

# Miami Pioneers / Natives of Dade

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

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

**Next Meeting**  
Sunday, November 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.

## 2016-18 Officers

our president is Jim Hartnett  
305-667-5733 or 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

## November 5th Sunday Meeting

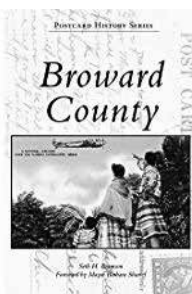
The next meeting of the Miami Pioneers and Natives of Dade will take place at the usual location at 2:30pm.

## Seth Bramson: Postcards of Broward County

by Seth Bramson

Our Guest Speaker for the November meeting is Professor Seth Bramson.

His presentation will center on his new book about the history of Broward County, published by Arcadia's Postcard History Series.



Seth will also talk about his biography of former Florida Supreme Court Chief Justice Gerald Kogan. Justice Kogan prosecuted Candace Mossler and Melvin Lane Powers in the murder trial of her husband, Miami banker Jacques Mossler as well as a number of other high profile cases.



## October Birthdays

- 1 Patricia Clarke
- 1 Margaret Kern
- 11 Florence Birch
- 11 Linda Boutin
- 14 Caesar Phillips
- 16 Andy Raby
- 18 Jeremy Daniels
- 18 Barbara McCabe
- 19 Jacquelyn Westbrook
- 21 Mary Taylor
- 23 Duane Hutson MD
- 23 Howard Kleinberg
- 25 Bettye Hudson
- 26 Robert Albury
- 30 Hannah Black
- 30 Elizabeth Stevens
- 31 Helen Grier

## November Birthdays

- 1 Kathleen Kauffman
- 5 Sherrin Smith
- 7 Walter Baggesson
- 7 Donald Slesnick II
- 8 Louise Garavaglia
- 11 Michae Brenan
- 14 Selma Speakman
- 17 Ruth Greenfield
- 26 Kemal and Ann Rajib
- 27 Harold Goldberg

## A Tough Start To Our Season

Your MP/NOD board of directors regrets the delays and challenges presented by the storms of the 2017 season. We were unable to create and print a newsletter for October, although we did send out notices via email as usual.

It's now important that we make up for lost time and momentum as we begin our new season of historical presentations.

With your support and attendance, we hope to get back on track with our high quality programs and guest speakers.

Please make plans now to attend the upcoming monthly meetings and be sure to invite a friend or two to enjoy our Sunday afternoon gatherings.

*Save The Date*

**December 3**  
**Justice Gerald Kogan**

former Justice of the Florida Supreme Court from 1987-1998. He served as Chief Justice from 1996-1998. He graduated from the University of Miami School of Law in 1954.

# The Overseas Railroad, Highway and State Road 4A

It's certainly a unique experience to travel to islands by car. The Florida Keys Overseas Highway is a marvel of engineering that transformed these erstwhile remote isles into world renowned destinations for adventure travelers.

Of course it started with Henry Flager's ambition to extend his rail network to a deep water port that could serve the newest wonder of the modern world -- the Panama Canal. Henry knew that ships carrying cargo from afar would dock at the nearest rail station to unload untold quantities of goods and treasures destined for the American mainland.



*The old Bahia Honda steel trestle was converted to a concrete bridge for cars. Portions of the road were tolled until 1954; toll booths were located on Big Pine Key and Lower Matecumbe.*

Completed in 1912, the Overseas Railroad was heavily damaged and partially destroyed in the Labor Day Hurricane of 1935. The Florida East Coast Railway was financially unable to rebuild the destroyed sections, so the roadbed and remaining bridges were sold to the state of Florida for \$640,000.

Since the 1950s the Overseas Highway has been refurbished into a main coastal highway between the cities of Miami and Key West. While the Overseas Highway today runs along the former Overseas Railroad right of way, portions of the highway came into existence earlier in a different alignment while the railroad was still operational.

## State Road 4A

The concept of an Overseas Highway began with the Miami Motor Club in 1921. The Florida land boom of the 1920s was underway and the club wanted to attract tourists to easily reached fishing areas, which could only

be reached by boat or train at the time. The land boom also attracted real estate interests who sought vehicular access to the upper keys where there were thousands of acres of undeveloped land. The completion of the railroad further proved a highway through the keys was feasible.

Construction on the original Overseas Highway, designated State Road 4A (an extension of a route running from Miami to Homestead), lasted through most of the mid 1920s. Officially opening for traffic on January 25, 1928, the original highway existed in two segments at its greatest extent. One

segment ran from the mainland via Card Sound Road to Key Largo and extended as far as Lower Matecumbe Key, while a segment in the lower keys existed from No Name Key to Key West. An automobile ferry service connected the 41 mile gap between Lower Matecumbe and No Name Keys.

## The 18 Mile Stretch

The construction of the highway from Florida City to Key Largo via Jewfish Creek (known as the 18-Mile Stretch) was officially completed on May 16, 1944, shortened the route to the mainland by 17 miles.

## Modern Improvements

The original highway through Key Largo and Tavernier would once again become part of the Overseas Highway in the early 1970s when it was expanded to a four-lane divided highway. Here, the northbound lanes run along the route of the original highway and the

southbound lanes along the route of the railroad, which is especially evident in area where the route splits into two one-way streets.

The widening was the beginning of a much larger project to rebuild much of the Overseas Highway, which included replacing the aging re-purposed railroad bridges with more modern bridges; some of which are able to accommodate more than two lanes of traffic. This included the Seven Mile Bridge, the Bahia Honda Bridge and the Long Key Bridge.

## The Mile Markers

The famous mile markers, starting in Key West, provide not only a measure of distance and location, but are the basis for most of the addresses along the route. An address ending in an even digit denotes the Atlantic Ocean side while an odd digit denotes an address on the Florida Bay/Gulf of Mexico side.

*Bring  
a  
Friend*

## Bring A Friend

Please remember to tell your friends about our Miami Pioneers and Natives of Dade historical society. As always, bring a friend as your guest to share the delightful programs, the camaraderie and the social time with refreshments.

## Snail Mail or Email?

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

We're now mailing the printed newsletter only to those members that have not given us their email address.

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