

**From:** Bruce Wigo

**Sent:** Friday, June 02, 2017 4:51 PM

**To:** Trisha Logan

**Cc:** Laura Voet; Dr. Lynette Long; Linda Mia Franco; Donald Morris; Thomas Green; Cija Omengebar; Bob Wojcik

**Subject:** Historic Marker

Dear Trish,

I have just reviewed the request for a historic marker to be placed on the Las Olas beach front, commemorating the accomplishments of Diana Nyad.

While I am fully in support of more historic markers commemorating the achievements of women, this would not be an appropriate location for Diana, not only because it would detract from the historical significance of the Wade Ins - but beyond taking an occasional dip in the sea there, nothing significant in her career occurred at this location. If there were to be a marker for Diana, the appropriate place would be at her point of landing in the keys.

That said, I would like to propose an alternative - Katherine Rawls, the greatest woman swimmer, and one of the greatest woman athletes of her time. It was the incredible accomplishments of Miss Rawls that brought Fort Lauderdale to the attention of the College Swimming Coaches Association, who held their first Forum here in 1936. The Forum has been credited with creating the phenomena of Spring Break and also the selection of Fort Lauderdale as the site for the International Swimming Hall of Fame, over New York, Louisville and Houston in 1962.

I have attached a few articles and a photo of the dedication plaque that was attached to the Casino Pool, which once stood on Alexander Park, and which is now located in our museum, upon her being named the nation's AP Outstanding Woman Athlete of the year, in 1935.

Not only was she a great athlete who brought fame and attention to Fort Lauderdale, but she lived and trained in Fort Lauderdale during her entire competitive career. Following her retirement, when the 1940 Olympic Games were cancelled, she helped our nation's war effort by being one of the initial 28 pilots who formed the Women's Axillary Ferrying Squadron in 1942, a group that transported military cargo by air, owing to the shortage of male pilots. In 1965, she was among the inaugural class inducted into the International Swimming Hall of Fame.

Here is a link to her wikipedia page. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Katherine\\_Rawls](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Katherine_Rawls)

If you or Dr. Long would like to learn more about Katherine Rawls and need assistance in formulating text for a marker that could be placed on the walk or on Alexander Park, my staff would be honored to assist.

Sincerely,

Bruce Wigo