

The Greater North Miami Historian



WINTER EDITION

Volume II Number 4

DECEMBER 1999

THE GNMHS PRESIDENT'S MILLENNIAL MESSAGE

SCOTT GALVIN

Experiencing the new millenium will be truly memorable. No one knows for certain what the morning of January 1, 2000 will bring. Personally, I don't fear widespread disaster as some forecast, but I admit that I am curious to see what the sunrise will bring that day. Without doubt, it will be a landmark date in human history. It is fun to imagine what North Miami might be like in the coming century.

I can foresee the time when all City transactions, including paying a water bill, are done online. Even our City Council meetings might be watched via computer. Perhaps viewers will be able to immediately notify Council members of their opinions on issues while debate is still continuing! As online shopping becomes more prevalent, I see our economy becoming more reliant on entertainment and food-oriented businesses.

No matter how easy it becomes for one to order products over the Internet, computers will never be able to give someone a "night on the town." There will always be a need to go out and have a little fun. That's why I see a continued demand for entertainment-driven business. Also, I imagine that gasoline supplies will dry up over the next 100 years. Although scientists are already working on alternative fuel sources, I am curious to see what will surge to the forefront. Perhaps it will be a source that hasn't yet been discovered.

Of course, a mind as simple as mine can't truly conceive of the wonders which will be brought by the 21st Century. Nobody could have imagined 100 years ago things like the airplane, computer, or caller ID. It's staggering to realize how quickly modern science and medicine have advanced in such a short period of time. I can't wait to find out what the coming years will bring! Keep collecting history!

111 YEARS AGO IN THE PRECEDING CENTURY A MARINE CORP VETERAN BECOMES FIRST PERMANENT RESIDENT IN NORTH MIAMI AREA

North Dade county got its first full time resident in 1888. His name was C.G. Ihle and he was a veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps. Mr. Ihle had served in the Marines in Pensacola and the Gulf Coast area and was impressed with the people and the fertile land. Shortly after his discharge he and a fellow Marine, by the name of David Burchhardt, headed for Jacksonville, Florida, with their severance pay. It has been said that while in Jacksonville they met an Englishman who gave them advice as to South Florida. It would seem that he, the Englishman, had been down the Florida coast. It might well have been so, as the Bahama Islands, a British Colony, lies just east of the South Florida coast and it was not uncommon for the Bahamians to migrate back and forth from the Islands to Florida. The Englishman pointed out to them that the South Florida coast offered them all the things that were looking for but in addition they would not have the cold weather they had experienced in the Pensacola area. So they went south and after a short period of settling in or maybe getting the "Lay of the Land", Mr. Ihle purchased 80 acre of land for \$80.00 in the area of what is now NE 116th Street and Biscayne Boulevard. He broke ground for a farm and eventually became a permanent but reclusive resident farmer. Burchhardt went in another direction but that is another story. To follow up on some more North Miami History check out ----- **The City of North Miami Web Page soon to be on line.**

THE GIFT BOX FOR THE QUARTER

Ed Krause a former Jaycee's President came over with a stack of Jaycee newsletters that were published in the seventies. They were called "The Orphan". The name "Orphan" for the Jaycee's Newsletter came by default, as no one wanted to accept the challenge to print it. With this problem it had a new father/editor every month and never a mother in those days. If you want to know who was in business and supporting the Jaycees in the seventies come on over and take a look. In addition Ed donated a great photograph from the twenties. It is according to Ed a picture of the Angela Daley Building. We have to take his word for it, he's been around the city long enough to know. It's located and is still standing at 721 NE 125th street. In addition it was also the City Hall for the Town of Miami Shores in the twenties. It was also the Chamber of Commerce Building at one time and this was verified by other photos in our file. It had a sign over the doorway that identified it as "The Chamber of Commerce Building." Thanks Ed.

From the Mayor's office we were presented the files of the Winter National Parade and Festivities of 1986 and 1987. If you want to know who did it and "Who was Who," come on over and open the files. They contain the Table of Organization and a list of the officials and photographs of the operation. Some of the leaders of that operation were the Mayors Howard Neu (87) and Marco Loffredo Jr. (86). The spark plugs in the group were easy to find. They were Bonnie Graham and Marion Dominix. Thanks Mr. Mayor

Lydia Kordalewski retrieved some Keystone Point Letterhead stationary that gave us a list of the Officers of the Homeowners Association that was kicking around in the 1970's. The letterhead is now in the archives with Dick Brook's map. You see, Dick Brooks popped in right after Lydia with a map of Biscayne Gardens that identified the lots and blocks in all the subdivisions. Written in on the lots were the names of the owners who resided on the lots. His Dad in the late 1940's was the President of the Home Owner's Association and had in detail written in all the member's names on the lots. With the names in place he could personally locate and go to the member's home at a moment's notice. Don't bother with mailing a letter to the member. Mail! There was no home delivery at that time. All the folks had a Post Office box over in North Miami. It was quicker to just go over to person's home. Thanks Lydia and Dick.



FOR THE THIRTIETH YEAR THE PUMPKIN'S ON THE STEEPLE

For the thirtieth year in a row the great pumpkin has appeared on the steeple of the E. May Avil Library in North Miami. See the Fall or Halloween issue of the Historian for the full story.

MIAMI BEACH TO OPA LOCKA VIA NORTH MIAMI'S NE 125TH STREET SUBURBAN REVIEW JUNE 15, 1950

The Start On Causeway Is Good News

Dredge boats and pile drivers are expected to begin this week on the new causeway linking North Miami and Bay Harbor Island. That is indeed good news! The contract for the \$2,000,000 causeway, extending for 2½ miles, calls for completion within 12 months.

M. E. Garris, in charge of the job, said the federal permit for construction was received last Thursday. The proceeds from the sale of the self liquidating revenue bonds are to be deposited in a Jacksonville bank this week, officials of Bay Harbor Island reported.

The plan is to charge a 25c round trip toll. There will be 2,200 feet of bridge construction 40 feet wide, with a double leaf drawbridge over the waterway channel. This new causeway is about half way between the Sunny Isle bridge and the 79th Street causeway. It will stretch from a point at about Collins Ave. and 98th St. on the beach side to N.E. 123rd St. on the North Miami side. North Miami have made plans for improvements of thoroughfares routing from the West end of the causeway clear through to Opa Locka via the new bridge across the Biscayne River at N.E. 125th St. This is great news for the whole of North Dade County.

On January 7th the meeting of the GNMHS will be held at North Miami's Police Station Community room. Mr. John "Rick" Ricciardelli a 50 year resident of North Miami will talk to us on the "Old Days" and the missing link (the 125th street Bridge over the Biscayne Canal) that is mentioned in the above 1950 newspaper. Mr. Ricciardelli has been Chairman and a member of the North Miami Charter Board for over three decades as well as a Vice-Commander on the National level, for the Am-Vets. He served as a municipal Judge in North Miami and was on the staff of Representative Dante Fascell of the US House of Representatives. The "Old Days" in North Miami should make an interesting dialogue for the evening.

GNMHS HOST DR. GREG BUSH, DIRECTOR OF THE INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC HISTORY

Dr. Bush a University of Miami Professor and Director of the Institute of Public History spoke to a packed room on Friday November 5th at the regular meeting of the GNMHS.

Dr. Bush covered a wide range subjects; starting with the protection of Public Space. Public Space was initially defined as areas like the Miami Circle, the home of Commodore Munroe, the Barnacle, Virginia Key, and Bicentennial Park. He did limit it to these historical issues, as there are other sites as well, that need protection by the public. He spoke of the Urban Environmental League that was organized to aid and protect the public space that is still remaining and the acquisition of other sites that need to be in the public domain.

Dr Bush suggested that groups like the GNMHS should be joining in with others and forming coalitions that are pro-active in preserving and advancing the public interest in the lands and parks around us. He said that the coalitions should be active in looking and reviewing all the plans and concepts proffered by the government entities that lead to the depletion of Public Land.

The need for publicity is critical in getting the message to the public. Many of the coalitions are unpretentious and not very well bank rolled and publicity is expensive. The new tool, the Net has been a boon to the little guy. In a matter of days the Miami Circle was worldwide news on the Net. The candle light vigil was seen worldwide. Not only was the Candle light vigil seen but the phone numbers/addresses of the officials were also seen.

Dr. Bush also went into the area of recording the history around us at this time. We (GNMHS) are busy collecting letters, documents, and photographs from the past but for a moment consider today's events are tomorrow's history. Dr. Bush said that many of us feel that we have not made a significant contribution to history and have nothing to say but consider that you were there and have a significant viewpoint of things that you saw and heard. Oral history taken from people who lived through "Hurricane Andrew" would give the folks a view of our trial and tribulations. Consider where you were you on Pearl Harbor Sunday if you are old enough. There are a thousand events and more people than events. Sit down and write about one of them for your posterity if not for the public. The oral histories that we (GNMHS) have taken will add to the understanding of the folks that listen and read them a hundred years from now. You can be the bridge to the future. An example of this is the article "Christmas Past" written during the great American depression by Don and Violet Henshaw.

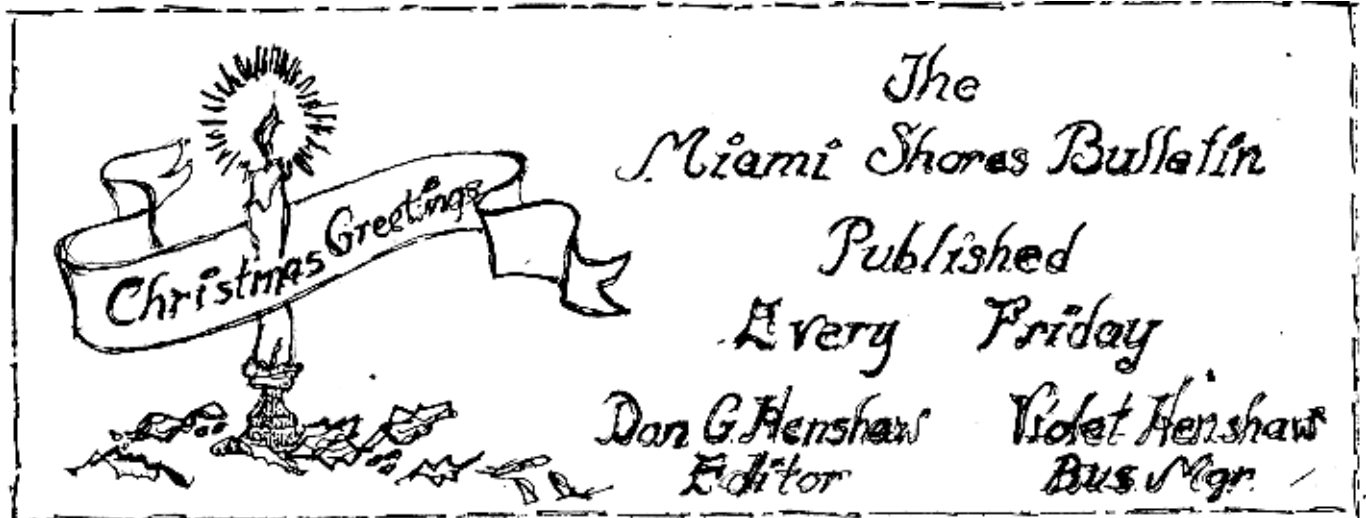
WHOSE ON THE BAND WAGON NOW ?

The word has been getting around about the GNMHS and 13 people sent in their dues and signed up as members and supporters of the Society. The new members for this quarter are:

Al Diaz, Ed Krause, Eileen Cubillas, Nancy Hopkins, Cyndi Harris, Patricia Manfredi, James Devaney, John "Rick" Ricciardelli, Thomas F. Ritten Jr., June Ritten Wells, Sandy Weisberg, Hiram Quinones, and Frank Santiago

All the folks who support the Society are not local. In the above group Mrs. Wells is from Atlanta and her brother Tom Ritten is from Orlando. They grew up in North Miami as children and have fond memories of the "Good Old Days." We now have a couple of members from Atlanta and some supporters from Central Florida. The core of the Society, however, is supported by the great local residents and businesses. Local support is great and the Society would like to thank all folks who turn out and support the functions that we fondly call the "Road Show."

FRONT PAGE BANNER OF THE DECEMBER 23RD 1927 ISSUE OF THE
MIAMI SHORES BULLETIN



CHRISTMAS PAST

A portion of the editorial taken from that December 23, 1927 Bulletin

----"1927 Christmas is not to be as joyous as many in the past in Miami, for we find ourselves in an unusual situation for this season of the year. Literally hundreds are unemployed, food and clothing are necessities that many lack. Scores of families are making no plans for Santa's reception. If we ever needed a Christmas Spirit among those who are blessed with the goods of the world it is this year. A generous spirit of giving will do much to alleviate any suffering, but the Spirit of the Christ will be needed for the permanent relief of the situation. Our own community will do its share in this work of kindness. The funds raised at the musicals and the Thanksgiving Services augmented by individual gifts of money, food, and clothing will go towards helping the needy in this and adjacent communities." ----

Things are far better today than in 1927 but there are still hungry and homeless families in our community therefore we still need the year round and generous Spirit that the Henshaw's spoke of in their 1927 appeal.



The Henshaw family is well known in North Miami but their mark on world history is not a big one. That is to say they would not be found in the encyclopedias of our time or probably the future ones. They however will be part of North Miami History. Their comments, editorials, and writings narrate a great portion of what was happening in the area. They perceived certain things as they passed through and they made an attempt to bridge the gap of the their time to the future. Can you write a journal for your posterity and effectively contribute to the flow of knowledge across time. Can you do this? Do this and your posterity will know how you lived or got by and who you were. Shown above is series of advertisements that went into the Miami Shores Bulletin on a weekly basis. Reading some of these old Bulletins gives a great insight into the Old City of Miami Shores (North Miami) and Biscayne Park.

THE AMERICAN CZECHOSLOVAK SOCIAL CLUB OF NORTH MIAMI

The club is located on 3.3 acres of land on historic Arch Creek Road just south of NE 135th Street. Arch Creek Road once was part of the original "Military Highway" that was constructed in 1857-58 and ran from Fort Dallas (Miami) to Fort Lauderdale. The ORIGINAL road construction was under the direction of Captain J.M. Brannan and Captain Abner Doubleday of baseball fame. It is quite probable that Brannan and Doubleday trod the grounds of what is now the Club. The land in those days was a veritable jungle and in the construction diary, Brannan describes it as the worse land that he ever had to build a road on. Today the land is somewhat different, as a great portion has been cleared yet it still has a remainder of the original jungle that gives it imposing features and character.

A short history of the American Czechoslovak Social Club of North Miami gives probably a nineteen twenties description of a house in the jungle, "the grounds were covered by thick wild underbrush. It was a veritable jungle. A very narrow path led into the property. Rumor had it that Al Capone used the property to store his contraband." Well that may well be true as the property backed up to Webber Creek now "Little Arch Creek" that led into Arch Creek and finally into Biscayne Bay. Its setting in the jungle would give it a bit of security from intruders and the location on the waterway made it accessible for the rumrunners in prohibition days. There has been no proof but it is a feasible and romantic concept.

In 1949 things began to change for the jungle site. A charter for the American Czechoslovak Social Club of North Miami was issued. For many years friends had been gathering at local parks, beaches, and social affairs. The desire grew for a closer association. Edward and Marie Berounsky of Miami Springs and some 20 Czechs and Slovaks gathered to form a club. A temporary group of officers were selected. Several meetings later the permanent organization of the Club was formed with its Headquarters at the Slavia Inn owned by Rudolph Klika. The first elected officers were President Martin Plouzck, Vice President Joseph Sykora, and Secretary Edward Barounsky, Treasurer Michael Zimic, and Financial Secretary Edward Jost. Thereafter regular meetings were held and membership increased. Soon their meeting place at the restaurant was not large enough. It was decided that the organization should buy a place for a clubhouse and a committee was formed to seek a suitable place. The search yielded the 3.3 acres on Arch Creek Road.

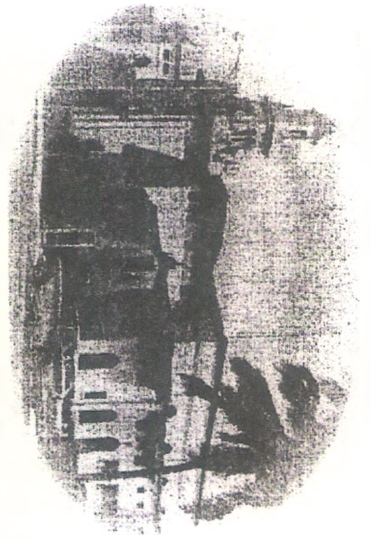
The property contained a large building and a smaller one that was a garage apartment. It was necessary for the Club to determine whether the property could be zoned for use as a clubhouse and in the end could the Club finance it? In the end all hurdles were overcome and a first mortgage was in place. Selling bonds to the members was the method used to raise the money. Nine years later the mortgage was burned.

At first there was a dining room but the food was prepared at the member's homes and brought to the Club. Later a large kitchen and a dining room for 300 were added. Of course a Czech dinner cannot be served without a glass of beer so eventually a barroom was added. The veritable jungle gave way to a parking lot for 100 cars. The vast open space car lot, unpaved and grassed in compliments the surrounding jungle and gives it a rustic lived in atmosphere. And so now 50 years later the Czechs and the Slovaks meet and dine with their friends at 13325 Arch Creek Road. The Club's restaurant is open to the public every Sunday from noon to 5:00 PM. A Sunday dinner can be roast pork, sauerkraut, dumplings, roast duck, goulash, a glass of beer and some good Czechoslovak music.

Compiled from notes of Lydia Kordalewski and Bob Petrick

We offer our condolences to Joseph Leonard, a GNMHS Director, on the recent passing of his sister, Katharine. The Leonard's are one of North Miami's, oldest families having settled in the area around 1923.

The Greater North Miami Historical Society



The Greater North Miami Historical Society is an organization established to preserve historical artifact, written, and oral history, ephemera, and memorabilia relating to the current City of North Miami and the areas surrounding the city.

The Society came into being when a group of interested citizens decided that the history around the Arch Creek Basin was as important to county history as is the Miami River Basin. Collections or data gathering, along with archiving are its basic tasks. The Society needs the papers, the photos, the stories, and any other documentation that is important to the historical archives of the community. The Society needs the help of the community and the friends of the community. So if you have a document, a photo or a story that you can donate or let us copy please contact us at the below address

13100 WEST DIXIE HWY
NORTH MIAMI, FL 33161
(305) 891-7811 FAX (305) 893-8522

**GREATER NORTH MIAMI HISTORICAL SOCIETY
13100 WEST DIXIE HIGHWAY
NORTH MIAMI, FLORIDA 33161**

**APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP
GREATER NORTH MIAMI HISTORICAL SOCIETY
13100 WEST DIXIE HIGHWAY NORTH MIAMI, FL. 33161**

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____ **FAX** _____

MEMBERSHIP DUES \$10.00 ANNUAL