WILTON MANORS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

HISTORICAL NOTES

MAY 2017

REMEMBRANCES OF THE WEST SIDE NEIGHBORHOOD

BY NANCY SAWALLIS

AS TOLD TO MARY GAYLE ULM, FALL 2007

Wilton Manors Historical Society

Bob and I came to Ft. Lauderdale in 1946. Bob's brother, George, was already in Ft. Lauderdale and selling war surplus. He asked Bob to come down and help him in the business. Bob and his brother did not get along well as coworkers, so Bob took a job with Sears as a service repairman. Bob did well at Sears and eventually became head of the Oakland Park warehouse and service center.

Bob and I bought a plated-lot on NW 25th Street in the sub-division called Beulaland. NW 25th Street was lined with Petty-coat Palms and at that time, it was only a block long, running to the start of the Mickel property, where NW 3rd Avenue is today.

Our lot bordered the Mickel property to the West and the Coggin property to the East (now apartments). Besides the Mickels, Coggins, and our house, there was only one other house on NW 25th Street. The Clark house still remains and is at 124 NW 25th Street.

The only other home I recall present in 1946 in the current west neighborhood of Wilton Manors belonged to Harold and Shirley Cane. The Cane home was where Walgreens is today (corner of NW 29th and Andrews Avenue). [1]

Bob built our first house by hand. Perry Mickel and his two sons, John and Bob Mickel, helped Bob lay the foundation. (The Mickel's also had a daughter named Marianna). We built our house on the back portion of our lot, because we planned on building a larger structure for ourselves closer to NW 25th Street, once we were better established in the community and could afford something larger.

Skunk Hollow with Nancy Sawallis

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[1] Now CSL Plasma

Our house was simple, but quite comfortable. Across its front we built a sleeping porch that had jalousie windows on three sides of the structure. We had a small kitchen and bathroom and a large closet with built-in drawers.

We called our house "Skunk Hollow", because one night we awoke to the sound of pots and pans rattling in our kitchen. A skunk had gotten in through a portion of the house that was not completed.

The Mickels were very dear to Bob and me and made wonderful neighbors. They shared the culls of the vegetables they raised, such as corn and green-beans, which were taken to market in Pompano.

They had chickens and cows and at least one horse. One of the Mickel children was knocked off the horse, because they ran into my clothes line.

The Mickel house is still standing; however, it has been rotated from its original position of running from south to north. Its attached barns were torn down for the continuation of 25th Street. The remainder of the farm was subdivided into lots and sold sometime probably between 1952 and 1954.

Perry Mickel and his house facing NW 3rd Ave. Care-taker's shack on the right.

One of the first homes built by Perry when he subdivided his property was a duplex at the corner of 25th Street and 3rd Avenue. The Mickel's care-taker's shack, occupied by an African-American gentleman named Willie, was located where the duplex currently sits.

Gordon A. Gilbertson and his wife moved into the duplex. We enjoyed having the Gilbertson's as neighbors very much.

Bob and I moved to my present home on NW 6th Avenue in 1957, after my son Tom was born. We retained "Skunk Hollow" for use as a rental until 1970, but sold it after my husband Bob passed away.

One final note of interest: George Sawallis purchased property from M. L. Prindle, that now is the home of PACE Center for Girls Broward. Judge Richardson handled the sale of the property from George Sawallis to PACE.