

# TRACKS OF TIME

Monthly Publication from the Zephyrhills Historical Association

Volume 22 – Number 9

September 2020

## There will be NO scheduled meeting in October

*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 November.*

### Future Meetings

Since the first Tuesday in November is election day, I think it is highly unlikely that we will meet in November. I think it is still possible that we can get together for our Christmas Dinner in December. I plan to start making some calls about this in the coming weeks. I am confident we can get Gail Fisher to put together a fine meal, as she did last year. Where we will hold it is a big question. I will talk to Bill Kustes, but we need to be sure we arrange a big enough place so that we can safely meet distance requirements. I am not one of those people who thinks we are no longer in danger from this virus, especially those of us who are at the age where the danger is greatest. Just about every one of us in the Association fits the criteria. Whether or not the mask mandate is still in effect, I strongly recommend we take this precaution while not eating. I will continue to put out the newsletter each month, and over the next couple of months I will be putting out the call for renewal of dues. More than likely I will plead with our members to contribute a little extra this year to the scholarship fund, since we have missed a bunch of fundraisers. I plan to forgo billing the Association for stamps this year. I already heard for Margaret Seppanen, who sent in a substantial contribution. If we all pitch in a little I am confident we can continue with all we have done in the past.

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



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**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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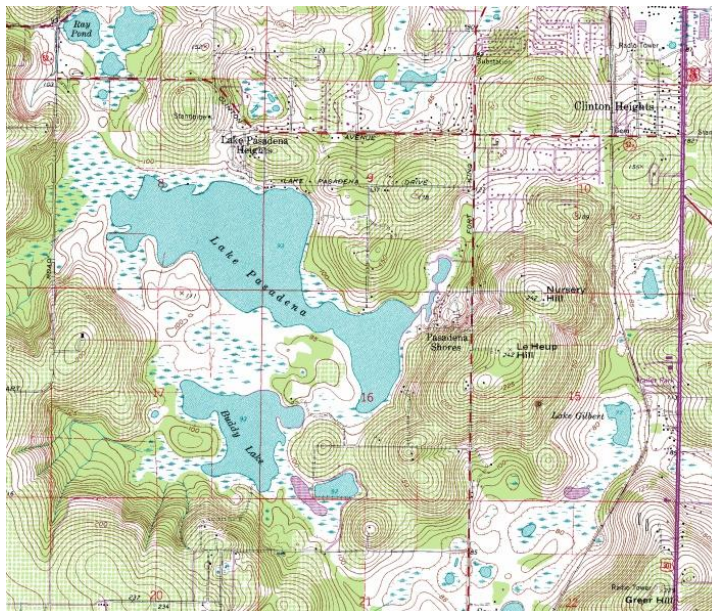
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HISTORY OF PASCO COUNTY  
Jeff Miller's fivay.org website

Lake Pasadena Area



This page was last revised on March 31, 2020.

A letter to the editor published in the *Bennington Banner* on Feb. 9, 1894, has: "We were met by Rev. A. E. Drew, a gentleman well calculated for the position he holds—that of general manager and agent for the Pasadena Land and Improvement Company. The hotel, three stories high, accommodates 125, is just completed, overlooks a lake some nine miles in circuit, and surrounded by orange groves."

The hotel burned on the night Dec. 30, 1901, or the morning of Dec. 31, 1901. Accounts give both dates, but perhaps the fire began on the night of Dec. 30 and continued into the next morning. The (Tampa) *Morning Tribune* reported on Jan. 1, 1902:

Dade City, Dec. 31.—(Special.)—The Lake View Highlands Hotel, on Lake Pasadena, was burned this morning. Only a few guests had arrived and they escaped in their nightclothes. The proprietor, Mr. Chas. J. Ramsdell, had just spent one thousand dollars in putting the hotel in thorough repair, preparatory to the opening on January 1. He had every room engaged for the season. The hotel was insured for about one-fourth of its actual value. The proprietor's loss is estimated at \$20,000. The people of Dade City and Pasco county have suffered a great loss in the burning of the hotel, as they were all invited to attend a reception at the hotel tonight, which is a great disappointment to all.

The hotel was located on Lake Pasadena Road, about one half mile west of Chesterfield Road, according to Wilbur Dew.

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**Observatory Opened On LeHeup Hill (1926)**

*FRED T. HIMMELWRIGHT IMPROVES ONE OF PASCO'S MOST BEAUTIFUL SPOTS*

*This article appeared in the Dade City Banner on Aug. 31, 1926.*

**By D. C. MULLEN**

Oakhurst, Aug. 30—(Special to The Banner)—Driving along the Fort King highway the other day, trying out the new paving, we stopped at the new filling station just opened by Fred T. Himmelwright (picture below). It is located on the top of LeHeup hill, one of the beauty spots of Florida. This filling station has a unique feature the writer has never seen before in any filling station. Mr. Himmelwright had observed that while there was a splendid view of Lake Pasadena from the road, it was not quite high enough to do justice to the surrounding hills, so he proceeded to add a high tower to his building from which the whole surrounding country can be seen.

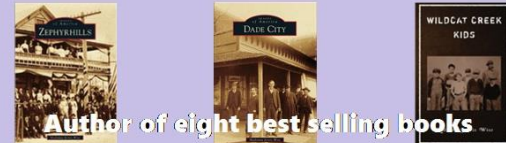

The tower contains a comfortable room, all glassed in, for cool or stormy weather, and is fitted up with chairs so that visitors may enjoy rest and the glorious scenery at the same time. It is to be hoped that Dade City and Zephyrhills people will not only stop and see their own section, as it really is, but to see that every tourist coming into this section gets this view of Pasco's mountains and lakes. This tower is free to everyone and the more people who stop and enjoy the scenery, the better Mr. Himmelwright will like it.

The filling station also contains a cozy little parlor and restroom for tired travelers and other conveniences. There is a stock of goods that travelers need, also a good, large dining room, where light lunches will be served. Bottled soft drinks are now being sold, but as soon as Florida fruit is in the market, drinks made of real fruit juices will be served and at 5 cents a glass, too.



Mr. Himmelwright has just completed a beautiful bungalow nearby, with all up-to-date features. He has his own water and electric light plant and everything of the best. All told, the improvements have cost \$8,000 and go to make a very fine improvement. The grounds are now being graded and beautified, but alas! we are still cursed with range stock, so that the

grounds must be heavily fenced. I should mention, too, that there is a fine piece of timber on the place nearby, that will be ideal for picnic parties, which Mr. Himmelwright gives the use freely to the public, in fact, a person gets the idea that most everything around there is for the free use of the public, something new in filling station ideas.

 <p><b>Author of eight best selling books</b></p> <p><b>Madonna Wise Books</b>          Author, Research &amp; Consulting          Madonna Jervis Wise          Zephyrhills, Florida          Murphy, North Carolina</p> <p><b>813-469-8627</b>          MadonnaJWise@gmail.com  <a href="http://madonnawisebooks.wordpress.com">http://madonnawisebooks.wordpress.com</a></p>	<p>License # GDI 09084</p>  <p><b>Garage Doors, Inc.</b>          Garage Doors          Sales &amp; Service</p> <p><b>Kerry Ryman</b>          Owner</p> <p>Residential/Commercial          &amp; Gate Openers</p> <p>4622 Gall Blvd. • Zephyrhills, Florida 33542          Telephone: 813-782-5926 • Fax: 813-322-8343          kerry@3rgaragedoors.com</p>
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**Diverse Groups Called Lake Pasadena Home (2003)**

*This article appeared in the Tampa Tribune on May 6, 2003.*

By CAROL JEFFARES HEDMAN

The community of Pasadena existed only for a brief time in the late 1880s and 1890s. But plenty of history remains in the area surrounding what's now called Lake Pasadena, southwest of Dade City.

The first known residents date to the 1780s when the village of Toadchudka was settled by Eufala Seminoles. They arrived in Florida from Eufala, Ala., in 1767 and later settled what was also called Etowahchutka. It was abandoned about 1836, presumably because of the start of the Second Seminole War.

Artifacts also have been found in the area to indicate nomadic people came here more than 10,000 years before to make tools from the outcroppings of agate coral that were prevalent then. This manufacturing site covered several square miles at the south and southwest part of what is now Lake Pasadena.

The Toadchudka Seminole Village was located just east of Williams Cemetery on Williams Cemetery Road, west of today's Prospect Road.

Williams Cemetery is the resting ground of many of the early settlers in the Pasadena area, as well as the nearby community of Prospect.

The cemetery was started by the Williams family, who deeded two acres. An additional 4 acres was bought from the Hawes family. The story has it that the Williams family allowed a group of travelers to camp on the hillside and, upon returning home from a trip, the Williamses found the visitors had been killed, possibly by American Indians. The visitors were buried in a mass grave that never has been located. Each time a new grave is dug in the cemetery, evidence of that early mass grave is sought.

The Williams Cemetery Association was organized in the early 1900s and owns the property west of Prospect Road. Tombstones in the oldest part of the cemetery have been weathered to the point the writing is obliterated. The cemetery includes four and five generations of families including Cripe, Dew, Gaskins, Osburn, Williamson and Wells.

**The Birth Of Prospect**

Jacob Wells, one of those buried there, came from Madison County in 1842 and set up a home near Riggs Hammock on what originally was Handcart Road, now Prospect Road.

A community developed there called Prospect, about two miles south of State Road 52 where today's Prospect Road curves west. A log church was built in 1855 and also served as a school. The first Prospect church closed in 1868 but a second was built in 1887 by Jack Osburn and Jack Gaskins on 20 acres deeded by David Osburn Jr. and his wife, Sally Kersey Osburn.

The congregation joined the Florida Methodist Conference, and in 1940 the building, then known as Sand Pond School, was purchased for \$100 by Med and Mae Stanley Gaskin. They used it for a residence on Fort King Road.

The second Prospect church had been located a few hundred yards north of the original church, about a mile southwest of the south end of the lake that took the name of a pet bull in the 1830s. According to legend, a covered wagon traveling along Fort King Road with a herd of cattle stopped for water. Most of the cattle drank from shore, but Buddy the bull waded in and wouldn't budge when it was time to move on.

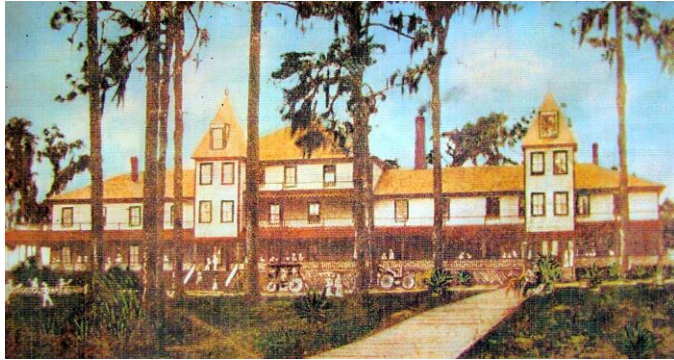
Some say Buddy waded out so far he drowned, while others say the stubborn bull left the water when he was ready and caught up with the herd. The lake became known as Buddy's Lake, then Buddy Lake and finally Lake Buddy. The community of Prospect was also known as Buddy Lake Settlement.

### Citrus Money Brings Prosperity

Lake Buddy became Lake Pasadena in the 1880s when the wealthy community of Pasadena sprang up with profits from the citrus industry.

The Lake View Highlands Hotel, located not far from Pasadena and Chesterfield roads, off Clinton Avenue, was built about 1888. It was a luxury hotel where wealthy visitors from the north vacationed.

But the freezes of 1894 and 1895 ended the prosperity of the community and the hotel, which burned in 1899.



The historic Pasadena Church, at 36134 Clinton Ave., is the only remaining structure from the grand old days. The church, built in 1880s, also served as a community social center and, from 1888-1988, as a polling place. The church was purchased in 1932 from the Methodist Conference and preserved by the Fort King Home Demonstration Club, forerunner of the Pasco County Extension Homemakers Clubs, now called Family and Community Education Clubs. The structure was returned to a place of worship in recent years when it was bought by the Living in Faith Fellowship.

A house at 11635 Pasadena Road, at the northwest corner of Pasadena Road and Fordyce Lane, also was built in the 1890s. It is called the Fordyce House, although the family was not the original builder. The house features a square turret upstairs which let in outside light to illuminate the inside staircase. Barbara Berger is the current owner. [The street sign has the spelling Foredyce.]

Also considered a historic site in the Pasadena area is the Solberg House, 11211 Fort King Road, between Waterfall Drive and Lake Pasadena Road. The Georgian-style house was built about 1915.

Sverre Solberg, a Norwegian ship captain, bought the house in the early 1930s from Toombs and Lyman Dairy. Solberg served as an officer of the Lykes Brothers Steamship Lines, headquartered in New Orleans. While he was at sea, his wife, Belle Mead “Billie” Solberg, had 10 acres cleared for a citrus grove. Sometime after she was widowed, Billie Solberg moved to a smaller house nearby. Her original house is now owned by Kimberly L. Michaels.

Just south, at 10550 Fort King Road, is the Dew Home. The rural Florida-style house was built in 1913 by William Dew, Charlie Knapp and Howard McKillips. The single chimney that supported three fireplaces was one of the first in the area. And the two bedrooms and a portico upstairs afforded a grand view of the countryside. Except for an open north porch upstairs that has been removed, the house has retained its original characteristics, complete with the tin roof. Grace Cripe married Dew in 1929, and they moved into the house in 1943. After William died, Grace lived there until she died in July 2000 at 96. The house remains in her estate.

On the south side of Lake Pasadena, near Bozeman Road, is the site of Earnestville. It was settled about 1875 when Elijah Embree Earnest and wife Virginia opened a store on Lake Buddy. The freezes of 1894 and 1895 hit the community hard, and its post office closed in 1899.

The freezes also caused residents to abandon Freedtown. It was established about 1869 by recently freed slaves near the end of what is now Bozeman Road, off Fort King Road. The settlement lasted for a generation, with log cabins, a cemetery and an African Methodist Episcopal Church. The buildings were torn down and the cemetery covered over. Church members moved to Dade City and founded Mount Zion AME Church.