

# WORLD NEWS



Miami Marine Stadium

## MIAMI MARINE STADIUM, FLORIDA, USA

One of the great Modernist constructions in Miami is the Miami Marine Stadium. Located on the shore of the 860-acre barrier island Virginia Key in Biscayne Bay, it dates from 1963. Designed by Cuban born architect Hilario Candela, a 27-year old devotee of Modernism, it seated 6,500 people and is distinguished by a massive cantilevered folded-plate canopy, made entirely of poured concrete, which cantilevers dramatically towards the bay. The roof is supported by eight columns at the rear, allowing unobstructed views from most seats. It was designed for watching powerboat racing, but served as the centre for many water-based events (such as water-skiing competitions) as well as musical performances of every type, boxing, water shows, Easter sunrise services, campaign rallies, community events. The concerts, where the band played on pontoons, figure strongly in the memory of the people of Miami. On a warm Florida night, concerts under the stars with the Miami skyline as a backdrop were absolutely magical - some recall bobbing about on small boats, surfboards and inner-tubes. A Jimmy Buffet concert in 1985 is still talked about by the locals. But all this changed when Hurricane Andrew swept across the city in 1992. It left doubts about the safety of the structure, and the City asserted that it should be demolished. But an engineering report showed that the Stadium suffered no damage from Hurricane Andrew - however it does require \$2-3 million for repairs to return it to its operational condition. In the meantime, it has become a favourite haunt of graffiti artists.

There is now a movement to revive the stadium, led by "Friends of Miami Marine Stadium", formed in 2008, and the Dade Heritage Trust. If you go to [www.marinestadium.org](http://www.marinestadium.org), there are some great images of the history of the Stadium, and what it would be like if restored. By the way, Jimmy Buffet also made a video to assist the group, with a link on the web-site. The Marine Stadium has also been named to the National Treasures list of the National Trust For Historic Preservation.

Many thanks to ADMS member Jeff Donnelly for the fascinating visit.

See: Miami Architecture, Shulman, Robinson and Donnelly, pp. 96/7; [www.dadeheritagetrust.org/link/friends-miami-marine-stadium](http://www.dadeheritagetrust.org/link/friends-miami-marine-stadium); <http://archrecord.construction.com/news/2012/01/Marine-Stadium.asp>