Welcome to the land of the Miamis. We who now call it home and those who called it home 200 years ago share a love for it that transcends time. But what was and is the land of the Miamis?
n July 22, 1795, near the close of discussions leading to the Treaty of Greenville and the end of the Indian Wars in the Ohio Country, Mishikinakwa, the famed Little Turtle of the Miami, after being questioned about the extent of Miami claims, replied: "My forefathers kindled the first fire at Detroit; from thence they extended their line to the headwaters of the Scioto; from thence, to its mouth; from thence, down the Ohio to the mouth of the Wabash; from thence to Chikagoua (Chicago) on Lake Michigan. This is the land of the Miami!"

Asserting that "the prints of my ancestors' houses are every where to be seen," Mishikinakwa hoped to keep this land forever Indian. But the Treaty of Greenville ended Indian title to most of Ohio, and precipitated such an influx of settlers that within eight years Ohio would enter the union as a state, in 1803.

On February 17, 1809, the Ohio General Assembly chartered Miami University, in the Great Miami River valley, thus recog-
By the end of the century sept or band lines had become blurred. This was evident as early as the 1740s, when large numbers of Miamis began to move into western Ohio, into the valleys of the Great and Little Miami rivers as well as the Maumee. Near present-day Piqua, in what is still called Miami County, emerged the largest Miami town, Pickawillany, with a population estimated at 2,000, and containing elements of all six Miami septs. Most active among those trading at Pickawillany were English traders from Virginia and Pennsylvania, who paid more for Miami furs and sold European goods lower than their French competitors.

The destruction of Pickawillany in June 1752 by an army of irate French-Canadians, bent on eliminating English competition and keeping the Ohio Country safe for France, has been called the first battle of the French and Indian War. It was not the only time the Miami Nation would find itself on center stage of world history. The second time came nearly 40 years later when Mishikinakwa, who as a small boy of 5 witnessed the destruction of Pickawillany, found himself the war leader not only of the Miamis but also of the Miami Confederacy, which included the Shawnees, Delawares, Potawatomis, Ottawas, Wyandots, Kickapoos, Kaskaskias, and Chippewas. With the opening of the Northwest Territory by the new U.S. government after the American Revolution, organized settlements began to spring up along the Ohio River at Marietta, Cincinnati, Gallipolis, and North Bend. With their way of life threatened by waves of settlers, the Indians of the Ohio Valley attacked the new settlements and armies that came for their protection. Twice U.S. armies were defeated by Mishikinakwa and his followers. Finally, an army under Gen. Anthony Wayne defeated the Indians in August 1794 at Fallen Timbers, near present-day Maumee, Ohio, though not before the Shawnee Blue Jacket had replaced Mishikinakwa after the latter had courseled peace.
Peace did come at Greenville the following year. The last to sign the terms of the Treaty of Greenville was Mahekinakwa, who vowed he would be the last to break it. He kept his word, remaining at peace with the United States to his death on the eve of the War of 1812, when, for the last time, red men and white would fight on Ohio soil.

Some Miami Indians did fight in the War of 1812, meeting defeat in the Battle of the Mississinewa. After the war, tragedy followed on tragedy, culminating in the decision by the U.S. government to remove the Miamis to the West in 1846. Ravaged by disease and death, survivors were taken to the Kansas Territory, then in 1867 to the Indian Territory in what would later become Oklahoma. They were recognized by the federal government as the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma, and many of their descendents live there today, in and around the city of Miami in the northeastern corner of the state, where their tribal headquarters are still maintained. Others, because of extensive property holdings or mixed blood, were permitted to stay in Indiana, where many of their descendents remain.

Today, strong bonds of friendship link the Miami Tribe and Miami University. Cultural exchanges and visits between the campus and tribal headquarters continue. Scholarships have been established to enable the Miami Indians to attend the University. The son of the Miami Indian chief joined Miami’s business faculty in 1983. Chief Floyd Leonard has visited the campus often and helped present an alumni seminar on our heritage. Our athletic symbol is Chief Miami, whose dress is an authentic design by a member of the Tribe, and who undergoes training in traditional Indian dance. The Miami Tribe has been invaluable in its counsel to the University, evident in a resolution adopted by its elected tribal council on September 9, 1972, and since reaffirmed, which concludes:

WHEREAS in the territory of what is now Ohio, Indiana, and Michigan our ancestors once lived in peace among the forests and long waters under the hand of the Great Spirit, and;

WHEREAS At Oxford, Ohio, where there once stood a village of the Miamis, there
stands today a University bearing the
name Miami and bestowing upon its
young athletes the name Miami
Redskins, and;

WHEREAS it is our counsel that the name
Redskins is a revered and honored name
in the eyes and hearts of the people of
Miami University, and that it signifies to
them as to us the qualities of courage,
self-discipline, respect, kindness, hon-
esty, and love exemplified by genera-
tions of young athletes;

THEREFORE Know all peoples, that we of
Miami blood are proud to have the name
Miami Redskins carried with honor by
the athletic representation of Miami
University on the playing fields of Mid
America and in the arena of the world in
International Olympic competition. We,
the Miami Redskins of Indian blood, and
our namesake, the Miami University
Redskins, have a mutual and cherished
heritage. May it be blessed by Moneto as
long as the winds shall blow.

At Miami University, we too are com-
mitted to our mutual and cherished heri-
tage with the Miami Tribe, and to extend-
ing our academic, cultural, and athletic
relationships far into the future. May our
bonds with the Miami Tribe always be
blessed by Moneto, as long as the winds
shall blow.

Phillip R. Shriver
President Emeritus and Professor of History
June 15, 1991

Miami University
OXFORD, OHIO

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