

July 2011



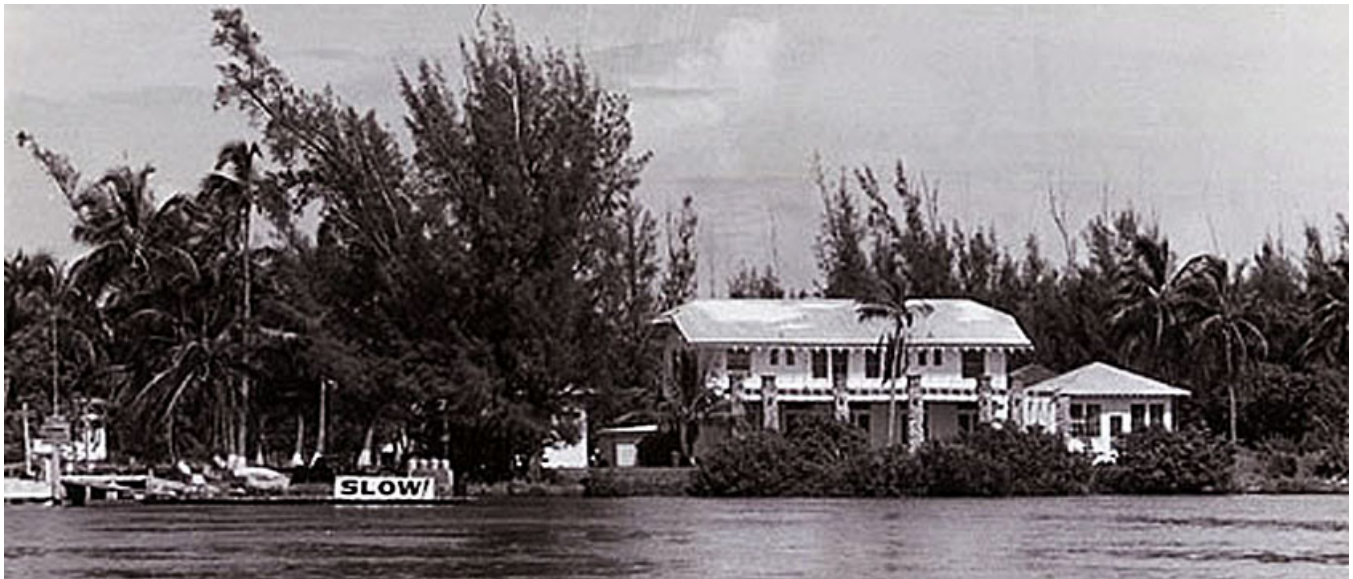
The Nauti News

Homestead Yacht Club

www.homesteadyachtclub.com

Our 26th Year of Boating Fun

A Biscayne Bay Landmark



The Cocolobo Cay Club was located on Adams Key for over 50 years

Club Meeting Reminder

The next monthly Club meeting will be on August 1st at the Capri restaurant

Commodore's Comments

To all HYC members,

The temp is hot, the water is warm, the wind is calm, and the mosquitos are hell--but other than that--everything is fine. I'm looking forward to seeing you all at our next meeting on August 1st. Please respond to our "call girl" and let her know if you will be attending and your food selection. A lot of members are out and about--so please make every effort to attend. It is in your best interest--you may be volunteered for next year's Bridge if you're not here.



Please stay cool, be safe and see you on the 1st!

Dave Giuliani.

Editor's Notes

This will be a rather small Newsletter. Since there was no meeting during July, we have no meeting minutes or Treasurer's report this month. Since I have lots of extra space, I have included another item about the history of the Biscayne Bay area. I previously included an item about Elliott Key and this item is about Adams Key. Hopefully you will find the information interesting.

Bill Zinn, Editor, sunbil@bellsouth.net

Cocolobo Cay Club

Adams Key, on the north side of Caesar's Creek, was once the home of the Cocolobo Cay Club, an exclusive millionaires club. Adams Key was purchased in 1917 by Carl Fisher, creator of Miami Beach. Fisher and some partners constructed a private club on the Key and called it the Cocolobo Cay Club. The two story main club building, constructed from Dade County pine, contained ten rooms, a kitchen and a dining room. The adjacent Casino building was the entertainment center of the club. Rumor has it that during prohibition this was essentially a highclass speakeasy. Membership in the club included such names as Firestone, Dupont, and Honeywell. Guests included such notables as Will Rogers and Jack Dempsey as well as at least four Presidents. Warren Harding was the first President to visit, having signed the guest book on February 21, 1921. Other presidential guests included Herbert Hoover, LBJ, and Richard Nixon.



Carl Fisher (right) with friend on Adams Key

Following the crash of the stock market in 1929, most of the members were unable to pay their dues and the club fell into disrepair. One of the early members, Gar Wood, a speed boat designer and racer, as well as the inventor of the hydraulic lift, maintained an interest in club and in 1934 assumed ownership of the property. Wood disbanded the club and maintained the property as a private retreat. One of the changes he made to the facility was the addition of a concrete ramp so that he could pull his sea plane out of the water when he flew guests down from Miami/Miami Beach. Among his many guests was Bebe Rebozo, President Nixon's friend. Rebozo reportedly loved the Cocolobo club and wanted to buy it. Finally in 1954, Wood sold the property to

Rebozo and Florida Senator Smathers. They operated the facility as essentially a fishing camp, with Rebozo's brother living on the property as a caretaker for much of the time.

Following creation of the Biscayne National Monument in 1968, the Federal Government purchased Adams Key and the Cocolobo Club for \$330,000. This purchase was a bit controversial as there was speculation that the purchase price was inflated because of Rebozo's friendship with Nixon. On December 21, 1974, the two story main club house was destroyed by a fire. The remaining Casino building was subsequently turned into an environmental study center for local school children. A small marine museum was also created. Small groups of students would spend the night on the island as part of the study program.

On August 24, 1992, the eye of category five Hurricane Andrew passed over Adams Key and destroyed all remaining traces of the Cocolobo Club. Two Park Ranger houses now sit where the rich and famous used to gather and play.