cigar factories then, which are all gone now. "There is no factory now in Tampa." The cigars are made by machines now, not by hand.

There were many black Cubans working in the factories. Mr. Garcia worked in the Perfecto Garcia factory, which had about 500 workers, more than forty of whom were black. After the revolution in Cuba, the factory was closed.