

Monthly Publication from the Zephyrhills Historical Association

Volume 22 – Number 6

June 2020

## There will be NO scheduled meeting in July.

*At the present time Zephyrhills Public Library is closed, and meeting rooms are not available due to precautions concerning Covid19. We will continue to publish a newsletter each month, so you will be notified in plenty of time whether we do or do not have a meeting in August.*

### Art Besinger



We lost Art Besinger this month. He has been such a steady member of our association for so long, and I know we are all going to miss him. He had a way of always cheering me up. He was a true blue friend. His was a life lived well.

**There will be NO fundraisers for the time being.**



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5x5 | 5x10 | 10x10 | 10x15 | 10x20 | 20x20 | RV | BOAT

**Jeff Miller**

**Pasco County Historian**

For a walk down memory lane visit

[www.fivay.org](http://www.fivay.org)

Please consider contributing old photos  
for the website.

My email address is on the opening page

#### ZHA Mission Statement

The mission of the Zephyrhills Historical Association is to research, gather, and share local historical information with all generations, through our literature, programs, and scholarships, and to volunteer assistance to the Zephyrhills Depot Museum and WWII Barracks Museum.

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**HISTORY OF PASCO COUNTY**

*Jeff Miller's fivay.org site*

**Crystal Springs — A New Town (1912)**

*The following article appeared in the Miami Herald Record on June 20, 1912.*

Crystal Springs is the name of a new town which is being established at the southern edge of Pasco county, on the Seaboard Air Line railway, about midway between Plant City and Dade City. Several thousand acres of the surrounding lands have been laid out in ten-acre farm tracts, of which several hundred have already been purchased by colonists from the north. A number of Florida people are also said to be buying allotments on this location. Already a village of more than thirty dwellings has been established.

*The following is from an article in Florida Scuba News in April 1998.*

Crystal Springs Colony was founded in 1911 as a socialist enclave, where property was shared and collective enterprise was established for the common good. Central to colony life were the springs, prized as much for their aesthetic value as for physical and economic sustenance. In 1916, some of the colony's investors, needing to pay off some debts, formed the Crystal Springs Colony Corporation. Claiming to represent the town, they seized ownership of the spring in 1925 and sold it without the community's permission. A tactical change of venue to federal courts across the state proved prohibitive for the strapped colonists, who ultimately dropped the case. The controversial transfer of ownership under these conditions has given springs supporters ammunition to argue that ownership of the springs should revert to heirs of the original colonists.

*This article appeared in the Tampa Tribune, date unknown.*

By CAROL JEFFARES

"There's a church in the valley by the wildwood, no lovelier spot in the dale; no place is so dear to my childhood as the little brown church in the vale."



Union Congregational Church, built in 1914

<p><b>WATSON CLINIC</b> <small>LLP</small>                  Dermatology at Zephyrhills</p> <p><b>Rick L. Moore, M.D.</b>                  Dermatology</p> <p>6901 Medical View Lane                  Zephyrhills, Florida 33542                  www.WatsonClinic.com</p> <p>Office: 813-788-7867                  Fax: 813-783-7187</p>	<p><i>Artistic Expressions</i></p> <p>5906 7th Street                  Zephyrhills, Florida 33542                  813 783-7731</p> <p><i>Custom picture framing</i>                  Prints Needlework Photos Paintings                  Computer photo editing</p> <p>Beverly Koehler Barnett, Owner      aeframer@gmail.com</p>
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The words of the old hymn, written by Dr. William S. Pitts, were inspired by a little brown church in Nashua, Iowa, where the Rev. John Nutting conducted services in the late 1800s.

And when Nutting retired to Florida in the early 1900s, he decided this state, too, needed a little brown church. Duplicating the plans from his Iowa church, Nutting and the community of Crystal Springs built the little brown church in about 1913.

Several years earlier, the Cooperative Homestead Co. of Toledo, Ohio, had purchased 10,000 acres from Zephyrhills Colony Co. The cooperative surveyed the land and made plans for development around what was then called Jarve Springs.

The company retained all titles to the property with the understanding they would be turned over to a local administration when 100 families had settled in the community.

By 1914, 168 allotments had been taken and the administration and titles had already been turned over to an organization called the Crystal Springs Commongood Society.

The society was more or less a socialist administration in which ownership and operation was by the community rather than by private individuals. A community building was constructed, and the first church services were held there. But the Crystal Springs residents wanted a church — preferably a little brown church.

They contacted Nutting, who was in his 80s at that time. And he agreed to retire to the new community and build the church. As was the Iowa church, the Crystal Springs Church was Congregational. Nutting built a little house next door and painted it brown, too.

Nutting's daughter, Jessie Nutting Priest, obtained a position teaching Latin at Zephyrhills High School.

Lifelong Zephyrhills resident Rosemary Trottman was one of Priest's students. Trottman, whose father died when she was young, was trying to finish four years of high school in three years. Her mother was eager for her to get out and earn money, Trottman said.

Trottman would come to school early and stay late to receive special instructions from Priest, she said.

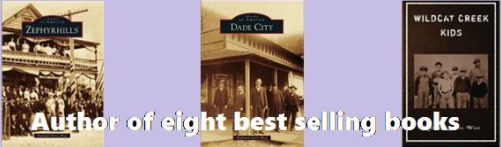

Priest rented a small house in Zephyrhills where she lived during school days. On Fridays, she'd return by train to her little brown house close to the railroad in Crystal Springs.

Once, Trottman recalled, she was permitted to travel with her teacher to Crystal Springs for the weekend to receive extra tutoring.

The teacher and her student spent Saturday night at the Nutting's home and attended church services Sunday morning.

"His (Nutting's) sermon was so inspiring. I don't remember the words of it, but I remember really worshipping in the hour I was there," Trottman said recently.

In the 1920s the Crystal Springs area flooded, and many residents moved. The little brown church became a chicken house. It has since been torn down.

 <p><b>Author of eight best selling books</b></p> <p><b>Madonna Wise Books</b>  <b>Author, Research &amp; Consulting</b>  <b>Madonna Jervis Wise</b>  <b>Zephyrhills, Florida</b>  <b>Murphy, North Carolina</b></p> <p><b>813-469-8627</b>  <b>MadonnaJWise@gmail.com</b>  <a href="http://madonnawisebooks.wordpress.com">http://madonnawisebooks.wordpress.com</a></p>	<p>License # GDI 09084</p>  <p><b>Garage Doors, Inc.</b>  <b>Kerry Ryman</b>  <b>Owner</b></p> <p><b>Residential/Commercial &amp; Gate Openers</b></p> <p>4622 Gall Blvd. • Zephyrhills, Florida 33542      Telephone: 813-782-5926 • Fax: 813-322-8343  <a href="mailto:kerry@3rgaragedoors.com">kerry@3rgaragedoors.com</a></p>
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