

## Behind the Scenes

It is virtually impossible to describe any facet of Broward County's history without taking into consideration the waterways which surround and penetrate the land. Numerous articles in past issues of *Broward Legacy* have underscored the importance of the Atlantic Ocean, the Everglades, natural rivers, inlets, and marshes, and man made canals in the county's development. In this issue Dr. Cooper Kirk, Broward County Historian, examines Broward's waterways as a whole, analyzing the impact of water on man and man on water from the earliest recorded accounts to the completion of Port Everglades in 1928. Ironically, as this article demonstrates, waterways have presented some of the greatest opportunities and some of the most formidable obstacles in the settlement of the county. In his attempt to master the waters, man has changed the region's geography and created much of its history.

The enthusiasm with which Broward boosters and builders reshaped land and water is illustrated in a 1920 *Fort Lauderdale Sentinel* article entitled "Proof That Dreams Do Come True." The *Sentinel's* unabashed excitement over the transformation of mangrove swampland into the Idlewyld subdivision offers insight into an age when the notion of conquering the wilderness was still a guiding force for most south Floridians.

The role of one particularly large and prominent family in taming the southeast Florida wilderness is highlighted in the second half of genealogist J. L. "Sam" Heede's article, "Our Bryan Pioneers." The first part of this article, published in the Summer/Fall 1984 issue of *Broward Legacy*, traced the descendants of William James Bryan as they helped settle Dania and Hallandale. The conclusion focuses on the numerous descendants of William's brother, Lewis Hawthorne Bryan. Several members of Lewis's family helped build the Florida East Coast Railway through the New River region, and settled there in the tiny village of Fort

Lauderdale. Over the years, these Bryans and their offspring have been in the forefront of Fort Lauderdale's and Broward County's agricultural, business, and civic affairs.

With the bulk of the county's history taking place in the twentieth century, students of Broward history are fortunate to be able to obtain priceless first-person accounts from many of the early pioneers. One of the most outstanding of these pioneers, George W. English II, tells his own story in a 1982 interview conducted by Dr. Cooper Kirk and printed here in condensed form. Mr. English served Fort Lauderdale as city attorney from 1928 to 1939, established a thriving private legal practice, dealt in real estate, and was instrumental in founding two banks. A preserver as well as a maker of history, he helped found the Fort Lauderdale Historical Society. His activities brought him in contact with most of Broward County's other business and government leaders, and his reminiscences cover sixty years of county history, including the boom, the bust, and the post-World War II population explosion.

Attempts to attract new residents from the North and West, a theme familiar to today's Broward Countians, is the subject of "The Most Desirable New Settlers," originally published in *The Miami Metropolis* in 1897. At a time when colonization programs were being sponsored by the F.E.C. railway to populate this newly-opened frontier, the *Metropolis* advised against importing "greenhorns," since they were unaccustomed to south Florida farming techniques. A second *Metropolis* article from 1897, "Housekeeping in Florida," possibly aimed at the wives of the "greenhorns," offers recipes and tips on insect control which today's readers may find as informative and helpful as they were when first published, eighty-eight years ago.

### *In Memoriam*

EASTER LILY GATES

April 21, 1889-February 8, 1985

With the death of Mrs. Gates a living landmark has departed from the Broward County scene.

Easter Lily gained many distinctions during her long, productive life. For sixty-four years she graced the Broward arena, and for forty of those years she held an elective county office, retiring in 1969, full of laurels bestowed upon her by a grateful citizenry. An inimitable story-teller of the events she participated in and observed, she made Broward County history come alive. Her unpublished memoirs augments this history. She ornamented each of the first twelve annual Broward County Pioneer Days in her role as official pioneer hostess.

Through her hard work, self-denial, sincerity and guilelessness, Easter Lily demonstrated that a woman could hold public office in a domain dominated by men, and still retain the affection and esteem of her fellow Broward Countians. That she will be sorely missed is a terrible understatement for a woman who became a legend during her own lifetime.

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*Broward Legacy* is published semi-annually by the Broward County Historical Commission. Location and mailing address: L. Clayton Nance Historical Building, 100-B South New River Drive East, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301. Telephone: (305) 765-5872. Single price copy: \$3 plus tax; annual subscription: \$6 plus tax. Back issues are available.

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