



WILTON
MANORS
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

2024 Annual Meeting -Presentation-

*"South Wilton Drive—social and economic center of
early Wilton Manors"*
— images from the 1940s/50s —

Curated and Presented By Ron Ulm
January 18, 2024



Presentation converted from Powerpoint slideshow. Click this icon on upper right corner of pages to view additional information about the topic of the slide.

A reminder that it all began with E.J. Willingham and his **1925** vision for Wilton Manors -- with it's wide, grand *Wilton Boulevard*.



And just after you crossed the bridge he built, on the left was his estate home (now the site of Richardson Historic Park and Nature Preserve).



(images from the 1940s Richardson Golf era)

The first social/economic development on south Wilton Drive was the opening of the **Richardson Golf Course** in **1939** on the Willingham Estate site.

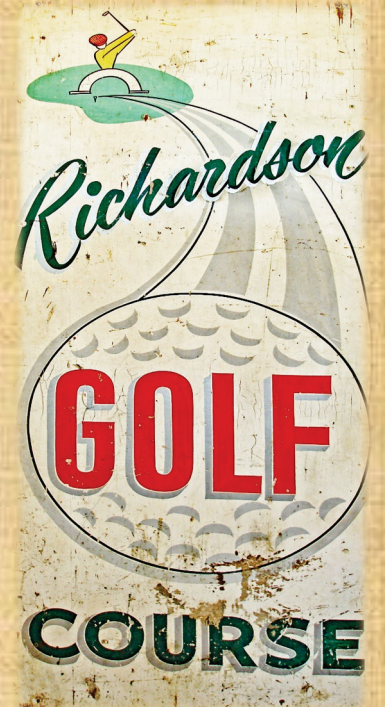
Sandwiches + food at Club House

Hot Dogs	19	1	20
American cheese	34	1	35
Sandwiches			
Salt drinks	9	1	10
Hamburg + cheese	53	2	55
Swiss cheese on Rye	39	1	40
Ham pickled chips	43	2	45
All meals			5
Soups	64	1	25
Beef	30		30
Candy	9	1	10
Ice cream			05
Apples + Tomato	39	1	40
Potato chip with oil + fresh			
cheese			
crackers in bags for soup			
chilled crackers	34	1	35

Richardson Golf Course open Dec. 12, 1939

Jan 3 1940
Jan 4, 1940
Jan 4 -
Jan 4 -

W. Goulding - New York. Hillsboro, N.Y.
J. Long Maloney & Chas. Tribune, Chicago - Ill
Mrs. E. B. Hamilton New York, N.Y.
Mrs. M. A. Brigham, Eugene, N.Y.
R. E. Sprague Longdon
Mrs. M. Graham - Kansas
John L. Leonard New York N.Y.
Mrs. Mrs. J. C. Long
Mrs. Norman Schuman St. Louis
Mr. & Mrs. W. H. Sprague Cleveland, O.
W. J. Sprague, Jr. St. Louis, Mo.
Frank Chapman New York City
E. P. Freeman Newton Mass.
Paul Waldinger N.Y.C.
McClintock N.Y.C.
Chas. Thomas N.Y.C.
W. H. Patrick N.Y.C.
Mrs. C. Tomrell N.Y.C.
Helen S. Strong Cherry Cove
W. C. Bates New York
W. A. Gardner New York
Mrs. Mrs. Robert Harcourt Riverside Conn.
L. Harold Wilcox Kitchfield, Minn.
Paul Tracy Chicago Ill.
Frank Barnett Kansas City, Mo.
Kearney Moore Kansas City, Mo.
Dorothy Guidet Kansas City, Mo.
W. H. Moore
J. W. Moore
Edward E. Barr
W. H. Stangel
L. D. H. H. H.
G. S. Lindholm
J. S. Lindholm
Paul A. Thatcher
Mrs. Mrs. W. S. Hall



U. S. G. A. Rules govern all play unless modified by the following:

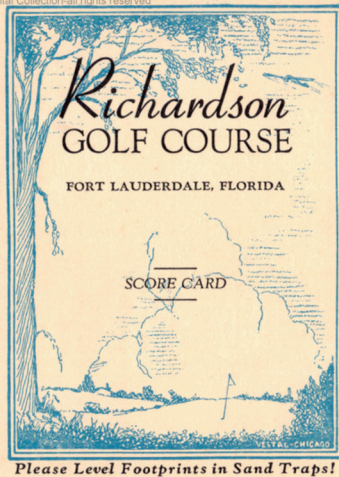
Local Rules

The roads on 6 and 9 are out of bounds.
Penalty: loss of distance.

A ball may be lifted from the hole of a burrowing animal in hazard or fairway and dropped back one club length, without penalty.

A ball may be dropped back one club length from any drain-tile or water-plug anywhere on the course without penalty.

The ball may be lifted out of ditches on 2, 3, and 5 without the loss of a stroke.



Al Hagen arrived in Ft. Lauderdale in 1938, at the age of 41 and semi-retired. As a result of a golfing bet, in **1941** he acquired the first land he would begin developing on the **west side** of south Wilton Drive. He sold lots and built a few homes before being drafted for WW II.



Al Hagen's first real estate office on Wilton Dr.



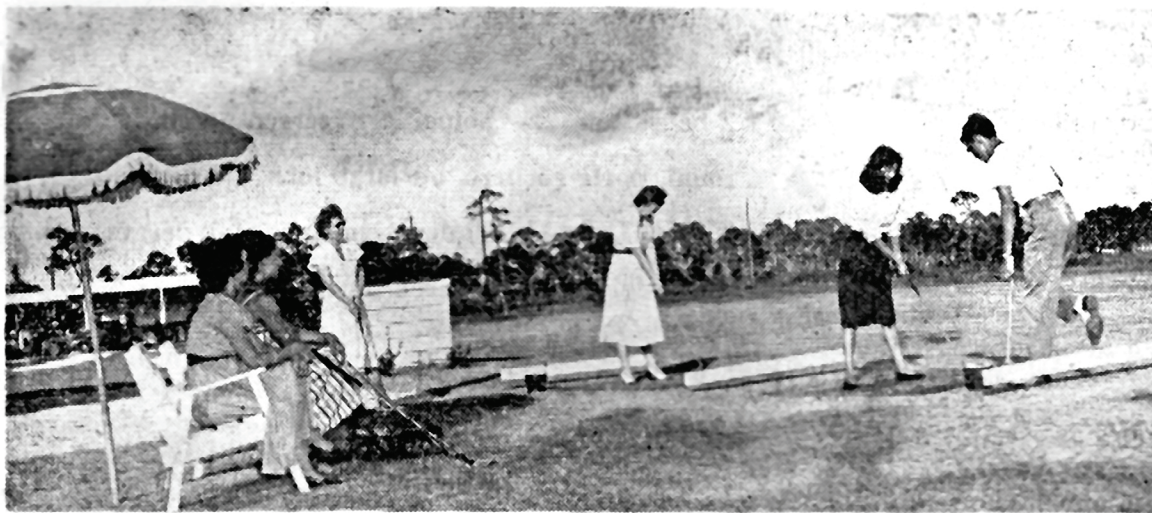
WILL BUILD according to your plans or duplicate any of the houses we have built in the past eight years. See the 2 and 3 bedroom homes we can build for \$7,130 to \$18,500 or duplex for \$9,500. We can build on your lot or on choice lots we have for sale in Wilton Manors. Tropical Homes Company, 2007 N.E. Fourth Ave., Phone 985-J.

Returning from the war in **1943**, Hagen purchased an **additional 40 acres** on the **east side** of south Wilton Drive. With the success of he and other post-war WM residential developers, Hagen recognized the need for commercial development to serve those new residents. Around **1948**, partnering with **contactor Clayton Leaver**, he built the first Wilton Drive business structures--at **N.E. 20th Street**. Southern-most was the *Helpy-Selfie Laundromat* (now Papa Duke's Deli). The other housed *Williams Pharmacy*, the *Tropical Club Restaurant/Lounge* and later Hagen's *Tropical Homes* expanded real estate office (now Tropics Bar and Grille).





In the **late 1940s/early 50's** Hagen also supported social and recreational activities for the community *(in addition to the entertainment offered at the Tropical Club ☺)*. In **1948** he opened the **Tropical Driving Range** next door to his office building.



THE TROPICAL DRIVING RANGE, on Manors Drive, is a popular rendezvous for the Wilton Manors residents. Here a group of spectators watch Warren McDermot, operator of the driving range, give Lucinda Lippard a few pointers. Spectators are, left to right, Mrs. McDermot, Mrs. A. Hagan, Mrs. Clayton Leaver and Mrs. Reginald Jackson. Marie Crone photo.

Notice
To

Golfers!

The Tropical Range
 is now under the management of
M. W. (MAC) PHELPS
 Golf Instructor
 Recently Connected with
 Richardson Golf Course

★

He extends a cordial invitation to all his
 friends and students to visit him at his
 new location.

Tropical **GOLF** *Range*

N. E. 4th Ave. and 21st St.

Wilton Manors



The site of Hagen's original real estate office across the street became an outdoor community venue known as **the Village Green**. It was the site of weekly **Barn Dances** and the famous-throughout-the-county **Village Barbeques**.

**BARN DANCE
TONIGHT**
And Each Saturday
Beginning 7:45 P. M.
in
WILTON MANORS
at
N. E. 4th Ave. and 20th St.
with
FRANK HAINEY
AND HIS HOEDOWN GANG

Al and Ginny Hagen



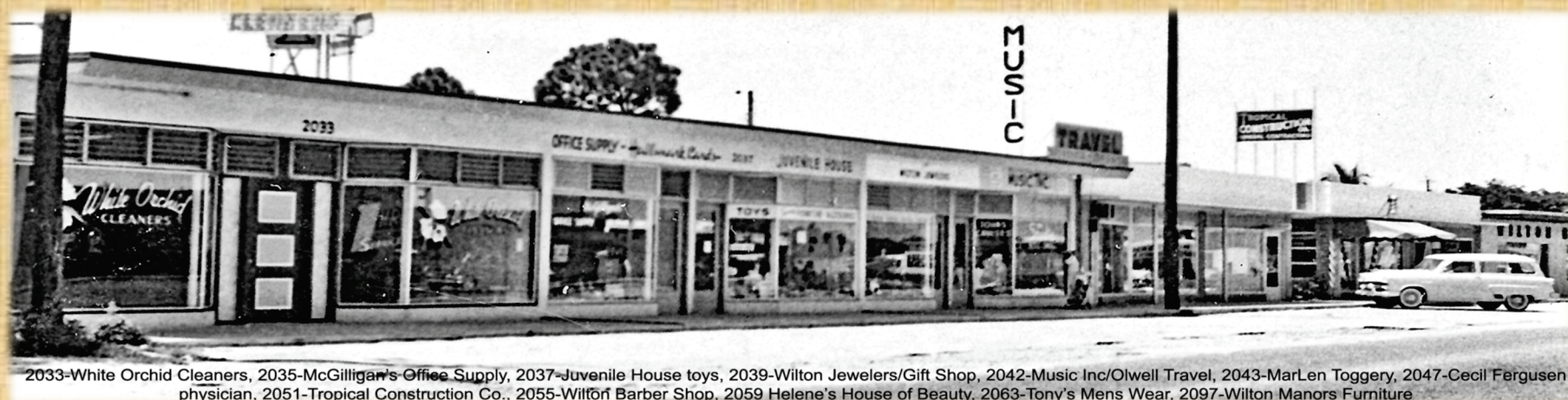
433 N.E. 21st street in background





Then through **the mid-1950s** came the next wave of development on south Wilton Drive; both commercial and civic. The area became a "*one-stop-shop*"— catering to virtually any resident's needs.

It began with Hagen adding additional stores to the west-side *Village Green* (2000 block) site. This included an office for Clayton Leaver's **Tropical Construction** company.



2033-White Orchid Cleaners, 2035-McGilligan's Office Supply, 2037-Juvenile House toys, 2039-Wilton Jewelers/Gift Shop, 2042-Music Inc/Olwell Travel, 2043-MarLen Toggerly, 2047-Cecil Fergusen physician, 2051-Tropical Construction Co., 2055-Wilford Barber Shop, 2059 Helene's House of Beauty, 2063-Tony's Mens Wear, 2097-Wilton Manors Furniture

Across the street, a **Food Fair** grocery store was constructed on the **Tropical Driving Range** site. This was WM's first modern chain supermarket.





A similar strip of storefronts was added to the **north of 21st Court**, on both the west and east-sides. The **west-side** is shown below.



2151-Manor Craftsman, 2155-Hickel Drugs, 2157-Hess Brothers furniture, 2161-Daniel Pescio physician, 2171-Roberta's Beauty Salon, 2173-Hurd's Radio Service, 2177-Nancy's Dress Shop, 2179-R. Brown Williams dentist, 2181-Stone's (Pearce) 5&10, 2183-Tropical Paint, 2185-Hanson's Swedish Massage, 2195-Village Tavern, 2197-WM City Offices, 2199-Manor Service Station, 2201-Manor Sundries

This set of stores included the first location of the fondly-remembered **Pearce 5&10**, as well as the **first City offices** (ironically, located next to the **Village Tavern**).



Doug and Duane Kenyon
audio clip



-courtesy History Ft. Lauderdale



Recognizing the growth of the area, the State began the four-laning of Wilton Drive in **1955**.

©Wilton Manors Historical Society Digital Collection
-Stafford Family Collection-



Jan. '55

Wilton Drive @ 21st Court - South



Jan. '55

Wilton Drive @ 21st Court - North

Four-laning project by the State

With the loss of the "Village Green" and "Tropical Driving Range" sites, the ever-growing Wilton Manors needed new locations for recreation and community engagement. Again, in **1954-1956**, Alvar Hagen stepped-in. On the east side Wilton Drive at **N.E. 21st Court** he would donate land for a **park/recreation center**; as well as the site of the **Wilton Manors Woman's Club**. That area would also, a few years later, become the location of the **"new" Wilton Manors City Hall**.

1954 article announcing the new recreation center

Recreation Planners to Be Named

FORT LAUDERDALE — A committee which will plan and direct the development of a recreation center in Wilton Manors will be appointed at a council meeting Tuesday night.

The first funds with which to start the center were raised by 42 club women who collected \$1,170 in a concerted house-to-house canvass.

Mrs. Merle Owens, chairman of the drive, said funds are still coming in. The women, who called their drive "Women Walk for Recreation," had set a goal of \$1,000.

Mrs. Owens said the response was greater than expected and she expressed gratification to householders who contributed.

The center, which will be located on five lots behind the Food Fair market, eventually will have a swimming pool, basketball, tennis and shuffleboard courts and a stage.

Property for the center was donated by Alvar Hagen. It extends more than 100 feet straight back from the Food Fair market and ranges from 500 to 588 feet wide.

A committee that directed the women's solicitation met with Council President Earl R. Gurney Thursday and recommended using the money to start work on a pavilion as the first project in the center. The center, it was suggested, could be used for card parties and other activities.

Gurney said he'll appoint a committee Tuesday night which will make a study of how the center should be developed.

Since the city has no taxes, it must depend largely on contributions for money with which to build the center. Councilman Earl R. Gurney, one of the leaders in getting the recreation center started, said he expects there will be contributions of materials and possibly labor.

He emphasized that the center project is a long range one that will be completed over a period of years.

Wilton Manors has a playground at the Wilton Manors school. It now has a recreation director, Walter Libby, who has planned a summer recreation program which will be centered at the playground.

Ca 1957 – fully enclosed version of Hagen Park Pavilion





An early event in the then-open-air Hagen Park Pavilion was this predecessor of "Wicked Manors"—the *Wilton Swingers Halloween Party*.



Another widely advertised event at the Hagen Park Pavilion was the annual *Kiwanis Club Pancake Festival*.



Man, Good!

Brothers Mike and Gary Hennen put the

cakes away at the pancake jamboree Sunday at Wilton Manors Hagen Park. The festival was sponsored by the Wilton Manors Kiwanis Club.

—Herald Photo by GENE HYDE

KIWANIS CLUB OF WILTON MANORS ANNUAL PANCAKE ROUNDUP

SAT. OCT. 6—12 to 8 P.M.

SUN. OCT. 7—7 A.M. to 7 P.M.

HAGEN PARK PAVILION

**PANCAKES & SAUSAGE
DOOR PRIZES—EVERY HOUR**

**BENEFIT YOUTH ACTIVITIES PROGRAM
DONATION \$1.00, CHILDREN 2 for \$1.00**

THIS AD SPONSORED AS A COMMUNITY SERVICE BY:

WILTON MANORS NATIONAL BANK

15th AVE. & N.E. 26th ST.

Member F.D.I.C.



SOME SERVICE!— Art Welling, chairman of the Miss Pancake Festival in Wilton Manors, gets first class service from three entrants, left to right, Linda Carter, Kathy Dix and Pam Mellor. The contest is being held in conjunction with the Wilton Manors Kiwanis Club's annual pancake festival. Girls interested in applying should contact Art Welling at 566-5020.

1955 - Wilton Manors Woman's Club groundbreaking and newly-completed clubhouse.



Wilton Manors Womens Club Groundbreakig - April 1955
(l-r) Clayton Leaver, Contractor; Alvar Hagen, who donated the land; Louoma Leaver
and Virginia Hagen

Ca. 1957 - Wilton Manors "new" City Hall, Police and Fire Station on NE 21st Court.



-courtesy, History Ft. Lauderdale
Gene Hyde Collection



And we close back where we started ... just across the bridge at the south end of Wilton Drive. In **1957** the **Hagen's** built a new home on **N.E. 19th St**, just off Wilton Drive—within sight of the Willingham Estate home.



N.E. 19th Street today



Come back next time for:

*"Checkered History of the Mansion on N.E. 23rd Street"
— from bootlegging, prostitution and gambling to faith-based nursing home —*

WILTON MANORS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

2020 Wilton Drive
Wilton Manors, Florida 33305
wmhs@wmhistory.org
954-617-5889 (voice mail)

