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UNUSUAL MONUMENT SYMBOLIZES FRIENDSHIP

By HAMPTON DUNN

CORAL GABLES --- One of the most unusual monuments is found here on Cartagena Plaza, where LeJeune, Sunset and Old Cutler Roads meet. The center of interest in a beautifully landscaped traffic circle is the monument featuring a pair of old shoes.

The shoes, "Los Zapatos Viejos," are replicas on a reduced scale of a famed statue in Cartagena, Columbia, in South America. That community is a Sister City of Coral Gables in the People to People program. The giant shoes on a stone base remind of the friendly ties between the two cities. The program between Coral Gables and Cartagena has won the Reader's Digest Foundation "best in the nation" award.

A plaque at Cartagena Plaza explains why the old shoes. It seems that a well-known Columbian poet, Luis Carlos Lopez, compared his feelings for his native city, Cartagena, to the affection that one has for a pair of comfortable old shoes, in his poem, "A Mi Ciudad Nativa." It's a quaint but effective manner of expressing fondness for home.

Friendly ties with Spanish neighbors on the South come naturally for Coral Gable which has Spanish atmosphere throughout. It is the beautifully planned city of George E. Merrick, which blossomed out during the Florida boom. The developer and his wife got names for most of the streets from Washington Irving's book, The Alhambra.

The leading "spokesman" for the new city was the brilliant William Jennings Bryan, who was paid $50,000 a year to extol its virtues.