

Miami Pioneers / Natives of Dade

celebrating and preserving the local history of Miami-Dade County, Florida

monthly meetings with historical programs • www.MPNOD.org • March, 2017

Next Meeting Sunday, March 5 at 2:30pm

Central Christian Church
222 Menores Ave, Coral Gables 33134

Enter the door at the south side of the building on Mendoza Ave. Parking in west lot is also available if you enter from Menores Ave. Street parking is also free on Sunday.

Please bring \$1 donation to cover the cost of the room. We very much appreciate those who can provide refreshments such as cookies, crackers, brownies, etc.

Correspondence

Send to MP/NOD at:
14900 SW 71 Ave
Miami, FL 33158

MP/NOD Facebook Page
<https://www.facebook.com/MPNOD/>

Dues

Please bring your annual \$20 dues to the meeting, or mail your check made to MP/NOD to our Treasurer: Marlene B. Carlin, 14900 SW 71 Ave, Miami, FL 33158. If your envelope is marked, your dues are past. Please help by sending in your payment as soon as possible.

2016-17 Officers

our president is Jim Hartnett
305-667-5733
hartnettj@bellsouth.net

past president, Caesar Philips
treasurer, Marlene B. Carlin
corresponding secretary, Mary Pyle
recording secretary, Cele Diaz
sergeant at arms, Gerda Marchese
parliamentarian, Linda Hertz

March 5 Sunday Meeting

The next meeting of the Miami Pioneers and Natives of Dade will take place at the usual location at 2:30pm on Sunday, March 5.

History of the Brickell Neighborhood

with Casey Picket

Our Guest Speaker is Casey Picket of Miami History Channel.

The talk on the Brickell Neighborhood will outline close to 150 years of history along the Brickell Avenue corridor from 1871 to present day. The presentation will discuss the Brickell family and the impact they had on what has become a brand name describing one of the most prestigious locations in Miami. The people, buildings, street names and activity types have changed through the years, but the area has been highly regarded throughout its storied history.

Mr. Picket is third generation Miami man, born at Doctor's Hospital in Coral Gables. Casey's family roots date as far back as 1899 in Miami.

His paternal grandmother's side of the family was in the citrus business in Apopka, Florida during the Freezes of 1894-95. The devastation of these freezes led the Combs family to eventually

Welcome New Member

Marion Zamotin recently joined the Miami Pioneers and Natives of Dade.

March Birthdays

03 Scott Biggane
07 Elizabeth Whalen
10 Joyce Demirjian
15 Julia Chwalik
15 Betty Filippi
16 Dr. James Hutson
20 Jane Stubbs
21 Joy McGarry
23 Philip Balbi
24 M. Hooper
24 Phillip Tedder
28 Dr. Joseph Fitzgerald

relocate from Central Florida to the newly formed City of Miami in the late 1890s and early 1900s.

Casey's grandmother and parents were born South Florida. His grandmother graduated with George Smathers and Gardner Mulloy in the class of 1932. His father graduated from Miami High in 1958 and went on to get his degree from University of Miami.

Casey's maternal grandparents ultimately settled in Coral Gables. His maternal grandfather, Raymond Casey, was part of an ownership group that ran a popular restaurant on Biscayne Boulevard until the late 1940s.

His mother graduated from Coral Gables High School.

Given his deep roots in Miami, Casey developed an interest in researching and writing about Miami's history. He started the Miami-History Blog (www.miami-history.com), in 2012, and maintains several social media sites to share and engage those interested in Miami and South Florida history.

Along with Dr. Paul George, Casey is a co-founder of the Miami History Channel (www.miamihistorychannel.com), which provides online documentaries on topics relating to Miami and South Florida history.



Save The Date: April 2

On the first Sunday in April we'll meet again to enjoy a wonderful program.

Florida Cracker Trail remains a window into History

We often hear the term “Florida Cracker” used in conversation, but what does it really mean?

Historically speaking, Florida cracker refers to colonial-era English and American pioneer settlers and their descendants in pre-American Florida territories. The first of these arrived in 1763 after Spain traded Florida to Great Britain following the latter’s victory over France in the Seven Years’ War.

The Cracker Conversation

The term “cracker” was in use during the Elizabethan era to describe braggarts. The original root of this is the Middle English word crack, meaning “entertaining conversation” (One may be said to “crack” a joke).

By the 1760s, the English, both at home and in the American colonies, applied the term “cracker” to Scots-Irish and English American settlers of the remote southern back country.

The word was later associated with the cowboys of Georgia and Florida, many of them descendants of those early frontiersmen who had migrated South.

Cracker Cowboys

The Florida “cowhunter” or “cracker cowboy” of the 19th and early 20th centuries was distinct from the Spanish vaquero and the Western cowboy. Florida cowboys did not use lassos to herd or capture cattle. Their primary tools were cow whips and dogs. Florida cattle and horses were smaller than the western breeds.

Cracker Descendants

In modern use, among some Floridians, the term is used as a proud or jocular self-description. Since the huge influx of new residents into Florida in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, from the northern parts of the United States and from Mexico and Latin America, the term “Florida Cracker” is used informally by some Floridians to indicate that their families have lived in the state for many generations.

It is considered a source of pride to be descended from “frontier people” who did not just live but flourished in a time before air conditioning, mosquito repellent, and screens.

Cracker Storytelling Festival

Since the late 20th century, the Cracker Storytelling Festival has been held annually in the fall at Homeland Heritage Park in Homeland, Florida.



The Cracker Storytelling Festival includes many storytellers from around Florida who come to share their stories with visitors. The majority of visitors who attend this event are students, because storytelling is part of the Florida curriculum.

The festival also incorporates local crafts and artwork, food vendors and a cracker whip-cracking contest. During the cracker whip-cracking contest, participants compete to see who can crack the most buttery flaky crackers. The winner receives the title of “Head Cracker.”

Florida Cracker Trail

The Florida Cracker Trail runs from just east of Bradenton, and ends in Fort Pierce, a total distance of approximately 120 miles (190 km).

In years past, this route was used for both cattle and horses. Today it includes parts of State Road 66, State Road 64, and U.S. Highway 98.

On November 20, 2000, the Florida Cracker Trail was selected

as a Community Millennium Trail. The Millennium Trails is a partnership among the White House Millennium Council, the Department of Transportation, Rails-to-Trails

Conservancy, the National Endowment for the Arts and other public agencies and private organizations. The goal of Millennium Trails is the creation of a nationwide network of trails that protect natural environment, interpret history and culture, and enhance alternative transportation, recreation and tourism.

An annual Cracker Trail ride is now held the last full week in February of each year. The ride begins at a site just east of Bradenton, Florida, and ends with a parade through downtown Ft. Pierce, Florida, a total of approximately 120 miles (190 km).

Each day’s ride is approximately 15 to 20 miles in length. The purpose of the ride is to draw attention to Florida’s horse and cattle heritage.

Importance of Participation

Please remember to attend the monthly meetings to see your fellow members, stay abreast of news and updates to your historical society and so that our guest speakers receive the type of reception that they deserve.

Bring a friend, invite a neighbor, reach out to family members that you know will enjoy our wonderful presentations on local history.

Snail Mail or Email?

The cost of printing, stuffing and mailing our monthly newsletter—our largest annual expense—continues to rise.

If you’d prefer to receive your monthly MP/NOD newsletter via email, and save your club the increasing cost of printing and postage, please let us know.