

THE SECOND FRONT

Confederate soldier's retirement was an early farming experience

By NORM SWETMAN
Staff Writer

John J. Brown, sometimes known to his friends as "J.J.," received a Christmas present from the sovereign state of Florida one year in the early part of the century. J.J. was 60-years of age on Dec. 20, 1913 when his application for a pension under state regulations for honorably discharged Confederate soldiers was approved at the rate of \$120 per year, amounting to \$10 a month, which was "tolerable" and "comfortable" in those early years.

That \$10 a month came in right handy. J.J. had been used to farming 40 or 50 acres in Citrus County, growing only corn and cotton. Lately, he felt himself slowing down and the acres he had tilled with enthusiasm became an endless, almost painful task.

Sitting now in the warm sun at the Ozello post office he regarded the document he had just pulled from the official envelope with the Tallahassee postmark on it.

It looked more like a deed except for the bold, black letters on the front, "Claim For Pension." Application No. 19454, he read slowly. Pensioner No. 8259. John J. Brown of Ozello Postoffice, Citrus County, late of the 10th Florida Regiment, after his Pension Department Sept. 3, 1913. Approved Dec. 20, 1913 with pay from Sept. 3, 1913 at the rate of \$120 per annum, (signed) J. R. A. Gray, Secretary of Board.

It took J.J. two enlistments to come by that money. He was 14 when Confederate forces fired on Ft. Sumter, South Carolina April 12, 1861. He became restless, leaving his chores sometimes if someone came by with news of the war.

"Watcha figurin', J.J.?" "Figger to go for a soldier soon's the crops are in come September — that is if the war ain't over by then. You reckon it might be over? I want me a chance to fight some of them Yankees. I hear tell they turns tall and runs soon's the guns start a firin'."

J.J. suffered through the long months of summer. Crops were in come the middle of September and he caught David Yule's train from the Sugar Mill in Homosassa up to Fernandina Beach, north of Jacksonville.

There were no strict regulations about age. J.J. stood in the recruitment line with younger ones — big for their age, either scared or braggart loud.

On the 28th day of September, 1861 he signed his name to the document as "John Brown," private, assigned to Company C, Captain Hopkins, commanding, 1st Florida Battalion, Confederate States Army.

Uniforms from the quartermaster boxes were doled out without regard to size or shape; one great coat with sewed on cape, (Confederate gray), "Change it, so 'jer, with somebody your size 'fira it don't fit. Move onto Skirmish cap with visor, lace up boots, trousers, shirt- (Con-

federate gray), knapsack for spare shirt and trousers, blanket, personal items and 'possibles'; canvas haversack, one-fourth bushel size, "for toilet food, issue or forage. You responsible for yer own cookin', so 'jer, and here's your canteen, three pint size."

Within two days J.J. learned about the canteen. "Th'ow it in the hot campfire, boy. Let that soldier come loose thet's holdin' them two pieces together. Now, you gotta two good shallow pans. One's fer washin' — cut a forked stick fer a handle and you got a fryin' pan fer roastin' ven'er peanuts, makin' flapjacks, er a shovel to dig in when the minnie balls come flyin' at ya. You watch the older ones and you gonna le'r'n somethin', boy."

Entrained part of the way, marching part of the way, sometimes hungry, J.J. Brown, private, Confederate States Army, made his way up to Virginia with his company and battalion.

During the next year the record of the recruit from Ozello is obscure. He must have engaged several battles. Of course he came down with a sickness so devastating he was confined to a hospital for a long period. Emaciated, pale and weak he shipped back to Camp Flinnigan in Florida where he was discharged on the 4th day of October, 1862. "On account of age and sickness."

Returning to the farm he slowly regained his strength. "Soon's I get able I'm a goin' back," he told his folks. For awhile he was the center of attention in the small community country northward from Georgia where most of them had never been.

He was 17 in January of 1864 and he started out for Virginia again determined to find his old outfit and reenlist. It was almost a miracle, but he did find them and reenlisted in March 1864. Their ranks were decimated, old comrades were gone — either dead or wounded. General Tecumseh Sherman was moving in for the siege of Atlanta, Ulysses Grant was pressing in on Richmond with frontal attacks caring nothing for the bloody slaughter of his forces, only that he was determined to win by sheer numbers.

Confederate General of the Army, Robert E. Lee was holding on with the remnants of his raggedly, starving army and giving Grant's replacements reason for despair, at one point they refused to make a suicidal charge.

It was August 1864 and private Brown had lost track of where he was exactly in Virginia. He later wrote, "I was captured in August 1864 one night while on picket along with about 30 others. We were taken to Norfolk, Va. and from there to Point Lookout, Maryland.... The war was over for John J. Brown of Ozello."

The camp was crowded, men died of hunger, dysentery, and pneumonia in the winters cold, and they died of discouragement. Christmas day was no different than other days, there were those who never knew it came and passed.

To the south and west of Point Lookout Prison on Sunday, April 2, 1865 President Jefferson Davis was handed a note as he attended services in St. Paul's Church. He got up slowly with a stricken look on his face. Shortly thereafter Confederate General R.S. Ewell came marching by with dirty, unkempt troops whose hat down eyes told the city the south was in a death struggle.

Lee worked desperately toward Lynchburg and the mountains with troops of Phil Sheridan's Union cavalry and the V Corps cutting pieces out of his rear guard.

At Jeterville he and General Meade crossed the Confederate line, Meade leading the II and VI Corps coming up fast on the Confederate flanks bringing his artillery in on the whop.

At Sailors Creek, where he outnumbered, outgunned, Ewell surrendered his 4,000 men, the remainder of his once proud Confederate Corps — and he wept openly and brokenly.

The VI Corps Union Infantry units had just arrived and bedded down at Farmville, where Grant had his headquarters, when a messenger arrived at the gallop. He gave a note directly into Grant's hand requesting Infantry replacements at Appomattox Courthouse. It was signed with Phil Sheridan's scrawls.

Grant ordered the VI Corps from their blankets and back on the road again for an attack on Lee's rear guard.

Lee had been alternately fighting and marching all night, and towards morning he disengaged at Appomattox. The exhausted gray line caught sight of Sheridan's cavalry blocking their way. Desperately they fired, Sheridan disdained to fire back. His horsemen gave way to the right and left unveiling solid blue lines of Union Infantry with cannon.

General John B. Gordon had the point and the advance guard. He rode back and reported the situation to Lee. "There is nothing left for me but to go see General Grant, and I would rather die a thousand deaths." Lee said quietly to his staff, and rode slowly off toward Appomattox Courthouse.

In June, 1865, J.J. was paroled from the prison at Point Lookout and started the weary, heart-breaking journey back to Ozello in Citrus County.

He was apparently content on his farm after that returning to planting corn and cotton, and truck for his family.

In 1881 he was appointed postmaster of a small settlement on the Withlacoochee River where Highway 220 crosses now, it was called, Camp Isard, in Marion County. Shortly afterward he was appointed Justice of the Peace for Marion County on an order signed by Governor William Bloxham and J.L. Crawford, Secretary of State.

His pension became valid in 1913 on his application and oath, "I served faithfully until Honorably Discharged from the service of the army in the year 1865 and did not desert the service of the Confederate Army nor take the oath of allegiance to the United States until after the surrender of the Confederate States."

On the 18th day of August, 1833, J.J. Brown died at Homosassa at the age of 86, leaving his wife Callie J. Brown and children.

On the 11th day of August, 1833, Callie J. Brown filed for a widow's pension with the State of Florida. The application was signed by Citrus County Commissioners W.H. Boswell, W.R. Levins, Austin Allen, C.W. Crait, J.H. Rice, and attested by Claude Connors, Clerk of Court.

Callie Brown was awarded the pension at the rate of \$480 per annum, amounting to \$40 a month which was "tolerable" and "comfortable" in those depression years.

Former Claim No.

Application No. 19454

Pensioner No. 8259

CLAIM FOR PENSION

John J. Brown
OF
Ozello

Citrus Postoffice
County

LATE OF
10th Fla. Inf. Company
Regiment

FILED IN PENSION DEPARTMENT.

SEP. 3, 1913

APPROVED

DEC 20 1913

With pay from *Sept. 3*, 1913

At the rate of \$ *120* per annum

J. R. A. Gray
Secretary of Board.

FILED IN COMPTROLLER'S OFFICE

Capital Park Co. State Printer
Tallahassee, Florida

CLAIM FOR PENSION for John J. Brown of Ozello, was honored by the State of Florida on Dec. 20, 1913 and he was awarded \$120 per year, a comfortable sum in those days, for his service as a Confederate States soldier. (From the collection of Major J.J. Brown)

Maryland. (From the collection of Major J.J. Brown)

CENTENNIAL
**CLAIRE PHILLIPS
 LAXTON**



Boat ferried children to island school

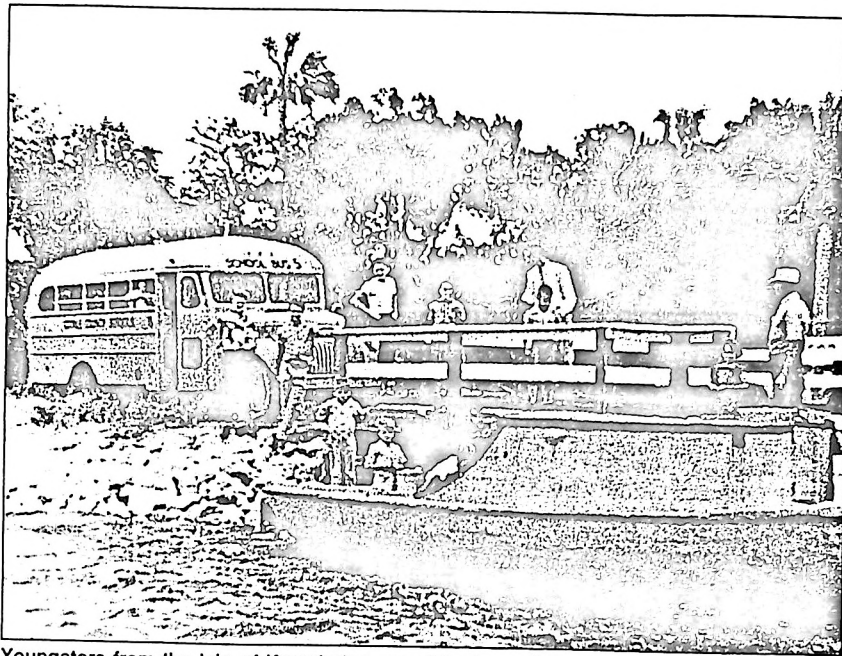
Editor's Note: Citrus County is 100 years old this year. In conjunction with the Centennial, the Citrus Times is publishing occasional features about Citrus County's past. Claire Phillips Laxton, a 10-year county resident, is a free-lance writer who specializes in history.

The village of Ozello was established 100 years ago on the St. Martin's River in western Citrus County. The first small schoolhouse opened in 1888, near Windmill Creek in Ozello.

County resident Cary DeBush recalls his parents saying that Ozello's first school went from the first to the eighth grade. He said a Mr. Mosley was the first teacher.

Evelyn and Carl Stephens came to Ozello in 1918 and have been married since 1940. Today, they are residents of Homosassa. They recall that L. C. Yoeman of Crystal River, owner of the fish house and the Regent Theater, also had a fish house branch run by Dennis Allen in Ozello during the 1930s and 1940s.

Another longtime resident was Jim Head, who had three farms in the Black Creek area. Ozello had a post office, but horses were used to carry mail from Homosassa to Ozello. People traveled to the Western Islands — nearby islands in the Gulf of Mexico — and to Homosassa by rowboats for visiting and shopping. Head grew crops and citrus, and kept work-horses and other animals on his farms.



Youngsters from the Isle of Knowledge are picked up after a boat trip to the bus stop sometime in the 1930s. They were bound for Crystal River High School.

Ozello children were taken by bus, then by boat, to Crystal River High School.

Crystal River resident Horace Brown recalls the Isle of Knowledge, so named because the second Ozello school was built on it. It, too, had grades 1-8. It closed in 1940. The schoolhouse was surrounded by water, and the students came to school by boat. That fact was once noted on Robert Ripley's *Believe it or Not* program.

In 1910, there was only one teacher for the

school. A woman, Ivey Steven Hutchinson, went to Tampa to learn navigation to run the school boat.)

Because the school went only to eighth grade, many youngsters didn't have the opportunity to attend high school. Later, Ozello children were taken, first by bus, then by boat, to Crystal River High School when Doc "Sonny" Hudson was principal.

Current and former residents of the Western Islands and Ozello gather each year for Pioneer Day, sharing old photos and memories of the "good old days."

Ozello was and still is a pioneer part of Citrus County. If it is built up some day, it will be to the dismay of many. For now, the residents enjoy the peace of the St. Martin's River.

This picture was taken in 1955 when "Doc" Hudson (the one in the middle behind Tom DeBush) was Crystal River High School Principal. Also this is Com. by the Times.

THIS IS A HISTORY

HUSBAND John J. BROWN
 Born 1 Jun 1908 Place Ozello, Citrus Co., Fla.
 Chr. _____ Place _____
 Marr. 29 Oct 1932 Place Inverness, Citrus Co., Fla.
 Died _____ Place _____
 Bur. _____ Place _____
 HUSBAND'S FATHER James Newton BROWN (1878-1960) HUSBAND'S MOTHER Sarah Agnes De BUSK (Sallie) (1878-1979)
 HUSBAND'S OTHER WIVES _____

WIFE Helen Lee HOUGH
 Born 1 Aug 1913 Place Crystal River, Citrus Co., Fla.
 Chr. _____ Place _____
 Died _____ Place _____
 Bur. _____ Place _____
 WIFE'S FATHER Sullivan Corvin HOUGH (Commodore) WIFE'S MOTHER Carrie Luna BARNES
 WIFE'S OTHER HUSBANDS _____

SEX M F	CHILDREN List each child (whether living or dead) in order of birth Given Names SURNAME	WHEN BORN			WHERE BORN			DATE OF FIRST MARRIAGE	DAY	WHEN DIED	YEAR
		DAY	MONTH	YEAR	TOWN	COUNTY	STATE OR COUNTRY	TO WHOM	MONTH	YEAR	
	Not named BROWN	4	Feb	1935	Homosassa	Citrus	Fla.	-----	4	Feb	1935
M	John Joseph BROWN	18	Nov	1937	Crystal River	"	"	10 Nov 1963			
M	Thomas Sullivan BROWN	21	Nov	1945	Brooksville	Hernando	"	4 Jun 1967			
M	James Robert BROWN	15	Apr	1950	Crystal River	Citrus	"	21 Sep 1969			

SOURCES OF INFORMATION Family records of Mrs. Helen H. Brown, Ozello, Fla. OTHER MARRIAGES _____

PLACES: Sharon, Windsor, Vi.
 To indicate that a child is an ancestor of the person submitting the sheet, place an "X" behind the number pertaining to that child

ENTER ALL DATA IN THIS ORDER:
 DATES: 14 Apr 1794
 FAMILY GROUP RECORD

HUSBAND John Joseph BROWN (Joe)
 Born 18 Nov 1937 Place Crystal River, Citrus Co., Fla.
 Chr. _____ Place _____
 Marr. 10 Nov 1963 Place Fort Myers, Lee Co., Fla.
 Died _____ Place _____
 Bur. _____ Place _____
 HUSBAND'S FATHER John J. BROWN (b 1908) HUSBAND'S MOTHER Helen Lee HOUGH (b 1913)
 HUSBAND'S OTHER WIVES _____

WIFE Sandra Marie SKINNER
 Born 18 Dec 1943 Place Fort Myers, Fla.
 Chr. _____ Place _____
 Died _____ Place _____
 Bur. _____ Place _____
 WIFE'S FATHER Luke SKINNER WIFE'S MOTHER Susan Pearl PARKER
 WIFE'S OTHER HUSBANDS _____

PLACES: Sharon, Windsor, Vt.
 To indicate that a child is an ancestor of the person submitting the sheet, place an "x" behind the number pertaining to that child.

SEX M F	CHILDREN List each child (whenever living or dead) in order of birth Given Names SURNAME	WHEN BORN			WHERE BORN			DATE OF FIRST MARRIAGE	WHEN DIED		
		DAY	MONTH	YEAR	TOWN	COUNTY	STATE OR COUNTRY	TO WHOM	DAY	MONTH	YEAR
F	Stacey Jo BROWN	1	Mar	1965	Fort Myers	Lee	Fla.	-----	-----	-----	-----
F	Ann Marie BROWN	9	Nov	1966	" "	"	"	-----	-----	-----	-----
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SOURCES OF INFORMATION Family records of Mrs. Helen Brown, Ozello, Fla. OTHER MARRIAGES _____

HUSBAND

Thomas Sullivan BROWN (Tom)

Born 21 Nov 1945 Place Brooksville, Hernando Co., Fla.

Chr. _____ Place _____

Marr. 4 Jun 1967 Place Crystal River, Citrus Co., Fla.

Died _____ Place _____

Bur. _____ Place _____

HUSBAND'S FATHER John J. BROWN (b 1908)HUSBAND'S MOTHER Helen Lee HOUGH (b 1913)HUSBAND'S
OTHER WIVES _____**WIFE** Kathy Jean DURBINBorn 9 Oct 1949 Place Decatur, Ill.

Chr. _____ Place _____

Died _____ Place _____

Bur. _____ Place _____

WIFE'S FATHER Robert George DURBINWIFE'S MOTHER Maxine Louise SABLOTNYWIFE'S OTHER
HUSBANDS _____

SEX M F	CHILDREN List each child (whether living or dead) in order of birth Given Names SURNAME	WHEN BORN			WHERE BORN			DATE OF FIRST MARRIAGE TO WHOM	WHEN DIED		
		DAY	MONTH	YEAR	TOWN	COUNTY	STATE OR COUNTRY		DAY	MONTH	YEAR
F	Sherry Michelle BROWN	13	Sep	1969	Inverness	Citrus	Fla.	-----	-----	-----	-----
F	Julie Kristine BROWN	21	Apr	1972	Dunedin	Pine.	"	-----	-----	-----	-----
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SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Family records of Mrs. Helen Brown, Ozello, Fla.

OTHER MARRIAGES

ENTER ALL DATA IN THIS ORDER:
DATES: 14 Apr 1974

PLACES: Sharon, Windsor, VI.

To indicate that a child is an ancestor of the person submitting the sheet, place an "X" behind the number pertaining to that child.

PLACES: Sharon, Windsor, VI

ENTER ALL DATA IN THIS ORDER:
 DATES: 14 Apr 1794

To indicate that a child is an ancestor of the person submitting the sheet, place an "x" behind the number pertaining to that child.

HUSBAND

James Robert BROWN (Jim Bob)

Born 15 Apr 1950 Place Crystal River, Citrus Co., Fla.

Chr. Place
 Marr. 21 Sep 1969 Place Red Level, Citrus Co., Fla.

Died Place
 Bur. Place

HUSBAND'S FATHER John J. BROWN (b 1908)

HUSBAND'S MOTHER Helen Lee HOUGH (b 1913)

WIFE

Beverly Jo DURBIN

Born 23 Mar 1951 Place Decatur, Ill.

Chr. Place
 Died Place

Bur. Place

WIFE'S FATHER Robert George DURBIN

WIFE'S MOTHER Maxine Louise SABLITNY

WIFE'S OTHER HUSBANDS

SEX M F	CHILDREN List each child (whether living or dead) in order of birth Given Names SURNAME	WHEN BORN			WHERE BORN			DATE OF FIRST MARRIAGE	WHEN DIED		
		DAY	MONTH	YEAR	TOWN	COUNTY	STATE OR COUNTRY	TO WHOM	DAY	MONTH	YEAR
F	Kelly Jo BROWN	16	Jul	1977	Inverness	Citrus	Fla.				

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Family records of Mrs. Helen Brown, Ozello, Fla.

OTHER MARRIAGES

HUSBAND James Newton BROWN
 Born 29 Jan 1878 Place Island Grove, Marion Co., Fla.
 Chr. _____ Place _____
 Marr. 11 Sep 1904 Place Citrus Co., Fla.
 Died 22 Jan 1960 Place Inverness, Citrus Co., Fla.
 Bur. _____ Place Stage Stand Cem., Homosassa Springs, Citrus Co., Fla.
 HUSBAND'S FATHER John J. BROWN (1847-1933) HUSBAND'S MOTHER Catherine Margaret SIMMONS (1834-1907)
 HUSBAND'S OTHER WIVES _____

WIFE Sarah Agnes De BUSK (Sallie)
 Born 7 Aug 1878 Place Rutland, Sumter Co., Fla.
 Chr. _____ Place _____
 Died 27 Jul 1979 Place Crystal River, Citrus Co., Fla.
 Bur. _____ Place Stage Stand Cem.
 WIFE'S FATHER John Timmons De BUSK (1853-1921) WIFE'S MOTHER Anne Victoria BELLAMY (1855-1889)
 WIFE'S OTHER HUSBANDS _____

SEX M F	CHILDREN List each child (summer living or dead) in order of birth Given Names SURNAME	WHEN BORN			WHERE BORN			DATE OF FIRST MARRIAGE	DAY	WHEN DIED	YEAR
		DAY	MONTH	YEAR	TOWN	COUNTY	STATE OR COUNTRY	TO WHOM	MONTH	YEAR	
1	F Edith Victoria BROWN	9	Aug	1905	Crystal River	Citrus	Fla.	20 Dec 1924			
2	Margaret BROWN	11	Apr	1907	"	"	"	(1) Jerome Edwin STEPHENS	3	May	1924
3	F Catherine A BROWN	29	Oct	1932				James Fisher STEPHENS			
4	M John J. BROWN	1	Jun	1908	Ozello	"	"	Helen Lee HOUGH			
5	M James Timmons BROWN	16	Jul	1909	"	"	"	25 Aug 1928			
6	M Horace Haiden BROWN	16	Dec	1910	"	"	"	17 Apr 1937			
7	F Sallie Mae BROWN	1	Sep	1915	"	"	"	Ann Gertrude EDGE		3	Aug 1922
8								died a child			
9											
10											
11											

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Family records of Mrs. Helen H. Brown, Ozello, Fla.

OTHER MARRIAGES

1 m (2) Alan BLACK no issue

PLACES: Sharon, Windsor, Vi.
 ENTER ALL DATA IN THIS ORDER:
 DATES: 14 Apr 1794
 To indicate that a child is an ancestor of the person submitting the sheet, place an "x" behind the number pertaining to that child.

Husband Given name(s) <u>JAMES NEWTON</u>		Last name <u>Brown</u>	
Wife Given name(s) <u>Sarah (Sallie) AGNES</u>		Maiden name <u>DeBUSK</u>	
Children List each child (whether living or dead) in order of birth.			LDS ordinance dates
			Temple
1 Given name(s) <u>John J.</u>		Last name <u>Brown</u> <input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"	
Born (day month year) <u>1908</u> Place		Baptized	
Christened Place		Endowed	
Died <u>1992</u> Place		Sealed to parents	
Spouse Given name(s) <u>Helen</u>		Last name <u>Hough 1913-</u>	
Married Place		Sealed to spouse	
5 Sex <u>M</u> Given name(s) <u>Hoarse</u>		Last name <u>Brown</u> <input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"	
Born (day month year) Place		Baptized	
Christened Place		Endowed	
Died Place		Sealed to parents	
Spouse Given name(s) <u>Ann Gertrude</u>		Last name <u>Edge</u>	
Married Place		Sealed to spouse	
6 Sex <u></u> Given name(s) <u></u>		Last name <u></u> <input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"	
Born (day month year) Place		Baptized	
Christened Place		Endowed	
Died Place		Sealed to parents	
Spouse Given name(s) <u></u>		Last name <u></u>	
Married Place		Sealed to spouse	
7 Sex <u></u> Given name(s) <u></u>		Last name <u></u> <input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"	
Born (day month year) Place		Baptized	
Christened Place		Endowed	
Died Place		Sealed to parents	
Spouse Given name(s) <u></u>		Last name <u></u>	
Married Place		Sealed to spouse	
Other marriages List other marriages and sealings of the husband, wife, and children on this form. List any necessary explanations.			
Sources of Information Add further information on attached sheets as necessary.			

Family Group Record

If typing, set spacing at 1 1/2. Page _____ of _____

Write date as: 4 Oct. 1896

Write place as: Tryon, Polk, North Carolina, USA or St. Martins, Birmingham, Warwick, Eng.

Husband Given name(s) <u>JAMES NEWTON</u>		Last name <u>BROWN</u>		<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"	
Born (day month year) <u>1878</u>	Place	LDS ordinance dates		Temple	
Christened	Place	Baptized			
Died <u>1940</u>	Place <u>CITRUS CO.</u>	Endowed			
Buried	Place	Sealed to parents			
Married <u>11 Sep 1904</u>	Place <u>CITRUS CO.</u>	Sealed to spouse			
Husband's father Given name(s) <u>John James C. Smith</u>		Last name <u>Brown</u>		<input type="checkbox"/> Deceased	
Husband's mother Given name(s) <u>Catherine M.</u>		Maiden name		<input type="checkbox"/> Deceased	

Wife Given name(s) <u>Sarah (Sallie) Agnes</u>		Maiden name <u>DeBusk</u>		<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"	
Born (day month year) <u>7 Aug 1878</u>	Place <u>Sumter Co Putnam (Alto) Florida</u>	LDS ordinance dates		Temple	
Christened	Place	Baptized			
Died <u>27 Jul 1979</u>	Place <u>CITRUS CO C.R.</u>	Endowed			
Buried	Place <u>St. Marys Stand Cemetery Homosassa Sp.</u>	Sealed to parents			
Wife's father Given name(s) <u>John Timmons</u>		Last name <u>DeBusk</u>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deceased	
Wife's mother Given name(s) <u>Anne Victoria</u>		Maiden name <u>Bellamy</u>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deceased	

Children List each child (whether living or dead) in order of birth. LDS ordinance dates Temple

1	Sex	Given name(s)	Last name	<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"	
		Born (day month year)	Place	Baptized	
		Christened	Place	Endowed	
		Died	Place	Sealed to parents	
		Spouse Given name(s)	Last name		
		Married	Place	Sealed to spouse	

2	Sex	Given name(s)	Last name	<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"	
		Born (day month year)	Place	Baptized	
		Christened	Place	Endowed	
		Died	Place	Sealed to parents	
		Spouse Given name(s)	Last name		
		Married	Place	Sealed to spouse	

3	Sex <u>F</u>	Given name(s) <u>Catherine M.</u>	Last name <u>Brown</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"	
		Born (day month year) <u>1 Apr 1907</u>	Place <u>CITRUS CO DECATUR FLORIDA</u>	Baptized	
		Christened	Place	Endowed	
		Died <u>13 Sept 1985</u>	Place <u>CITRUS CO C.R. FL</u>	Sealed to parents	
		Spouse Given name(s) <u>JAMES FISHER</u>	Last name <u>STEPHEN</u>	<u>2 Jun 1899 - 11 Mar 1965</u>	
		Married	Place	Sealed to spouse	

Select only one of the following options. The option you select applies to all names on this form.		Your name	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Option 1—Family File Send all names to my family file at the _____ Temple.	Address	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Option 2—Temple File Send all names to any temple, and assign proxies for all approved ordinances.		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Option 3—Ancestral File™ Send all names to the computerized Ancestral File for research purposes only, not for ordinances. I am including the required pedigree chart.		
		Phone ()	Date prepared

Family Group Record

If typing, set spacing at 1 1/2. Page of

Husband Given name(s) <u>John James (Jr.)</u>		Last name <u>Brown</u>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"
Born (day month year) <u>31 JAN 1847</u>	Place	LDS ordinance dates	Temple	
Christened	Place	Baptized		
Died <u>3 AUG 1933</u>	Place	Endowed		
Buried	Place	Sealed to parents		
Married	Place	Sealed to spouse		
Husband's father Given name(s)		Last name		<input type="checkbox"/> Deceased
Husband's mother Given name(s)		Maiden name		<input type="checkbox"/> Deceased

Wife Given name(s) <u>Catherine M.</u>		Maiden name		<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"
Born (day month year) <u>24 JAN 1824</u>	Place	LDS ordinance dates	Temple	
Christened	Place	Baptized		
Died <u>3 OCT 1907</u>	Place	Endowed		
Buried	Place	Sealed to parents		
Wife's father Given name(s)		Last name		<input type="checkbox"/> Deceased
Wife's mother Given name(s)		Maiden name		<input type="checkbox"/> Deceased

Children List each child (whether living or dead) in order of birth.

1	Sex <u>M</u>	Given name(s) <u>Joseph Enoch</u>		Last name <u>Brown</u>		<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"
		Born (day month year) <u>27 Nov 1870</u>	Place	LDS ordinance dates	Temple	
		Christened	Place	Baptized		
		Died <u>31 July 1924</u>	Place	Endowed		
		Spouse Given name(s) <u>Sarah Jane</u>	Last name <u>Head</u>			
		Married <u>10 FEB 1878</u>	Place <u>Citrus Co</u>	Sealed to spouse		

2	Sex <u>M</u>	Given name(s) <u>James Newton</u>		Last name <u>Brown</u>		<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"
		Born (day month year) <u>1878</u>	Place	LDS ordinance dates	Temple	
		Christened	Place	Baptized		
		Died <u>1960</u>	Place	Endowed		
		Spouse Given name(s) <u>Sarah (Sallie) Agnes</u>	Last name <u>DeBusk</u>			
		Married <u>11 SEP 1904</u>	Place <u>Citrus Co.</u>	Sealed to spouse		

3	Sex	Given name(s)		Last name		<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"
		Born (day month year)	Place	LDS ordinance dates	Temple	
		Christened	Place	Baptized		
		Died	Place	Endowed		
		Spouse Given name(s)	Last name			
		Married	Place	Sealed to spouse		

<p>Select only one of the following options. The option you select applies to all names on this form.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Option 1—Family File Send all names to my family file at the _____ Temple.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Option 2—Temple File Send all names to any temple, and assign proxies for all approved ordinances.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Option 3—Ancestral File™ Send all names to the computerized Ancestral File for research purposes only, not for ordinances. I am including the required pedigree chart.</p>	<p>Your name _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Phone () _____</p> <p>Date prepared _____</p>
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Write place as: Iyorn, Polk, North Carolina, USA or St. Martins, Birmingham, Warwick, Eng.

Write date as: 4 Oct. 1896

They can copy these

★ The Suncoast Sentinel ★

PRICE 5¢



Serving Citrus County,

Dunnellon, Yankeetown and Inglis...

TIDE TABLES

	High	High	Low	Low
June	a.m.	p.m.	a.m.	p.m.
1	12:07	10:22	4:01	6:02
2	1:22	10:54	4:28	6:45
3	2:39	11:26	4:52	7:28
4	.....	12:05	.....	8:10
5	.....	12:46	.....	8:55
6	.....	1:31	.....	9:40
7	.....	2:23	.....	10:27

Crystal River, Florida, Thursday May 31, 1962

Phone Swift 5-3146

Channel Marked

Crystal River--The new bridge on the Ozello Road extension to the Gulf is now open, both for auto traffic across it, and for boat travel under it.

The channel from the end of the road to Mullet Key is marked with stakes, covered with luminous paint, so that boaters can follow the channel by day or night.

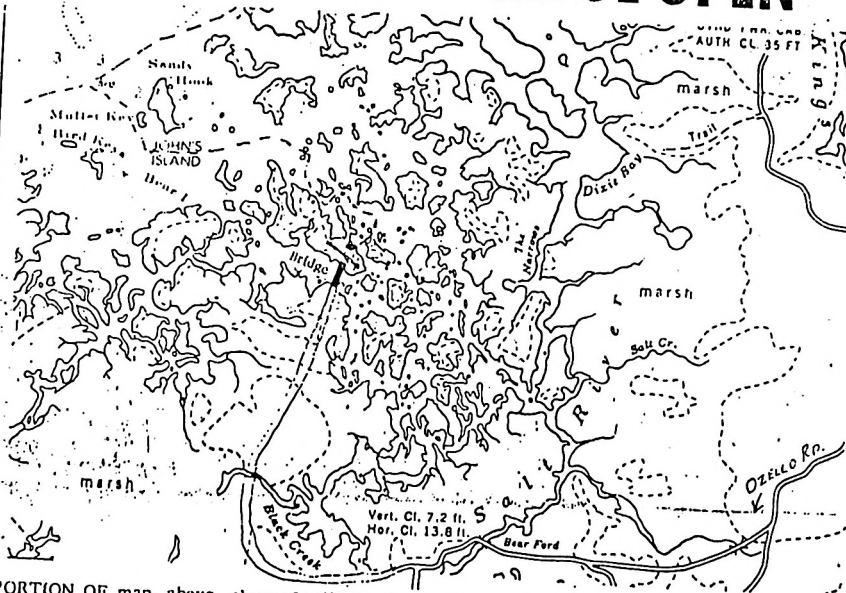
Work on this project, in addition to the re-conditioned road, has been done by the Citrus County Road Department, with the co-operation of Benjie Barnes, Clyde Byrd and State Rep. Allison Strickland.

Pile driving of the stakes has been done by Knox Purcell.

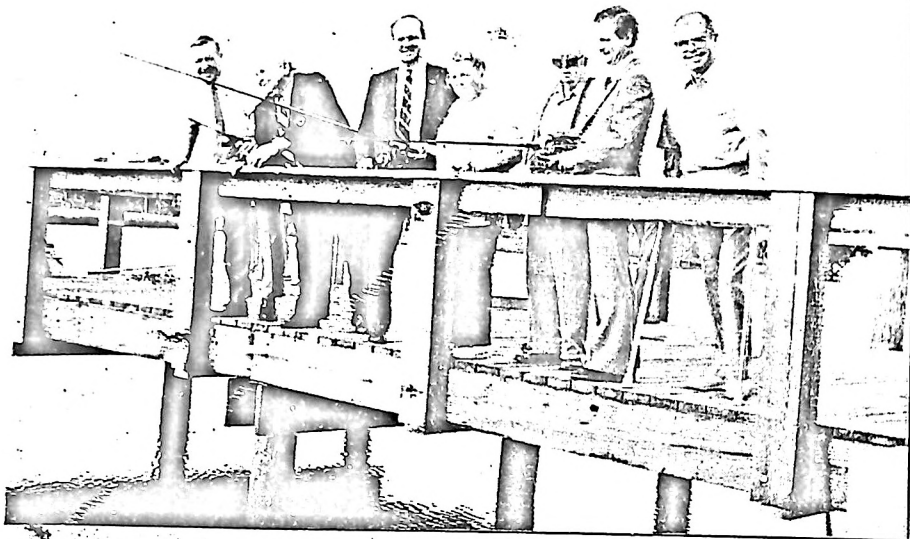
The area is well-known for fishing and crabbing, and rapidly is changing from a jungle into a resort area. Housing areas are being prepared along the road for the expected influx of people who want to live "closer to nature."

The road extension ends on an island which contains an airstrip and a designated area for a County park, with a natural beach.

OZELLO ROAD BRIDGE OPEN



PORTION OF map, above, shows Ozello Road near Crystal River, and its extension to the Gulf. Dark portion across channel is bridge, next is proposed airstrip, and beyond that is area set aside for Park. Dotted line from that point to Mullet Key is route for boats, staked out by County, chowing cafe channel. See story.



RENOVATED FISHING PIER REOPENS

For many Citrus County residents, it was good to hear that a popular saltwater fishing pier reopened in April 1988. Located at the end of South John Brown Drive off County Road 494 in Ozello, the pier had been closed to the public by the county's Division of Parks and Recreation since fall of 1987.

Once considered a safety hazard, the fishing pier now boasts sturdy wood decking supported by six 12-inch-by-10-foot wood pilings, and connected to a reinforced concrete wall with bolted galvanized steel plates. The county's Department of Public Works completed the total reconstruction project, even down to the smallest detail. Local fishermen requested places to rest their fishing poles, and county work crews responded with 16 holes drilled at regular intervals in the pier's guardrails. A small parking area was added to accommodate five vehicles, and the pier itself is handicapped accessible.

Situated on a scenic stretch of the St. Martin's River, the renovated John Brown Drive pier fills a gap in the shortage of shoreline fishing in Citrus County. Catch-of-the-day might include redfish, sea trout or catfish, and crabbing is a popular pursuit.

Ozello from Page 1

Wells, who says the community has become a little too crowded for his taste, remembers a simpler Ozello.

"It was just a little quiet fishing settlement," he says. "Everybody went fishing, came home, ate some mullets and grits and went to bed. That's about all I know. I ate so damn many mullets I could swim like one.

"We didn't have nothin' and didn't want nothin' and didn't expect nothin'. We was happy," Wells says.

John Brown was born in Ozello 79 years ago. From the porch of his weathered wooden house on John Brown Drive, he can see the pier that bears his name and the landing where island dwellers head home in their motorboats.

Brown recalls hunting and fishing throughout the area, which he says was called the great marsh.

Now, Brown's days are quieter, spent sitting in the house or strolling down to the pier.

"I don't believe I'd want to live anywhere else," he says. "And I'm getting too old to move."

By almost any standards, Ozello is still a simple place.

Ozello boasts a civic center, which draws a usual crowd of about 10 for Saturday night bingo, a Baptist Church and a convenience store. There's one tavern and one restaurant. Peck's Old Port Cove, perched at the northern edge of Ozello, is a roomy seafood house that offers spicy shrimp, oyster burgers and blue crab sandwiches. Across the road is the recently named Ozello Keys Art Gallery, filled with Phyllis Milton's



Times photo — BOB MORELAND

Real estate agent Wanda Wells and her husband Zeke Wells, center, take a moment to spend some time with friend Scotty Anderson and their dog, Megan.

sketches and paintings of the scenes of Ozello.

The houses in Ozello are no longer just the small trailers and cottages of fishermen. Spacious wooden houses with large decks and porches stand on stilts above the rivers and creeks. From most any point on the mainland, you can see a roof peaking out from the bushes of the islands, linked only by thin electrical wires swaying in the wind.

Ozello's varied houses reflect the mix of the Ozello population. But the community, made up of fishermen, retirees, year-rounders and weekend

dwellers, is easy-going and close-knit. "There's not hardly anyone that's

"We didn't have nothin' and didn't want nothin' and didn't expect nothin'. We was happy."

— Zeke Wells

not liked by everyone," says Wanda Wells. "It's a community of people that like each other."

Thelma Henderson says Ozello is a "getaway" place for people from the Tampa Bay and Lakeland areas. "They come here for the weekends to be quiet," she says.

Ozello folks have their raucous times, but on the whole, they're a quiet bunch, a community of people who like to live a little bit away from it all. Leaning over a cooler filled with fresh mullet, wholesale fish seller Orin Vann will tell you why he likes the Ozello lifestyle.

"It's at the end of the road and you don't get no hassie."

DEAR ANN LANDERS: Here are some excellent commandments for in-laws. And please, Ann, feel free to add to this list.

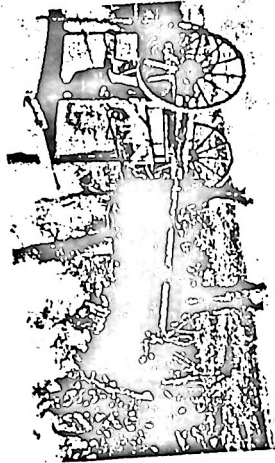
As one who has been through the mill, I can tell you there are many young married couples who need all the help they can get.

By-Laws for In-Laws

1. Don't feel that you are entitled to know everything about your married children's lives (who they entertain, what they do every night, how much money they make, what their friends are up to, etc.).

2. Don't complain that visits with your children and grandchildren are too infrequent. If your son takes you to lunch, don't tell him it should be every month, and then call him to make sure that it is. Be content with whatever time he can give you.

Ozello



lower the bridge again, then the next traveler by road could consider himself lucky if the block and tackle was on his side. There was a large plank left by the bridge so it could be placed across the river to permit the traveler to get to the other side and lower the bridge. The last bridge we now have, at that time had a culvert covered with dirt to make a roadway which they called "Long-haul-over." Old timers claim that more trout were caught on the south side of this culvert than at most locations in Ozello.

Before the bridge were built the horse and wagons had to ford the river and creek. Some times on high tide the horses had to swim (they would wait until the tide subsided).

Facts from Mr. Newton Turner

by Mae Witte

PIONEER DAYS

After the war in 1920 the County Commissioners voted to pay \$500. to have two bridges built, one over Salt River and one over Black Creek.

Mr. Newton Turner received the contract to build them. He got his lumber at Centralia and had it shipped to Dunne-lon and then to Homosassa. It was then hauled by oxen to the river bank and then by boat to Salt River and Black Creek. Mr. Turner hired a few colored men, they made posts from cedar logs and the rest of the bridge was constructed of cypress. The bridge over Salt River was a draw bridge. The traveler had to leave his boat and be on the bridge to operate it, by block and tackle.

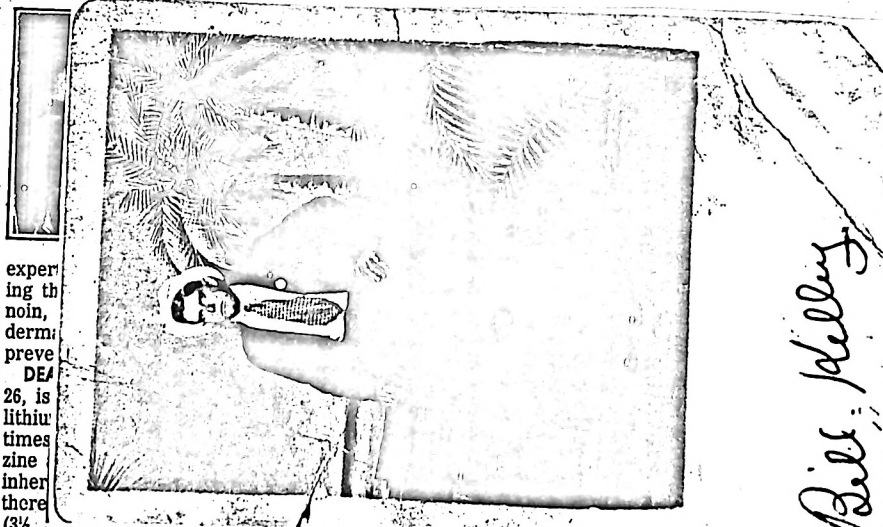
There are always a few in every group and even in those days there were no exceptions. Some would go through and neglect to

Consult a specialist about skin disorder

DEAR DR. GOTT: Ten surgeries and seven years later, no one has been able to tell me what I can do to prevent future occurrences of hidradenitis suppurativa. Can you?

DEAR READER: Hidradenitis suppurativa is a chronic skin condition marked by repeated infections of the sweat glands, primarily in the underarm and groin areas. Simple cases present as boils and abscesses, which are readily treated with antibiotics and hot compresses. Chronic and recurrent episodes are a different matter because the infections can coalesce, forming deep tracts of inflammation that are resistant to therapy and can make arm movement and walking painfully difficult.

As a general measure, susceptible patients should avoid skin



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Bill Kelly

a y e e d e a r e

Time is all I have now

John Brown, a legend on the canal in Ozello, has his day next week

By BARBARA BEHREND
Citrus Times Staff Writer

OZELLO — Time has wrought only small changes on John Brown's Ozello home.

Time and the freezes of the past several years have taken away the trees that once lined the canal and lent shade to the grounds.

Time and fast-moving boaters who stirred up destructive waves have dissolved a couple of islands that had rested in the canal.

Time and the elements have faded and roughened the outside of the wood house Brown built 55 years ago. But time hasn't changed the way Brown feels about Ozello. The view is still good, and he still calls the place home.

"Time is all I have now," Brown said in his soft voice, gazing from his cluttered screened porch to the dozen of empty flower pots and numerous cypress trees dotting his yard.

But Brown has more than time. He has memories that span 76 years of living on and off in the Ozello area.

Sitting on his porch chatting, he remembers picking up children in the boat that took them to the famous Ozello island school, which appeared in Ripley's *Believe It or Not*.

Brown remembers being a constable, a sheriff's deputy, a school bus driver, a school board member, a fisherman, an electrician and a security guard.

Brown remembers the accomplishments of his ancestors. His grandfather, J. J. Brown, came to the area after the Civil War. He carried the mail, taught school and was a county commissioner. Brown's father, James Newton Brown, served as a county commissioner and the mayor of Crystal River.

Because of the accomplishments of Brown and his family, the Ozello Civic Club has declared May 25 John Brown Day.

Turnover for rest of the story
Please see BROWN, Page 2



Citrus Times — BOB MORELAND

'During the Depression I didn't have a job, so I had to get someplace in the woods and I just took a liking to this spot. I'd leave, but I'd always come back. This is my home.'

— John Brown

CORRIENE MARIAN DeBUSK

Corriene Marian DeBusk, 47, of Lecanto, passed away Wednesday, Feb. 8. Born in Ozello, she was a lifelong resident of Citrus County. She was a secretary for Aquatic Weed Control of Citrus County and member of Crystal River First Baptist Church.

Survivors include two sons, Charles and Jeffrey Priest, Red Level; two daughters, Bonnie Strickland and Shirley Mashburn, both of Red Level; her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Henry DeBusk, Crystal River; four brothers, Billy and Barry DeBusk, Crystal River, Lloyd DeBusk, Orlando, Thomas DeBusk, Ozello; two sisters, Joann Stephens and Rebecca Parham, both of Crystal River; and six grandchildren.

Graveside funeral services will be held Monday, Feb. 13, at 11 a.m. at Stage Stand Cemetery, Homosassa Springs, with Rev. L.B. Thomas of Crystal River First Baptist Church officiating. Strickland Funeral Home, Crystal River, is in charge of arrangements.



Citrus Times — BOB MORELAND

John Brown sits amid the plants on his steps.

Cent from other side
Brown from Page 1

Scheduled to begin at the civic club at 11 a.m., the celebration of Brown's 77th birthday will include an old-fashioned style show, a potluck dinner, music, games and special recognition to the former school teachers of the island school and anyone born in Ozello more than 50 years ago.

Those who have old photos of Ozello are asked to bring them to the celebration, and the public is invited.

Brown said Friday that he is honored by the plans for the celebration but doesn't understand why such a fuss is being made about it. He does look forward to seeing many of his friends and relatives at the event.

An active man all his life, Brown said he has not quite adjusted to retirement. He was asked to leave his job as a security guard several months ago when a new boss noticed his age.

"I miss it," he said, removing his cap and brushing back the white wisps of hair. "But it was time for me to quit anyway."

Retirement means living just on his and his wife Helen's Social Security, but Brown isn't worried. "It don't take much for us to live," he said. "When I paid that judge the night I got married, I had just two dollars in my pocket."

After he and his wife were married more than half a century ago, Brown held many jobs. He was asked by some local people to run for the job of constable, not an easy task in a town that had a tough reputation.

Brown said the beauty of the area and the numerous relatives he and his wife have there made them settle in and stay in Ozello.

"During the Depression, I didn't have a job, so I had to get someplace in the woods and I just took a liking to this spot," Brown said. "I'd leave, but I'd always come back. This is my home."

John & Helen Brown



Jim Newton Brown + Carrie



SEP . 54 .

Ozello pioneer dies

Staff report

John Brown, a lifelong resident of Ozello who was active in the community, died Monday about a mile away from the house in which he was born.

Brown, 84, was a well-liked resident who served on the school board, was a constable for many years, and was a charter member of the Ozello Water Board.

His brother, Horace Brown of Crystal River, said he not only drove a school bus for many years, but also captained a boat that transported children who lived on islands to school.

He was a constable for 22 years in a district that covered Ozello, Crystal River and Ho-

mosassa. "He liked doing that a lot," Horace Brown said.

John Brown's son, Tom Brown of Crystal River, said his father was well respected in Ozello, and a road that cuts off from Ozello Road bears his father's name.

The community's Pioneer Days started a few years ago with John Brown Day.

"He was a quiet, gentle man," Tom Brown said. "He didn't get riled up too much. People listened to what he had to say."

John Brown is survived by his wife, Helen H. Brown; three sons, Joe and Tom of Crystal River and Jim Bob of Marianna, Fla.; his brother Horace; seven grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

12/3/92
ccc



Riley Hunt + Jessie Hunt

James Henry Neal



Ozello-area cabins should not be burned

In the shallow coastal waters of Ozello, among the jagged oyster bars that threaten to cut feet and disable outboards, there lie some of the most ruggedly beautiful islands in the United States.

Here and there on a few of these islands can be found cabins. Many of them are now used only as camping lodges, but once were homes to some of Citrus County's first residents.

At the expense of much blood and sweat, these pioneer homes were built out of the settlers' love for the area and the necessity of a home for their families. Over the years, hurricanes and fires have destroyed some of these homes.

But because of the fierce tradition embedded deep in the hearts of the settlers' descendants, they were repaired or rebuilt, and these homesteads were preserved. For decades these families and their homes went unnoticed, until recently, since Citrus County has suffered from urbanization so rapidly that environmentalists are up in arms.

Because of this environmental tension, state agencies under the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund have stepped into Ozello in an attempt to gain some much needed control over growth in this sensitive wetland area.

Unfortunately for the homestead cabin owners, it appears that these agencies' attempts have been directed toward their cabins. Several months ago a campaign to rid the islands of the settlers' cabins was begun. The islands were posted "no trespassing," and campers were told to stay off the islands and out of the cabins unless to remove

personal belongings.

This came as quite a surprise to the home owners who, because of their long history on the islands, considered the land to be theirs. Now rumor has it, that in their final phase of squatter eradication, these state agencies intend to burn the cabin homes to the ground.

If indeed the cabins are burned, it will be a grave mistake. Burning is an inefficient method of disposal. Open

fires never burn purely or completely and release a variety of chemical compounds. The burning of a dwelling such as these cabins is likely to release carbons, nitrates, sulfurs, and carcinogens into the local ecosystem.

Aside from these less obvious, many animals will be killed as a direct result of the blazes. The rafters of one cabin that I know of personally are home to a family of owls, and a family of great blue herons has made their nest in a tree near the house.

Ozello's marine life and shellfish population are already wounded, and the destruction caused by these open bonfires would cut that wound even deeper.

A suggested alternative to destroying the cabins is to turn them into historic monuments that all of us could enjoy. Another would be to turn a few of them into field stations for the wildlife officers to use on overnight missions, after all they have been havens to many wind-blown and sun-baked travelers through the years.

As a final suggestion, if it is necessary to destroy the cabins, a method other than burning, such as dismantling them and carting them away, should be used.

Something must be done. These homes are an integral part of Citrus County's heritage, and, for the benefit of all residents, they need to be preserved. With perseverance, I hope that my voice will be heard and my ideas will be considered.

Our state leaders have an extreme large responsibility and in this bureaucratic government they often make mistakes. It is a good leader who will listen when mistakes are pointed out, and an even better one who will take action to correct the situation.

OPINIONS INVITED

The opinions expressed in the Chronicle editorial are the opinions of the editorial board of the newspaper. Editorial board members are Publisher Gerard Mulligan, V.P. for Marketing David Ernest, Editor Jim Hunter, Managing Editor/News John Bowrman, Managing Editor/Graphics Tim Hess, Feature Editor Neale Hunter and County Editor Cindy Cokely.

Groups, or individuals who wish to comment on editorials or express another opinion are invited to write letters to the editor or to schedule a meeting with the editorial board by calling 726-4005.

Readers of the Chronicle are invited to send letters to the editor on issues they feel are important to the community. All letters must be signed and include a phone number. The phone number will not be published, but all letters will include the name of the author. We reserve the right to edit letters for consideration of space, libel or taste. Send your letters to:

The Editor
P.O. Box 1899
Inverness, Fl. 32651

Sincerely,
G. William Bryant
Crystal River

Ogella Fla
April 16th 94

Dear Sir Wesley
Mr Walker

Woceler wants to secure
the process of settling on
a piece of state land and
thinks he will be able to buy
and pay for it in twelve months

The land lays on the south
side of St. Martin river in
the south west corner of section
~~fourteen~~ fifteen (15) township
number (19) range Butler (14)

it is a part of a 80 acre lot
the N. W. half of it bought by
W. W. Briggs about two years ago

Please inform me what
he (Woceler) must do to settle

COPY
reproduced by
FLORIDA STATE ARCHIVES
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
R. A. GRAY BUILDING
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0250
Series 911 Carton 51

I will be greatly
Obliged for the
direction information
Yours Truly
E. F. Brown
Hemosassa
Citrus Co Fla.

E. F. Brown
Aug. 18/89
Care — 71 —

Mayors of Crystal River

1. Bowman, E. T.	1903 - 1905
2. Sparkman, N. N.	1906
3. Stevens, J. E.	1907 - 1910
4. Erwin, Richard W.	1911 - 1912
5. Sparkman, N. N.	1913 - 1914
6. Gay, W. E.	1915 - 1916
7. Sparkman, N. N.	1917 - 1918
8. Hough, W. E.	1919
9. Gaston, J. B.	1920 - 1921
10. Root, E. B.	1922
11. Stevens, J. E.	1923 - 1924
12. Barco, H. C.	1925
13. Burgess, Yorke	1926 - 1927
14. Barco, H. C.	1928
15. Bowman, E. T.	1929 - 1932
16. Rubin, Philip	1933 - 1935
17. Moon, W. B.	1936 - 1937
18. Bowman, E. T.	1938 - 1939
19. Alyea, W. S.	1940 - 1941
20. Stevens, J. E.	1942 - 1946
21. Brown, J. T.	1947
22. Brown, J. N.	1948
23. Graff, Carl F.	1949 - 1950
24. Thompson, M. M.	1951
25. Dumas, Brown	1952 - 1963
26. Damron, Leonard A.	1964 - 1967
27. Ayers, Stewart	1968
28. Damron, Leonard A.	1969 - 1972
29. Lewis, Vinel S.	1973
30. Williams, Herbert	1981 - 1990
31. Rich, Curtis, Sr.	1991 - to present

Crystal River was operated as a village government until 1903.
It became a town form in 1903 and a city form in 1923.

Ozello pioneer dies

Staff report

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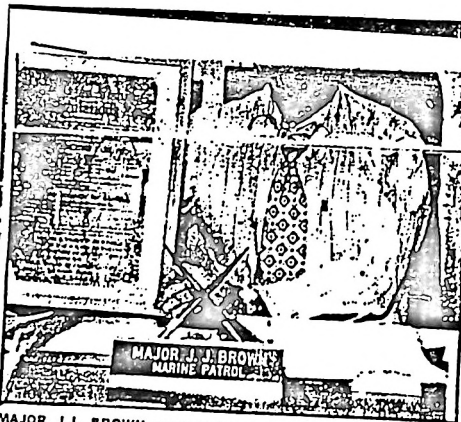
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12/3/92
ccc



MAJOR J. J. BROWN commander of the Marine Patrol office in Homosassa whose enforcement arm extends up and down the west coast of Florida holds a copy of one of the first Salt Water Fishing Regulations true today," Brown said. Returning to Citrus County after an absence of dating back to the Civil War. Most of the official papers and letters concerned his great-grandfather, and his grandfather. (Photo by Norm Sweetman)

wife, sonora, and our two children, Stacy 17, and Ann 16. Both are attending Crystal River High School. We like it here and the girls are learning to adapt. You know how it is to pack up and move away from high school

written oftener than I have. I should have come down and gone on Homeseasy but Dave written me there was no lands there worth homesteading — Therefore I decided to rent lands this year. I have let out my mill road

erate soldier now marine patrol office

this year and have put in just such a crop as you say you have 25 acres in corn and 15 in cotton. If you want fancy I can do very well without her."

S.S. continued describing an illness he was getting over and complaining because the weather was cold and rainy.

In a later letter, dated May 13th — 1886, S.S. wrote his son the seasons were set just right for planting and he had good prospects with 27 acres of corn and 13 acres of cotton and one and a half acres in rice.

S.S. said there was "a gooddeal of sickness in my family this spring," and he went on to describe it, "Fancy has something come on his leg which laid him up about three weeks — but we all in tolerable good health at present," and he sent his respects.

In June of 1882 S.S. received a letter from his brother, Dave in Auburndale, Florida which points up the scarcity of doctors in Florida at that time. Dave Brown wrote: "Dear Brother yours received and glad to hear from you all. Inclose a prescription given by a medical man here for your rlat. I described the case as near as I could and he gave the prescription and said it is only ablod complaint you can gutt any amount you wish from one dram.

Their has been nearley a compleat failuer in crops around here and to cap it all their was 2 houses burned last week one in this place and one nearby

and we had to donate to one of the families. Tell Margret it was McClaines house where the water works was also tell her John Crasie lost his horse last tuesday worth \$150. A bad alarm on him it seems as if we was in a bad streak down here. I am glad to hear the hogs is doing well..... Ever yours, David."

An old 1870 Florida road map issued by the Florida State Auto Association shows "Improved Roads and Fair to Good Roads in both red and black, and Very Poor to Poor Roads in black lines."

Main highway through the state was U.S. 1, other highways were not numbered. U.S. 37 through the middle of the state had not been built, neither had U.S. 41 along the west coast and through the Everglades to Miami.

On the back with a listing of official hotels and garages is an additional listing showing population of towns with over 500 residents. Inverness had a population of 1,132; Crystal River, 941; Bronson 773; Clearwater, 2,677; Miami, 23,518; Ocala, 4,921; St. Petersburg, 14,237 and Tampa, 81,252.

Major Brown said he is going to contact Hampton Dunn of the American Auto Association in St. Petersburg to see if he is interested in the original map. If not he will discuss it with the local Historical Society.

"One thing about it," Brown grinned, "it's great to be back in Citrus County."

Joe Brown Now Heads Marine Patrol

Maj. John J. (Joe) Brown, 15 year career officer with the Florida Marine Patrol was promoted to the Chief Law Enforcement Officer of the Marine Patrol on Jan. 1, filling the vacancy left by the retirement of Lt. Col. H.V. (Ted) Gibson. Brown's new rank is Lieutenant Colonel.

Both the retiring chief law enforcement officer and the new chief are familiar to Citrus County. Lt. Col. Gibson lives at Inverness and Lt. Col. Brown is originally from Crystal River.

Lt. Col. Brown was born and reared in Crystal River and is a graduate of Crystal River High School. His parents, John and Helen Brown live in Crystal River and also have a home in Ozello.

After receiving an honorable discharge from the U.S. Air Force, the new chief law enforcement began his career in law enforcement as a conservation officer with the former Conservation Board. Later he was made assistant district supervisor for Southwest Florida.

In 1970, Lt. Col. Brown was assigned to General

Headquarters in Tallahassee, and was promoted to the rank of Major. Since that time, he has served as coordinator for Florida's Seafood Quality Control Program. Through his efforts most of the guidelines now followed by the state were established. Florida's guidelines have been used as models by other coastal states.

according to Department of Natural Resources reports.

The new chief law enforcement officer has varied interests which include outdoor sports, woodwork, biographical history, historical and marine related literature.

Lt. Col. Brown and his wife Sandra have two daughters, Stacey, nine, and Ann eight.

Marine Patrol official moved to Citrus office

JIM HUNTER
Staff Writer

Homosassa Springs will be the site of Gulf Region Bureau office of the Florida Marine Patrol as the result of a realignment in the agency's top administrators.

Col. Joe Brown, a native of Ozello, the Marine Patrol director for the last four years, will be stepping aside from his directorship in Tallahassee and will be assuming the duties of director of the Gulf Region. Until now that office has been located in Tampa.

The new director of the patrol will be Capt. Don Ellingsen, who worked in the Crystal River District office as a lieutenant from 1976 to 1980.

The new Gulf Region office will be an administrative office and will be manned by Col. Brown, an administrative assistant, and a small number of support personnel. It will be located in the Wagon Wheel Plaza on U.S. 19 south of

Homosassa Springs.

A spokesperson for Col. Brown's office said the office should be operational by August 1.

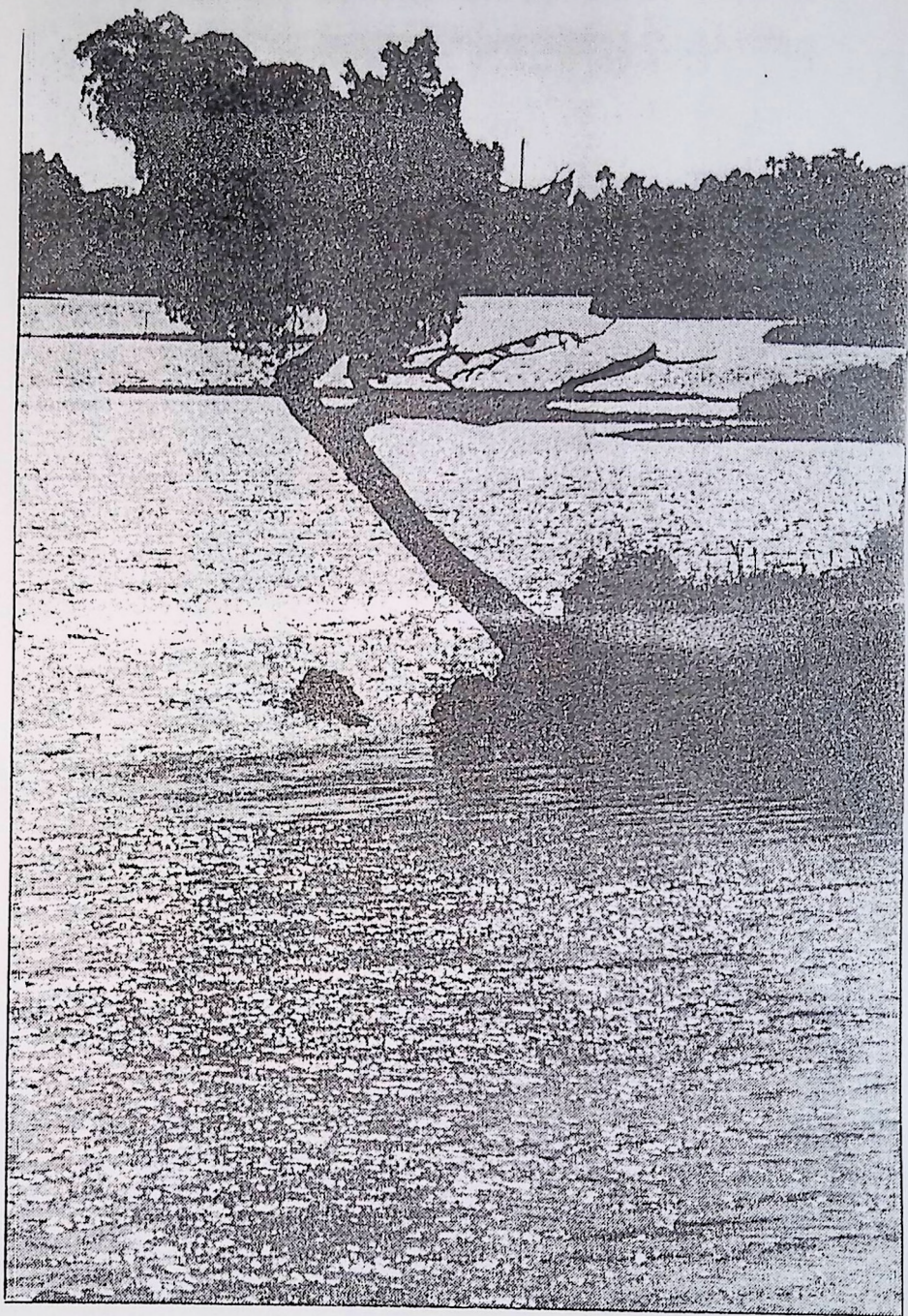
Col. Brown is currently in the process of relocating his family in the Homosassa area.

Brown was appointed director of Florida Marine Patrol in Nov. of 1979. Before that he had been assistant director for the patrol for four and a half years.

Dr. Elton J. Gissendanner, director of the Department of Natural Resources under whose auspices the Marine Patrol operates, said that the changes were voluntary and involved three top administrators who all desired changes.

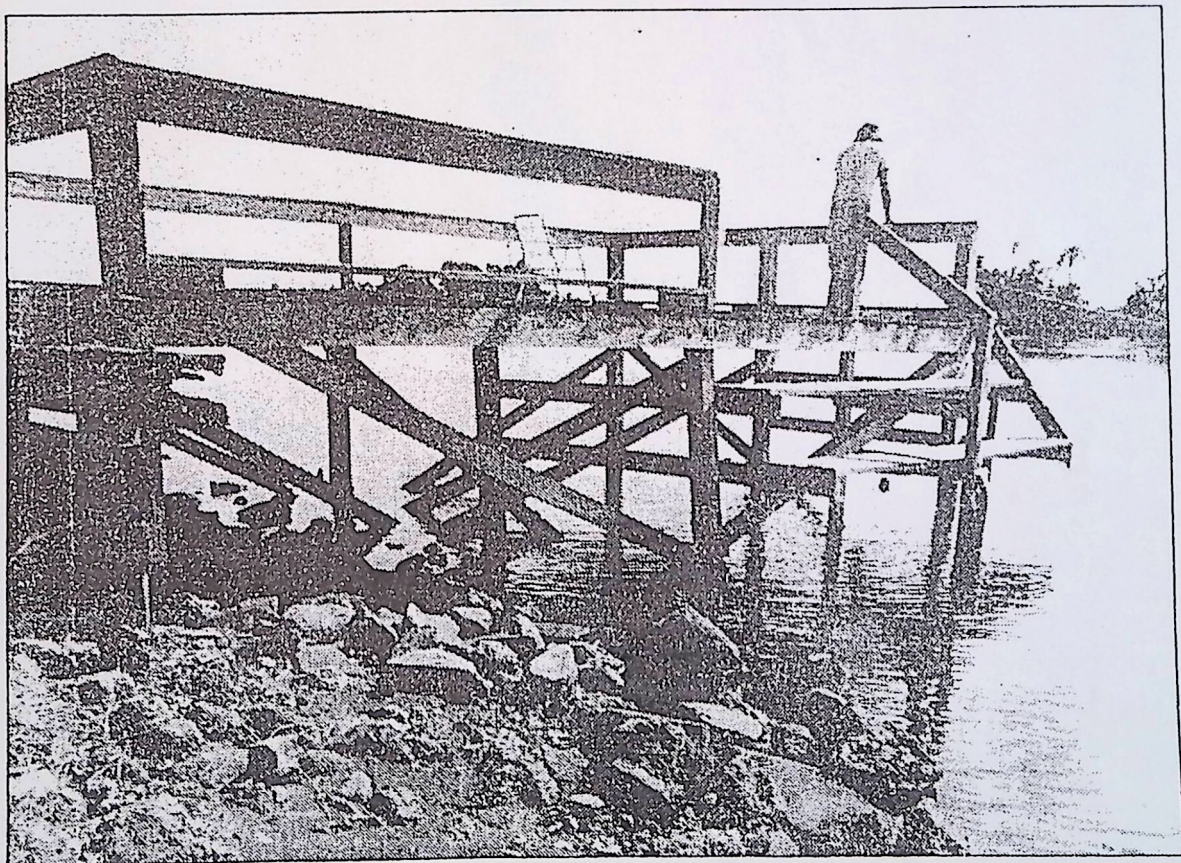
Captain Jack Thompson, who is presently the director of the Gulf Region Bureau will be taking over the Tampa District office.

Please see office, back page



Seaside Scenes In Ozello

Located on State Road 494 off U.S. 19, between Crystal River and Homosassa Springs, is the quaint seaside village of Ozello. Picturesque buildings and boats dot the maze of islands that stretch for nine miles down a winding road. At left, an old tree on one of the islands is silhouetted against the shimmering sea. Some residents say Ozello is named for the daughters, Ozello and Ozöna, of the first man to purchase property there. However, longtime resident John J. Brown, right, says the name came about when residents could not agree upon a name for the community, and the community's first postmaster, Will Platt, asked U.S. postal officials to name the village. The name they sent back to Platt was Ozello. Below is a dock located at what Brown says is the original site of the town. — Tribune Photos by Bob Hannah



Ozello's Old School May See New Dawn

(Continued from Page 1)

the school in 1922, but went back the next year to repeat the final grade "because I didn't have anything else to do."

Brown said the one-classroom school was constructed of pine from a nearby mill, and placed on the centrally-located island to settle a dispute between Ozello parents as to where the school should be built.

"Part of the time we had to cut wood," Brown recalls of classes, which followed the early American tradition of having the teacher instruct one grade level while students in the other seven grades studied at their seats.

NEITHER FOG nor choppy seas, nor a lack of interest

kept the 40-odd students that attended school with Brown from landing on the island on time, he said.

And nobody went home when chill winds slipped into the sides of the unsealed building, Brown said, although a watch was kept for signs of approaching storms.

The high-ceiling room was lighted by kerosene lanterns that were pulled down for lighting and then allowed to raise back up, Brown said, with students huddled over double-seated wooden desks with flip-up tops.

A POT BELLIED stove did what it could to warm the wooden structure (made longer to seat the large class), Brown said, and an organ in the schoolroom provided its own kind of warmth. A near-

1930's and early 1940's in a newspaper article published several years ago.

"Since I couldn't swim, I was just a little afraid of the water," Mrs. Martin said of her island days. "Here I was expected to teach 18 or 15 youngsters that could handle boats like professionals and swim like ducks," she lamented.

"AT THAT TIME the school term was four or five months during the summer. This was to allow the older boys to fish in the fall and winter months to help swell the family finances," she explained.

Mrs. Martin was apparently as willing to learn as to teach, and she described how two boys in the family with which she boarded taught her the art of rowing during her first summer in Ozello.

Boat trips to the school didn't stop after the classes were ended in 1944, either, since the still-sturdy wooden building became a refuge for fishermen caught in a storm.

IN FACT, it took killer-hurricane Gladys to make the old school begin to lean to one side, when Ozello was hard hit by the tropical storm a few years ago.

The winds that often whip across the coastal marshlands

finally brought the structure down, collapsing the walls and leaving the tin-covered roof perched on top of the remains.

And more recently the school vestiges were partially dismantled when a fellow who had bought an island near Ozello began to salvage building materials on what he thought was his property.

LOCAL RESIDENTS, alerted by the noise of the salvage work, boated out to the school house to tell the worker that he had landed on the wrong island; Lois Klingensmith, president of Ozello Inc., the community's civic organization, said. Now it looks like the school may get new life since trustees for the property have given Ozello Inc. members permission to renovate and refurbish the structure.

The one-acre island (more-or-less an acre, the deed acknowledges with due reverence to the Gulf tides) belongs to the people of Ozello. Trustees Katharen Stevens, Mildred De Busk and John Brown gave the civic club permission to undertake the raising of funds for restoration work.

So like its lost sister-of-the-sea Atlantis, the school-house on the "Isle of Knowledge" is due to rise again.

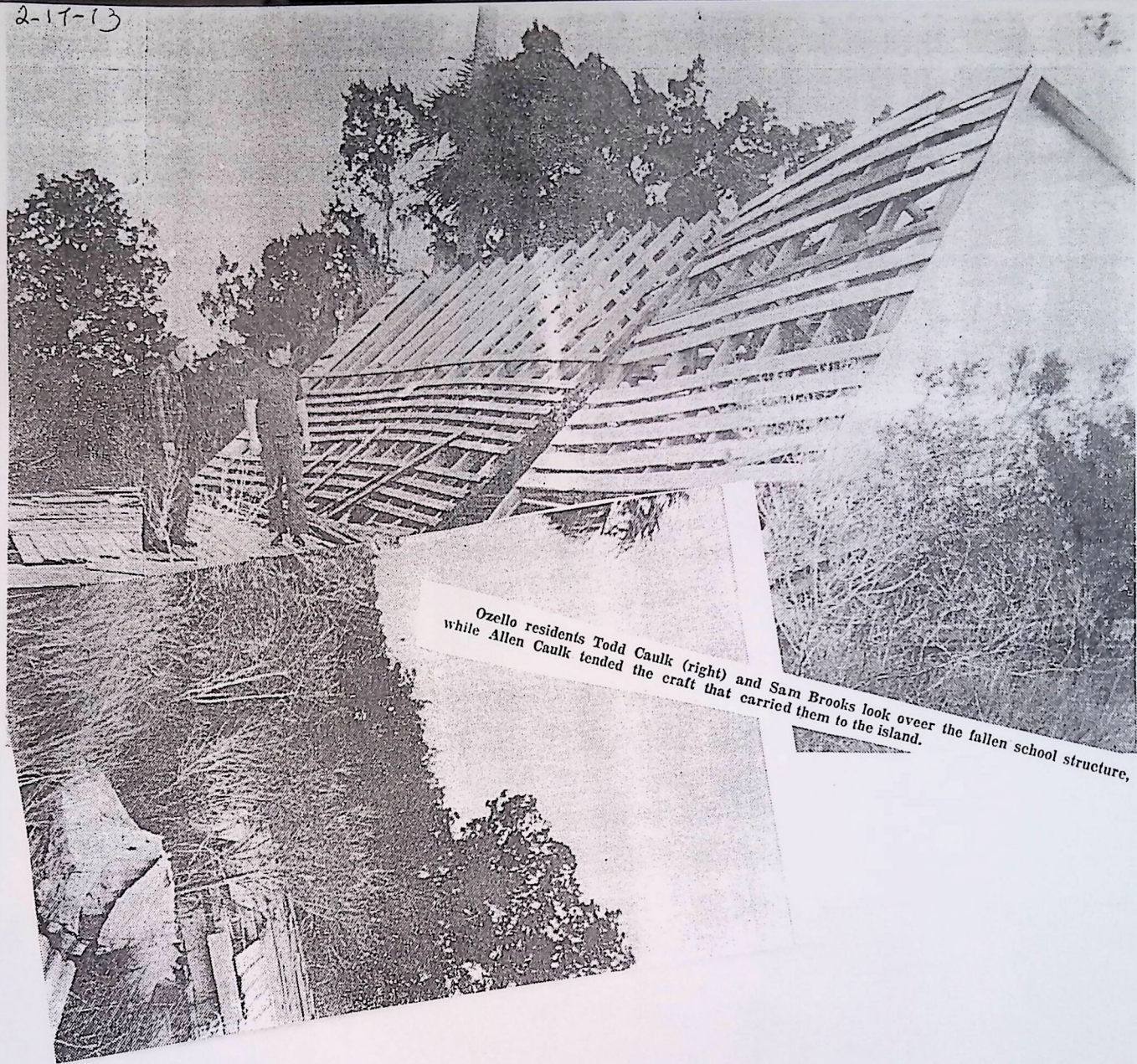
by cistern caught rainwater for use on the island, Brown said.

The county paid the teachers, who boarded with local

residents between voyages to the classroom.

One of those teachers, Mrs. Cattie Martin, described her terms at the school in the

2-17-13



Ozello residents Todd Caulk (right) and Sam Brooks look over the fallen school structure, while Allen Caulk tended the craft that carried them to the island.

Feb 1, 1960

Subdividing Under Way At Ozello

A once - thriving commercial fishing and grove center — decimated by freezes of the 1890's — is getting a new spurt of life.

It is the town of Ozello, not on the map until 1954. Ozello is about 7 miles west of U.S. 19 on 494, about three miles south of Crystal River in Citrus County.

Today it's a place to go to get away from it all and that's what J. H. McClung, realtor, and A. T. Carroll, contractor and businessman, had in mind when they started opening 320 acres there for houses.

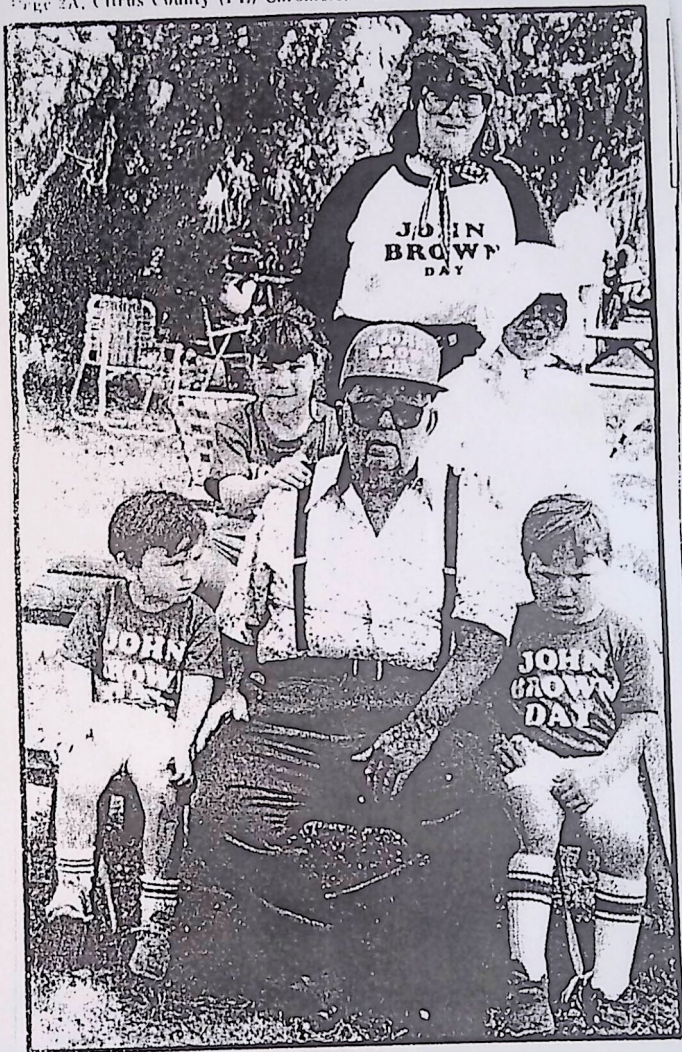
It's still hunting and fishing country up there and the developers, known as the Ozello Land Development Co., decided to open up an all waterfront section aiming at the "second house" buyer for weekends and vacations. The property is on the St. Martin's River and canals are being dredged and land cleared to create the all waterfront sites.

Planned are a total of 1,200 lots. All residential lots are 100 x 130 feet with 100 feet water frontage. Prices range from \$1,785 to \$2,995.

A 20 - acre section has been set aside for mobile homes. These lots are 50 x 130 feet.

Before the big freeze of 1893-96, the mainland and islands of Ozello were thickly populated.

A post office was located on one island and the mail and supplies were brought in by boat from Cedar Key. The school house was built on an island in 1886 and children from the mainland and the adjoining islands attended school by row-boat. The school is still standing and a schoolboat still operates, taking children from island homes to school on the mainland.



John Brown Day

Life long Ozello resident John Brown was honored at the Ozello Civic Club last Saturday afternoon. The town's residents turned out to participate in an afternoon of various activities including games, contests and lots of homemade food prepared by area residents. Pictured from left to right are Brown's grandchildren, Phillip Brown, Danny Brown, Kelly Brown, Sherri Brown and Kristi Brown. The contest and game prizes were donated by the Gannon's Beef Shop, Edd's Tackle Shop, Gator Sport Shop, Pirates Cove, Wendy's, Palms Hardware, McDonalds, Medic Pharmacy, Ann Romana, Qwik Trip store in Ozello, Palms Tavern, Red Line Shrimp Docks, Carolyn Rooks, Midstate Federal, Barnett Bank and Citizens Bank. (Photo by Karen Sandvick)

City declares John Brown Day to celebrate 77th birthday.

By Ray Davis Staff Writer

OZELLO — One of Ozello's residents will be 77-years old June 1 and this tiny village located near Crystal River plans to make the day a memorable one.

John Brown, who was born in Ozello in 1908 is a legend in the town where his grandfather J.J. Brown had settled shortly after the Civil War.

The Ozello Civic Club has published an official proclamation declaring June 1 as "John Brown Day" and has planned a full round of activities beginning at 11 a.m. at the Civic Club building.

"The day promises to be a memorable one," said

Jane Hindman, one of the day's organizers and wife of the Ozello Community Baptist Church minister.

One of the events planned is an old fashioned style show when live models will show the turn-of-the-century clothes styles. Other activities will be horse shoe pitching contests and volley ball along with music being furnished by a string band.

"Special recognition will be given to former school teachers of the famous Ripley's "Believe It Or Not" island schoolhouse and also anyone who was born in Ozello more than 60 years ago," Hindman said.

As a life-long resident, Brown was town constable for some 16 years in addition to pursuing other professions before his retirement a few years ago.

Brown was a member of the school board and drove the school boat when roads were mere trails skirting the marshlands.

He was also a barber and an electrician, operating an electric shop in Crystal River.

A professional fisherman, he also owned a fish house in Ozello.

Brown's grandfather was one of the first mailmen in the town, carrying the mail by boat for nearly 35 years. He was also a school teacher, a county commissioner when Citrus County was organized in Mannfield and was the oldest Mason in the state at the time of his death.

His father James Newton Brown was a fisherman and a guide by profession and was later to become mayor of Crystal River.

Ozello

PIONEER DAYS
There are ruins where big salt kettles were operated only a few miles away on the Salt River during the Civil War, though these are almost concealed by dense woodland now.

that were piled to hold the big salt kettles and the holes in the marshes, but the kettles are all rusted away.
Facts from Henry DeBus

Ozello News

by Mae Witte
PIONEER DAYS

Mr. Henry De Busk states his grandparents used to come to Ozello and make salt on Salt Island (located between Ozello and Crystal River). People from all over Fla. would come and camp for two and three weeks at a time to make and acquire their supply of salt for a year or so. They dug holes in the marshes to get buckets of water to fill the pots and then boiled the water down until all that was left would be the salt. The water seemed to be so much saltier up Salt River than it was anywhere else. All that remains of that old custom are the rocks

Mrs. Ray J. (Kitty) Baker a registered nurse owned and operated the first and only hotel to this day in Ozello. It was built by Ray Baker and is now the present home of Mr. and Mrs. James Stephens. It is one of the oldest buildings still in use and is located on Paradise Island on the St. Martin River.

The people came by train to Homosassa and then Mr. Baker took them by boat to the hotel in the evening after his day's work, as he operated general store in Homosassa, the old (Lonecke Store).

The hotel was noted a health resort, because there was no malaria fever in Ozello, and people would come from other areas to the hotel to stay and regain their health from the fever. It had 9 rooms, 5 of them being bedrooms plus a bathroom.

Florida had many malaria carrying mosquitoes but apparently Ozello didn't as there was never a case of malaria fever found there. Families would move to Ozello to avoid getting the fever or to have their health restored. In fact back in the 1880's, John G. Pratt claims his father was advised to move his family from Homosassa where he first settled, to Ozello to avoid the fever, so he moved and settled in that area.

Ozello

by Mae Witte

PIONEER DAYS

Back in 1930 Mr. Newton Turner received the contract to build a road from the first bridge to the St. Martins River (or to the dock). He hired some colored help to dig the black mud and build it up for the road bed. Holes were drilled out, they were then cut up and hauled away. Mr. Turner made good use of a large shell mound that was located on the river bank. He had it all hauled and spread on the newly built road, making a good shell road from a pile of muck or mud.

By 1954 the State Road Department had widened and surfaced the road to the banks of the St. Martins River, and recognizing the natural attraction for sportsmen and tourists erected a "Wayside Park" for picnic area alongside the new highway.

Facts from Mr. Newton Turner

by Mae Witte

PIONEER DAYS

The first Post Office was in a Trading Post located approximately between the Rhimes and the Lambert property. The Trading Post was owned and operated by Bryant Moody.

Mr. Will Pratt was the first Postmaster and lived in the large house that Mr. Andy Katoski now owns.

Facts from John J. Brown

Ozello News

by Mae Witte
PIONEER DAYS

Mr. Bryant Moody was the owner of the Trading Post where the Post Office was located and he served as the second Postmaster.

The Post Office was then moved to a small building on an island called Beulahland Island (across from where the James Stephens property is now located on the St. Martins River). The property was owned by the Atlanta Fishing Club. Mr. John J. Brown was the caretaker for the club and he also brought the mail by boat to the Post Office. His step-daughter, Rosa Cambell was the Postmistress.

Facts from Horace and John Brown

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JAMES BROWN DIED FRIDAY

James Newton Brown, 81, of Crystal River, died last Friday at the Citrus Memorial Hospital.

A native of Marion County, Mr. Brown had held several public offices in Citrus County during his 70 years residence in Crystal River. He served as a deputy sheriff in Homosassa in 1917; a county commissioner for one term in 1940, and was elected mayor of Crystal River in 1948 for one term.

Survivors include his widow, Mrs. Sarah Agnes Brown, of Crystal River; two daughters, Mrs. Edith Black of Summerfield, and Mrs. James Stephens, of Crystal River; three sons, Rev. J. T. Brown, of Tampa; John J. Brown and Horace Brown, of Crystal River; one brother, Henry Brown, of Wachula; 17 grandchildren and 24 great grandchildren.

Funeral services were held Sunday afternoon at the graveside in Stage Stand Cemetery at Homosassa Springs. Rev. Elton McPheeters, pastor of Crystal River Church of God, officiated.

Porter Funeral Home was in charge of arrangements.

KOFMEHL BUYS BARCO SEAFOOD

CRYSTAL RIVER — Mr. Charles Kofmehl purchased the Barco Seafood Company in Crystal River on Highway 19 last week. He began operating the business January 24, and will continue to carry all types of sea food, including Crystal River oysters.

Mr. and Mrs. Kofmehl live in Magnolia Shores and have two sons, Phillip, in Navy Training School, and Jimmy, in school in Crystal River.

June 7 67

Ozello News

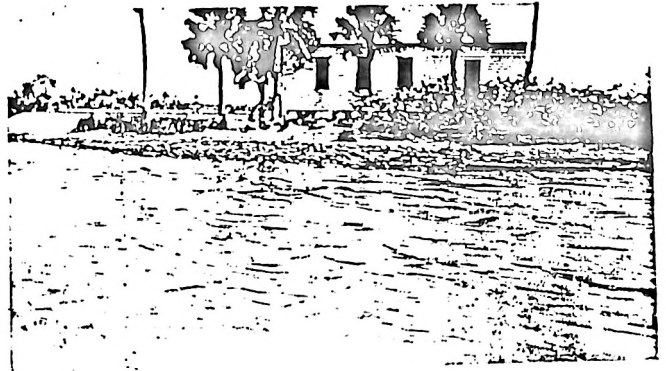
by Mae Witte

PIONEER DAYS

The first school Ozello children attended, from the information I was able to collect was on South Island between Tiger Tail and Hell's Gate in the Homosassa River. It was an Indian village at one time. The island was named "Tiger Tail" after their chief.

Mr. John J. Brown Sr. taught school there. He rowed his boat from Ozello to the school, the children were also transported by boat.---Facts from Mrs. Helen Brown.

Back before 1880 the first school house in Ozello, "Bayview School" was located on the north side of the St. Martin's River on the point, which was an Indian shell mound (now the Hallie Bennett property). The school was only a one room thatched hut of palmetto. Henry De Busk states his mother Elizabeth Waddington, her sister Agnes and her two brothers John and Joe attended that school with others. At one time there were 20 pupils. James J. Brown was the last teacher. The school became unreasonably stripped and torn, and a new place of learning was badly needed. Facts from Henry De Busk.



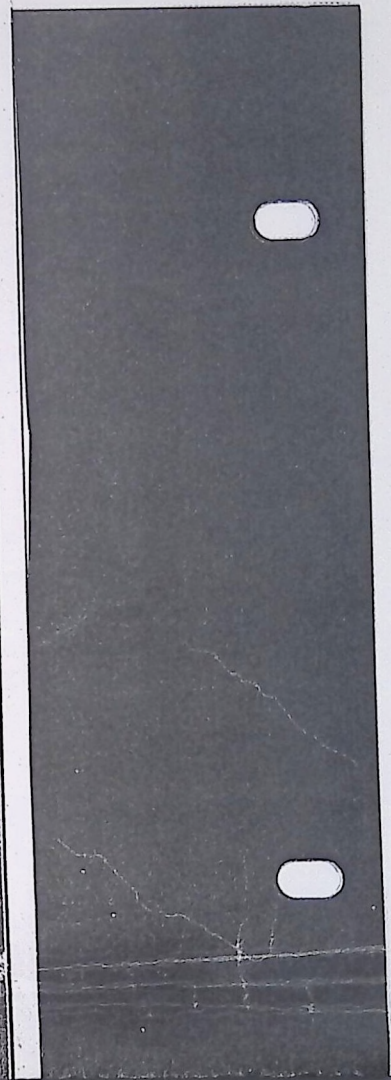
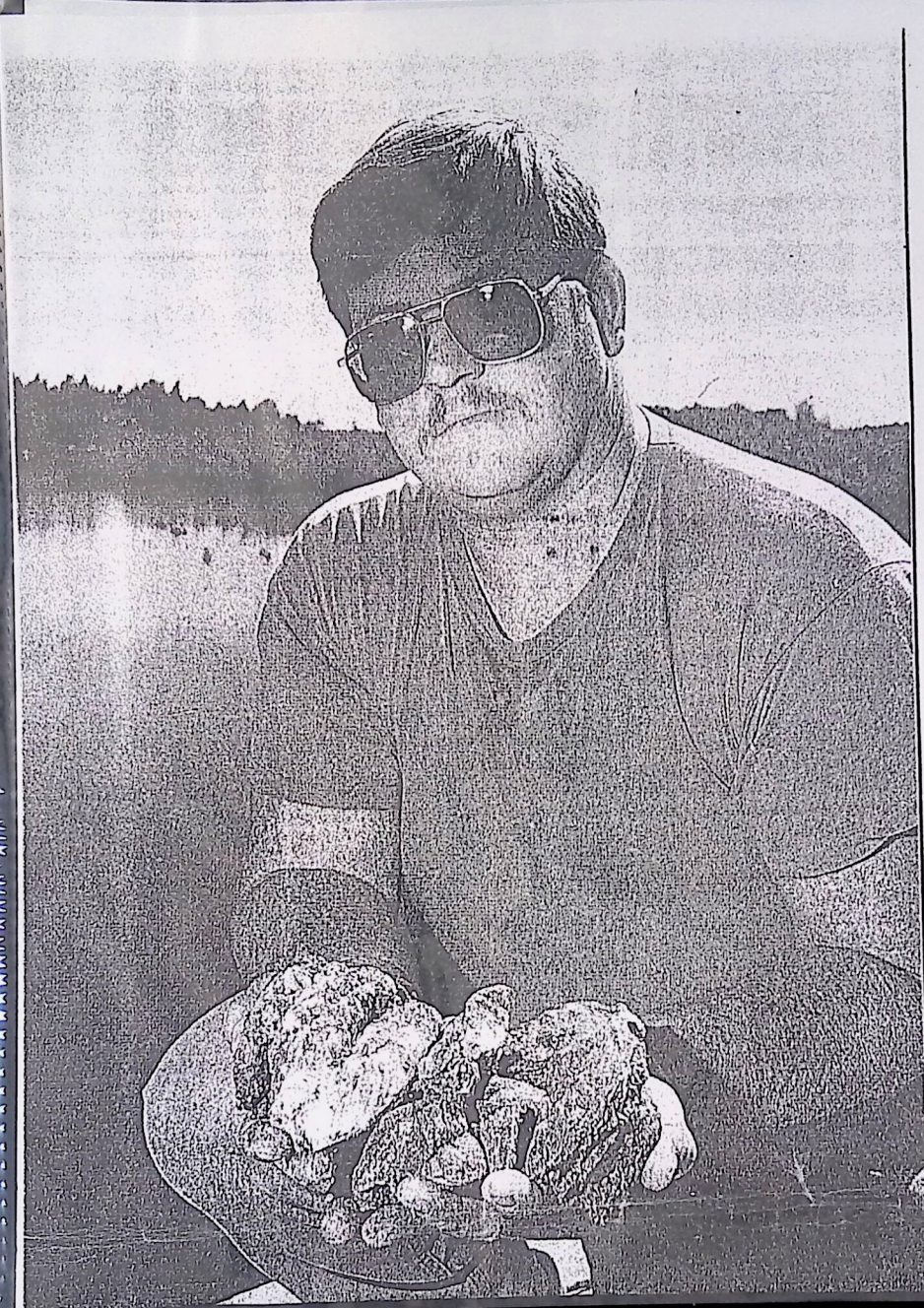



OZELLO

Celebrating history

Residents of Ozello came together Sunday to celebrate their contribution to Citrus County history. This year, the island school of "Ripley's Believe it or Not" fame and its students and teachers were the center of attention. Some of the men and women who attended the school on the "Island of Knowledge" described their experiences. Children were treated to an afternoon of old-fashioned games and members of the Ozello Islands Arts and Crafts Association displayed their talents. Above, at back from left: John Brown, Myrtle DeBusk Pheil, Angie Stanaland Lasco, Creola Priest Willis, Horace Brown, Anne Ashworth Speegle (a teacher), and Harry DeBusk. Front: Geneva Stephens Watson, the Rev. L.R. Watson, Cary Stanaland, Cattie Martin (a teacher) and Agnes DeBusk. At right: Guy Dow works on one of his creations at his "exotic stoneware" booth. Dow and his wife, Barbara, own a landscaping business.







Tribune photograph by ANDY JONES

Cliff Revels, owner of Ozello Seafood holds oysters that are still in their shells. Revels

said oyster hunters can still find a few productive beds off Citrus County.

Oystering a real shell game for Citrus County fishermen

VALERI OLIVER
Tribune Staff Writer

OZELLO — Cliff Revels longs for the days eight years ago when he could leave his boat dock in Ozello about 9 a.m. and return by 1 p.m. with eight 12 bushels of oysters, a good day's pay.

"Now, I'd be lucky to have two or three bushels," said Revels, owner of Ozello Seafood.

Oystering has disappeared as an economic option for the fishermen of Citrus County, say biologists and fisheries enforcement officials, and indications are that other species also are being overfished off the county's coastline.

"I know who was oystering here years ago, and they quit and went into other fisheries. Mostly it's due to the deterioration of the waters. Crystal River once had three full-time oyster houses," said Joe Brown, chief of the Florida Marine Patrol's four enforcement districts from St. Petersburg to the Alabama state line.

Two years ago, Citrus County fishermen landed a total of 44,000 pounds of oysters at county docks.

Last year, landings declined to about 16,000 pounds and will continue to decline, experts say. Fishermen made 606 oystering trips in 1986 compared with 342 trips last year.

"It used to be much more plentiful. We just don't see that much activity in the Citrus County area," said John Schneider, chief of the shellfish sanitation division of the state Department of Natural Resources.

Schneider said fishermen who once used oystering to supplement incomes have turned to stone crab fishing, but a recent DNR study has shown that the waters off Citrus County may be overfished for stone crab, too. Because oystering has never been a big business in Citrus County, Schneider said fishermen may be traveling to Cedar Key, where harvests have been more successful.

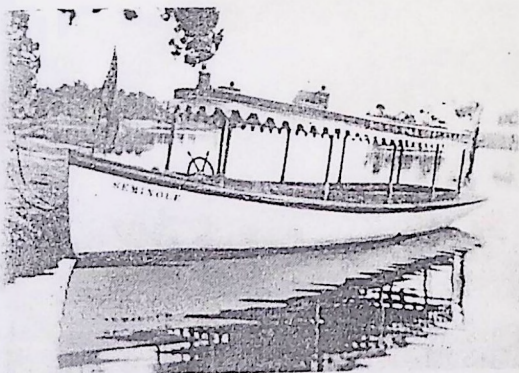
Revels said oyster hunters can still find a few productive beds off Citrus County. He complained that some less experienced fishermen are harvesting oysters before they reach 3 inches across.

See OYSTER, P.



Two of the younger John J. Brown's sons take to the road during high tide in Ozello.

Tom J. C.
Brown



A family boat from the 'island days' of Ozello

Mullet Key

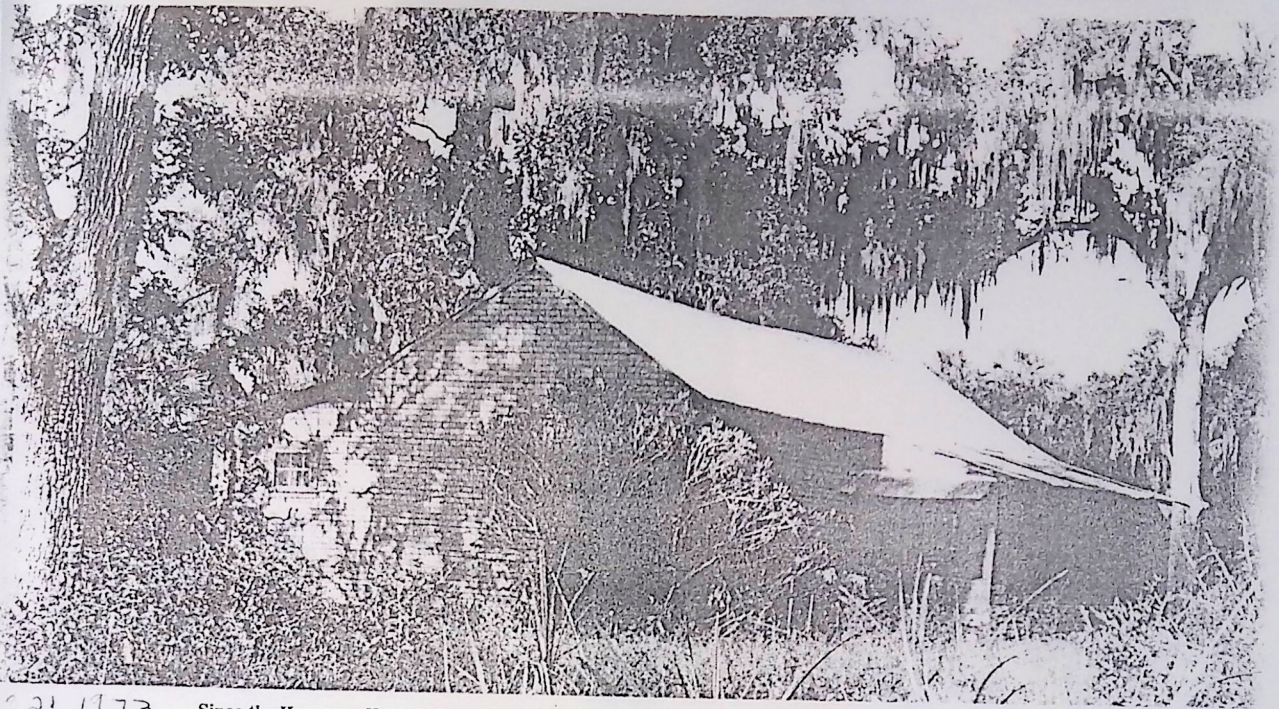
Mullet Key is a slice of land sitting peacefully on the Gulf of Mexico in Crystal River. For 2,000 years, it was home to hundreds of Indians.

Indians inhabited the site was inhabited from 500 B.C. until 1500 A.D. It was used as a temporary living area for the Indians during certain months of the year.

The Indians liked to camp there because of the shellfish and plentiful food sources available to them.

The island is privately owned by Lowell Steigler of Miami Beach and is not open to the public.

Mullet Key was placed on the register because of its archaeological significance regarding settlement patterns, the subsistence and environment of Indians. It is also the site of a very important coastal prehistoric shell midden.

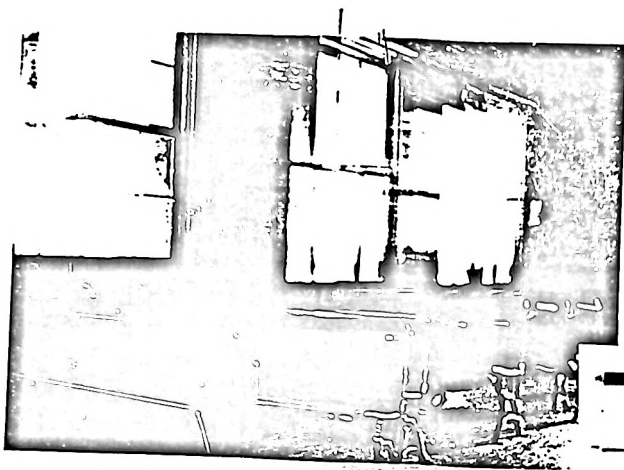


021 1173

Since the Hangover House's Demise, this is the 'new' oldest home in Ozello area, where John J. Brown grew up.



John J. Brown and his fishing boat, both longtime residents of Ozello



Time Out

Ozello

Continued from page 1c

"Do you remember the time we came home from town in that awful storm?" someone asked the Brown "boys." They nodded.

"The water was so deep we drove off the bridge here. All we could see was the very top of our Model A roadster. We all waded home — neck-deep in that water! I don't recall it ever being that bad before or since."

Helen Brown had her own fascinating tale to relate.

"One of the most interesting sights I ever saw," Helen said, "was the time a man came out from Crystal River with an ox-drawn wagon. He put that ox on a raft and floated him across the river to some cedar knots and left-over limbs he wanted to haul back to Crystal River. Well, I wish you could have seen that animal. He had as good 'sea legs' as any man. He'd sway with the waves and movement of the raft. I never saw anything like it."

Everyone seemed to have something to say about the famous island school, which Ripley wrote up in his column one time, calling it "The Isle of Knowledge."

The school was opened in 1890 and served the community until about 1943. There was quite a commotion over where the school should be located. Families living south of the river wanted the school located there; those on the other side of the water disagreed. Some Solomon wisely chose to have the school built smack in the middle — on an island.

Everyone travelled to school by boat," Horace Brown pointed out. "A lot of us old-timers went to that school, but what some don't recollect is that there was an earlier school

with a palm-thatched roof. It was known as Bay View and was built of cedar logs on a shell mound.

Horace said that his grandfather John Brown had been the earlier school's last teacher and that he had also served as the first teacher of the famous island school. "My father, Jim, went to that school," he said.

Cattle P. Martin wrote a graphic description of what it was like to be a teacher at the island school, which appeared in a forerunner of the *Chronicle* for the 1976 Bicentennial Celebration.

She said six to eight skiffs (as boats were then called) would row up on the shell banks of the island. There was an unwritten law among the children not to touch each other's boats. Everyone brought their own water as there was none on the little island.

The school was used on Sundays for church services and Sunday school. Twice a year everyone turned out to enjoy the children in the Christmas program and another program at the end of the school year.

Katie Martin admitted that the children's ability to detect whose boat was passing the school house by the sound of its motor, mystified her.

"In those days," someone added, "if you wanted to get to Crystal River or old Homosassa to shop, you went by boat. There were two haul-overs — places where you had to haul your boat, one at Salt River and the other at Black Creek."

A woman stopped and introduced herself. "No," she said. "I'm not from this area. To tell the truth, I'm a newcomer to Citrus County, but I like family gatherings. I'm a long way from home and family and I just thought I'd like to come."

Step back in time to Ozello's 'Pioneer Day' this Saturday

By ESTHER DUNCAN
Chronicle Writer

This Saturday, May 2, a lot of folks will be driving down a winding road in order to step back in time and visit with each other in Ozello, one of Citrus County's oldest communities.

Called "Pioneer Day," the event will honor its pioneers as part of this year's County Centennial. Representatives of the Centennial Committee will be there, including Alex Griffin, chairman of the committee, as well as Charles Allen, David Benton and Marcia Beasley.

Saturday's event will take place on Civic Center grounds, near the water tower. A huge banner out front will proclaim, "Pioneer Day, May 2nd." Festivities will open at 11 a.m. and continue until 4 or 5 p.m.

Ozello was settled in Civil War times and is still a small, quiet community located on the water six miles west of U.S. 19 on S.R. 494.

Its long-time residents take great pride in their community and many old families in the county trace their roots to this area. There are still a number of families with members who attended the famous Ozello school, known as the "School of Knowledge," located on an island which the children reached by boat.

John J. Brown is one such resident who was born in Ozello and has lived there all his life. The road he lives on is named after him. At one time he was in charge of getting the island children to and from the mainland by boat, then busing them into Crystal

River to school.

A previous event honored Brown and Agnes DeBusk, also an Ozello pioneer. Brown and his wife, the former Helen Hough of Crystal River and of a pioneer family herself, plan to attend the occasion. However, Agnes DeBusk, whose presence was anticipated, is now hospitalized and will be missed.

There will be a display of old photographs, newspaper clippings and memorabilia in the Civic Center for all to enjoy. Everyone is urged to bring whatever items they have to share with others.

Old-timers will naturally congregate there and those interested will be able to hear many a fascinating tale of what life in Ozello and on its nearby islands was like in this community's early days.

Races and games will be held and special entertainment provided, including Jack Smith and his "Kitchen Band" from the Multi-Purpose Senior Citizen Center at Lecanto.

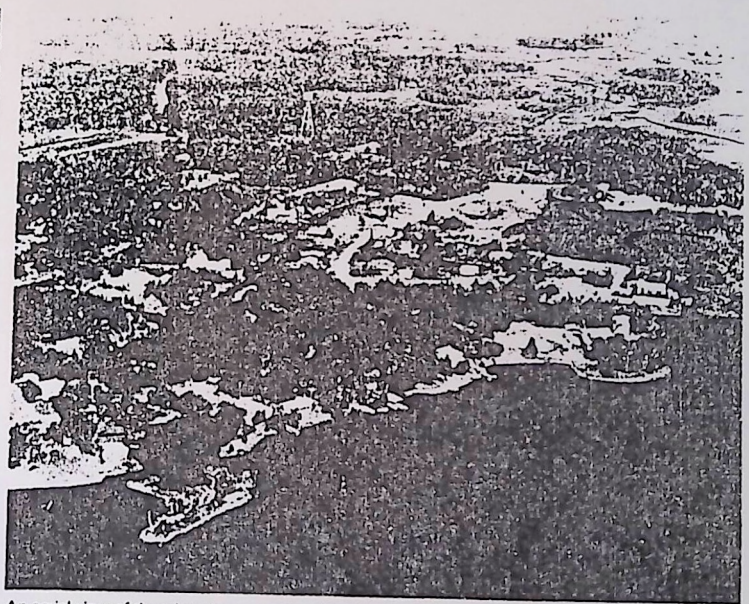
A chicken barbecue will be served with tickets available for purchase at the door of the Civic Center. Proceeds from the barbecue will be used for the future installation of a shuffle board court.

"Everyone is welcome. In fact, we're looking forward to meeting first-time visitors as well as old-timers," Thelma Henderson, Committee Chairman, said. "There will be a lot of sunbonnets, so if you have one handy to wear you'll blend in with the crowd."

First Lt. Charles A. Thalman, son of Capt. and Mrs. Walter Thalman of Floral City, was awarded the Silver Star medal for heroic action in the Pacific. He also held the Purple Heart. Another Silver Star winner was Pfc James L. Jones, son of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph F. Jones of Crystal River, for heroic action in France. Still another Citrus Countian so honored, was Duncan J. McRae, son of Mr. and Mrs. A. J. McRae of Homosassa, for heroism in Okinawa.



A rustic post of signs lists local residents' names.



An aerial view of the relaxed community of Ozello. Two wooden bridges will soon be replaced.

Ozello

from Page 1

When the crabs shed the hard shell, sometimes nine inches across the top, every 26 days, they reach the peak of attractiveness to the shellfish gourmet. With the hard shell on, the crabs would only be worth about five or six cents a pound, says Thomas who moved here from Maryland where he was in the seafood business. But when they've shedded, the softshelled crab will fetch \$1 each on the wholesale market.

THOMAS SEAFOOD ships 28-30 dozen of the crabs from Ozello to northern markets each day at the peak of the October-May season.

Ozello is beginning to change some.

The two wooden bridges will be a thing of the past as pile drivers are hammering in the foundation for new concrete and steel spans.

New still houses are dotting the landscape as bulldozers scrap aside the palm forests.

Change is inevitable and for those already here, it's monitored with mixed emotions.



Citrus-Hernando Times — BOB MORELAND

Among the scenic offerings of sleepy Ozello is this wildly-shaped, weather-worn tree.



Rudy Baxter and Mrs. Elaine Young, both from Wildwood, eat freshly caught oysters beside a motor home.

Former Claim No.
 Application No. 24005
 Pensioner No. 10355

CLAIM FOR PENSION

BY
Mrs. Callie J. Brown
 OF

Homassa Postoffice
Citrus County

WIDOW OF
J. J. Brown
 OF

..... Company
 Regiment

FILED IN PENSION DEPARTMENT
Aug. 12, 1933

APPROVED AND FILED IN COMP-
 TROLLER'S OFFICE

Aug. 30, 1933
 With pay from Aug 6, 1933.

At the rate of \$ 480.00 per annum

Russelle Bower
 Secretary of Board

Aircraft Printers, Tallahassee, Florida

3333

They Took A Boat To School

By MICHAEL POPE-MOOR
 Times Correspondent

OZELLO — Not so long ago, a youngster growing up in the wetlands around Ozello would be late to school and have a ready-made excuse — provided he was dripping wet.

The youngster could have simply explained that his boat

years ago in his "Believe It or Not" series.

And, believe it or not, between 1886 and 1944, a student at the Ozello school wouldn't have been considered out of

line if he'd slipped a redfish down on the teacher's desk instead of the traditional apple.

One of these students, still living in Ozello, was preoccupied at the waterborne place of

learning by his father, and by his grandfather, who had served as an early teacher there.

"Each family had their own boat," John Brown explained of his alma mater. Brown completed the eight grades at

17-73

'Isle Of Knowledge' In Ozello

had copized, and that teachers have to expect that sort of thing when the local school is on an island.

Ripley called the school "The Isle of Knowledge."

at the waterborne place of

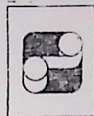
(See OZELLO, Page 6)

Ozello had a north-south war of its own

There was a north and south war in Citrus County not too many years after the Civil War. In 1880 hard-working fisher folk living out near Ozello faced up to the fact they needed a school house. A school in those days meant a one-room building with eight rows of desks for each of the eight grades.

The people on the south side of St. Martins River said, "Fine, we'll build it over here and the other children can

row over and back every day."
"Not so fast," said the north side



Norm Sweifman

From the Sketchbook

river residents. "We gonna vote to build it on our side of the river and y'all can row over there."

Well sir, the argument see-sawed back and forth, first it was north and then it was south, and then it got some of the fisher folk mighty mad. It might have come around to some bad blood except somebody suggested if it was going to unsettle the whole community why not compromise and build it on an island in the middle of the St. Martins?

That's what they did — they cut down
Please see sketchbook, back page

Continued from page one

palm trees for the walls and made a thatched roof to cover it. Older students rowed the younger ones over every morning and back every night. It wasn't a long way to row except when the tides were running in the opposite direction and then you really had to bend the oars.

Like the unwritten law of the west about messing around with another man's horse, you just didn't touch another kid's boat. If you did it was a quick way to get yourself a blood nose, a black eye, or a knot on your head.

Mrs. Cattie P. Martin taught there in the late 50's and early 40's and she reported she had between 15 and 18 students ranging in ages from five to 16-years old. "They could all swim like ducks," she wrote and she couldn't swim a stroke.

Rain or shine, school started at eight o'clock with six or eight skiffs pulled up on the shell banks of the island. Each grade was given a reading or writing assignment while Cattie taught or heard one class at a time. Older ones helped the younger ones when they completed their assignments.

At the noon hour everyone went outside with their lunch bags, the older boys hurrying so they could get in a game of baseball. In this case the ball was cut from sponge rubber and the bat was whittled out of a board slat.

The ball diamond had been scraped level in the sand near the school. Hit a long ball to the outfield and it wound up in the river. If the tide was slack an outfielder could swim after it and if it was running swift a skiff was kept nearby to retrieve it.

There was a cistern on the island to collect water, but buzzards flew in and roosted on it so it was destroyed and the kids had to bring their own bottled water from home.

For the first 50 years or so school was held only in the summer months. Fishing, crabbing, and oystering was a family affair during the fall and winter and they needed every hand. Not until

the 1930's did the school become full time and that was about the same time Ripley featured it in his "Believe it or Not," column, and everyone began calling it the, "Believe it Or Not School."

Cattie Martin left the area for awhile and then returned in the fall of 1935 to take up her teaching duties again. It so happened school was to open on Labor Day that year but it was delayed a day to let the hurricane that crossed Metacumbe Key churn its way northward up the Gulf. Spin-off winds howled a full day and night bringing in extraordinary high tides.

Mattie was ready for Wednesday however, and so were most of the kids. No need to pull their boats up on the island banks, the land was all under water so they tied up to the second or third steps of the school.

Dismayed, but keeping up a cheerful front for the youngsters, Mattie wrote, "The only sanitary facilities were the old outdoor privies some distance from the school house. For two days they could only be reached by boat or wading. I'll leave the rest to your imagination."

One day in the 40's or 50's, sometime after the students were being bused to school in Crystal River, a man appeared on the island and began wrecking the building. He had made pretty good progress before the local people caught up with him and asked angrily what he thought he was doing. He explained he had bought the island and he had no use for the old school.

Well, they hadn't heard anything about anybody buying one of their community landmarks and they began an inquiry. Turned out the fellow was on the wrong island and he hastily departed with a quick apology.

Mattie wrote a fitting closing to the island school saga, "The little 72-year old schoolhouse stood for years on its lonely island, a silent reminder of the courage and determination of the people to provide an education for their children despite many difficulties."

by Mae Witte 30/47

PIONEER DAYS

April 28, 1938 the Post Office was reopened by Mrs. Gertrude Edge Brown. Previous to this it had been discontinued for 18 or 20 years. It was on Horace and Gertrude Brown's property, located approximately west of Henry De Busks and east of James Stephens on the old Billy Wells property. The Browns had it in one room of their house and everyone traveled there by boat to get their mail.

Mr. Frank Boswell transported the mail by car from Crystal River and then hauled it by boat to the Post Office. In 1941 the Post Office was discontinued again and to this date has not been reopened. Ozello residents then had to pick up their mail at the Homosassa Post Office. Later the mail was delivered from Homosassa to rural boxes in front of the Stiver property on S.R.#494, then Crystal River took over the delivery of the mail at the same rural box locations.

Finally in April of '66 Gene Allen delivered the mail to rural boxes in Ozello. Some residents still have P.O. boxes. Facts from Gertrude Brown.

NON-CLAY

Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Hendrix, whose permanent home is Inverness, but for the last three

Oldest Mason in State of Florida Dies at Homosassa

J. J. Brown passed away at his home Saturday evening at nine o'clock. He was one of the oldest citizens of the county and the oldest Mason in the state of Florida. The Masons took charge of the funeral.

The following out-of-town people attended the funeral of J. J. Brown: W. H. Brown, son of the deceased, W. C. King of Wauchula, Mrs. M. J. Whalen and niece Miss Mary Crayasse and Joe Williams of Jacksonville.

at Wildwood.

Card of Thanks

With grateful hearts we desire to thank our many relatives and friends for their kindness, love and sympathy, during the sickness and death of our beloved husband and father. We also wish to express our thanks for the beautiful floral tributes. May God's richest blessings rest upon each of you.—Mrs. J. J. Brown, Mr. and Mrs. J. N. Brown, Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Brown, Mrs. Rosa Campbell.

Methodist Circle Meeting
The Young Ladies Methodist Circle met Tuesday aft-

Citrus County Chronicle

Aug 17, 1933

file - Mason's Homosassa

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Main

Friday



Ozello native John Brown and his wife, Helen, shown here at the home Brown built in 1932.

Folks at the end of the road that winds above the saw grass have their raucous times, but on the whole, they're a quiet bunch, a community of people who like being . . .

Away from it all in old Ozello

By KAREN DUKESS
Times Staff Writer

OZELLO — Wander into the Palms Tavern in Ozello at sunset and hear a tale of woe.

Cradling a bottle of beer, one of the regulars will tell you the only thing to do at night in Ozello is to watch the mullet jump.

Another will tell you he's only in town because of a flat tire that stranded him there 13 years ago.

But raise an eyebrow, and you'll probably hear the truth.

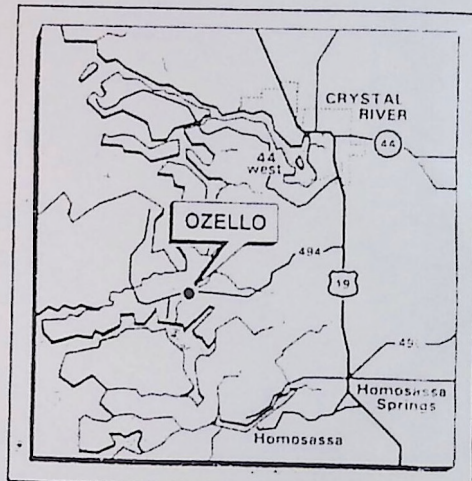
"We try to tell everybody we don't like it so nobody else'll come in," says Jim Young.

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Like most of Florida's small communities, Ozello keeps a watchful eye on the growth that threatens to overtake and change its peaceful lifestyle. But unlike the towns that fight in vain to thwart

War, Ozello established itself as a fishing community of a few families living on islands. No one is sure how the community got its name, but Helen Brown, who came to Ozello from Crystal River as a bride in 1932, offers this version:

"I can only tell you what was told to me," says Mrs. Brown. "Mr. Pratt was the postmaster. He asked everyone to submit a name. He sent the names to the Postmaster General and he picked Ozello. But Mrs. Martin told me that Mr. Pratt



Times art

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*Citrus County
Chronicle
Aug 17, 1933*

file - Mason's Homosassa

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Men's Work St
Brownbilt

Men's Trousers
summer-weight

BA

Main

Friday

J.J. Brown



HORACE BROWN, in his mid 70's, was born in Ozello and has been a fisherman all his life. He stands in front of crab traps, some tools of his trade, in Crystal River where he keeps his boat.

A LIFETIME OF FISHING

Citrus' coast attracted the best

By **ESTHER DUNCAN**
Correspondent

For almost seventy years Ozello native Horace Brown has been fishing for a living in the Gulf and nearby waters.

"I used to go out fishing with my brother, J.T., recalled Brown as he sat in his living room in Crystal River with his wife, Ann Gertrude. "We were just a couple of small boys and we'd take the old boat out and get a pretty good load of fish."

In those days there were no motors to propel fishing boats. Human muscles provided the power. There were two sets of oars, one in the bow and the other in the middle.

"We'd take our fish into T.L. Rogers or MacRae's in old Homosassa," Brown said. "Hugh Barco and Yeomans were operators of fish houses too. Fisherman depended on them for supplies — everything from nets to bait."

Brown saw the day of the inboard motor come into general use. "They were not fast, but they were lasting," he said. "Later there was the outboard motor — I guess we began using it in the 40's."

He remembers the days of big catches. "It wasn't unusual to get a 3,000 pound catch. Now I feel lucky to get a 300 pound one."

Brown still goes fishing as often as five days a week. And when he's not fishing his wife says he's doing something else, such as making dog runs or gardening. At 75, he has the healthy, sturdy appearance of a man much younger.

Duncan MacRae has been operating a supply and bait business in Old Homosassa for years. It is located on Homosassa River property that has been in the MacRae family since his father, the late James Alexander MacRae, and his wife Mary, settled there in 1914.

MacRae, like Brown, appears to be much younger than his some sixty years. With the thoroughness and dispatch those who know him expect, he reviewed a list of commercial fisherman in the Homosassa area prior to 1900.

He reeled off the names: Ed Bibert, Marvin Baker, Fernie Lashley, George and Ben Shriver, Jack, John Ethan and Earl Head, Louis and Hance Carter, Ed and Charles Strickland, Henry and George Loennecker, Sam and Charlie, Thomas, Jessie, John and Spencer Lyles, and Ben and George Shiver.

Fishing was a way of life for residents in the early 1900's who lived on the islands of the Gulf or the nearby rivers of this area.

"We had a safe at our general store," MacRae said, referring to his parents store in Old Homosassa. "Quite a number of people would ask my father to keep their important papers. Some never came back, and we still have a few of those old documents."

He unrolled a yellowed scroll of the heavy paper commonly used years ago. It was a land grant from President Benjamin Harrison, dated July of 1891 to the Lyles: "In accordance with the Act of 1862 to secure a homestead of 150 acres at Homosassa." It was signed by W.C. Zimmerman, clerk of Citrus County, when recorded in 1892.

MacRae said two other homesteaders of that era, Dave Bishop and Joe Trotter, sold out to the McReynolds Fish Company, which was purchased in 1910 by T.L. Rogers.

"The catch in those days consisted of mullet, trout, sheepshead, channel bass, blue fish, oysters, sponges and also black bass and brim, then legal," said MacRae."

"Customers came with horse and wagon to buy from the fish houses," MacRae said. "In the early 20's, C.W. Croft operated a fish company. And my father established the J.A. MacRae Fish Co., in 1924. In 1928 Charlie Rayn opened a fish house."

Please see **Fishing**, page 81

A lifetime of fishing

Continued from page 80

Duncan pointed out that fisherman had to have a supplier as well as someone to handle their fish.

"When they were loaded with a big catch they needed a place to unload and store their catch. Of course the price fluctuated according to the market," he said.

Since preservation was a serious problem then, much of the fish was salted and packed whole in barrels then shipped by the Atlantic Coast Line, which ran to Homosassa from Dunnellon once a day. Brown said the locals called it the "Mullet Special."

A box car would sit on the track for loading, then take off the following morning. The Browns disagreed on whether there was always a turn-around at the end of the spur or not. Brown thought that — at least at one time — the train merely backed in.

"It was Hugh Barco who introduced ice to Citrus County," MacRae said. "A great deal of it was utilized in the fish industry. Fish would be packed in it and then re-iced in Jacksonville."

Then when the trucks appeared on the scene in the mid-20's or maybe a little later, fish began to be trucked here and there, mainly up to Georgia markets for distribution.

Duncan spoke of a fisherman who became a local legend.

"One of our greatest fishermen was George Shiver who lived on one of the islands, called Shiver Bay. He had a keen sense of hearing and he could hear the fish, such as a school of mullet, coming. He'd get in his boat and go out with his net and locate the school immediately."

According to MacRae, Prohibition had quite an effect on commercial fishing.

"Like all coastal communities, rum-running was common in this area. Prohibition changed the method of shipping rum and indirectly helped the economy here, that is, for fisherman. A lot more fish was in de-

mand. The rum was put in boxcars with the beverages to one side, then the two hundred pound barrels of fish were used as a cover. Not many agents wanted to move all those barrels around."

MacRae estimated that 75 percent of the economy of Western Citrus County was gained from the fishing industry. Brown agreed with this estimate, saying it was still a major industry for many.

It wasn't until the 1950's that a new method of catching shrimp and stone crabs was introduced to meet the rising market.

"Up until this time not many went after shrimp and stone crabs," explained MacRae. "I copied an East Coast method of getting shrimp for bait and it worked."

Horace Brown pointed out that a major change in the fishing industry took place with the development of rollers on nets.

"Until then nets tore easily on the rocks. After that our net's 'rolled' over rocks."

He added that nets used to wear out quickly. Now of nylon, the nets are long-lasting. Years ago they had to be dyed for camouflage; now nets are practically invisible to fish.

"Fish are very intelligent," he said. "If you make a single mark on the ocean floor they'll swim up to it and refuse to go farther. They'll turn aside."

Brown spoke of the diminishing number of fish in the area. "If you want to see what's happening just take a boat out on the river and watch the hundreds of boats speeding back and forth all day long. It's no place for fish any longer."

His wife added, "How well I remember fishing on the river when I was a girl. The water was so clear it looked like water in a glass."

She said that she thought some people misunderstood the water hyacinth. It used to be much thicker. Now the big 25-pound Jacks come up and the smaller fish have no place to hide."

Both men spoke of the comradery that used to exist between commercial fisherman.

"In early days," Brown observed, "fishermen needed each other — let's say it was easier to circle a school of fish with help. Improved equipment has lessened the need for cooperation. I remember when a fisherman would volunteer to take another's catch in with his."

MacRae spoke of the current issue — whether the so called diminishing supply of fish is the fault of commercial or sports fishermen.

"The two groups needed to establish better communication," he said. That's a first priority."

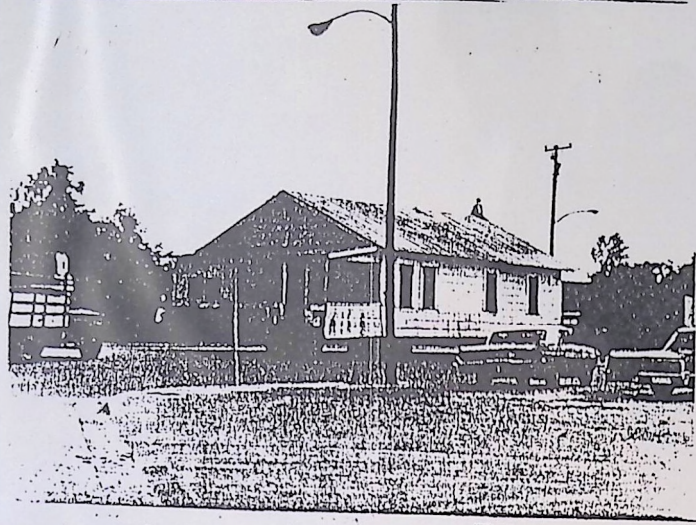
He pointed out that the Department of Natural Resources took over the control of snook some years ago. But, despite the time devoted to research, little is known about the habits of the fish.

"Politics has to be removed from the Department of Natural Resources," Duncan said.

He too, believes the basic problem is fairly simple: there are as many fish as ever, but many more fishermen competing for them.

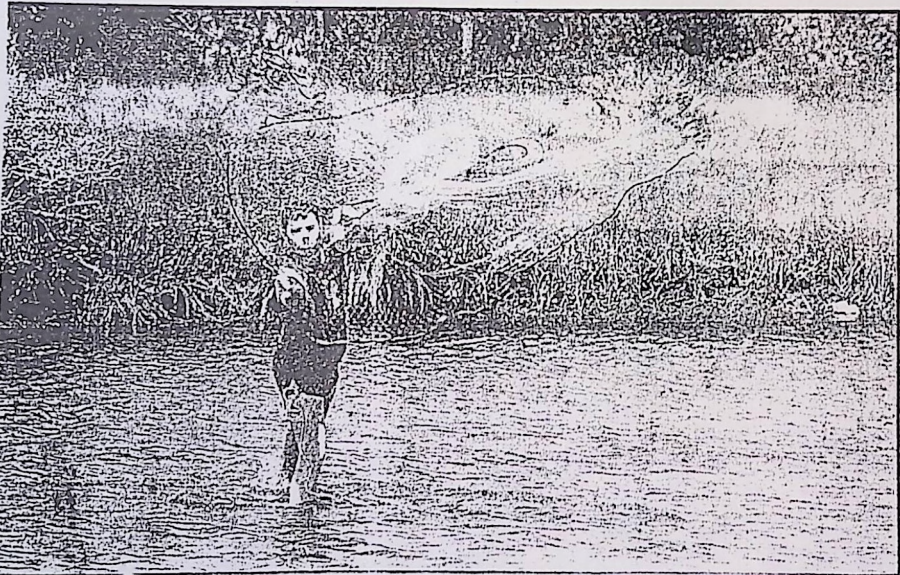
"Besides, fishing, there are many other water-related activities that are important to our economy here," Duncan pointed out. "All of them benefit one of our most important industries, tourism."

Whether one fish or a dozen is the catch, both men agreed that tourists enjoy the world of water in western Citrus County.



Ozello native John Brown and his wife, Helen, above, live in the house Brown built on John Brown Drive. Waters around Ozello are fertile fishing grounds for folks like Matthew Bombly, 19, who came from Floral City to cast his net.

Photos by
BOB MORELAND



years ago.

But raise an eyebrow, and you'll probably hear the truth.

"We try to tell everybody we don't like it so nobody else'll come in," says Jim Young.

The people who live in Ozello — about 600 if you go by a count of the water meters — share an unmistakable and protective attachment to the small community at Citrus County's westernmost edge. At the end of a nine-mile road that curves and twists above a sea of sawgrass, Ozello is an outpost of tranquility surrounded by water and soothed by a steady Gulf breeze.

Like most of Florida's small communities, Ozello keeps a watchful eye on the growth that threatens to overtake and change its peaceful lifestyle. But unlike the towns that fight in vain to thwart progress, Ozello has a chance at stopping time.

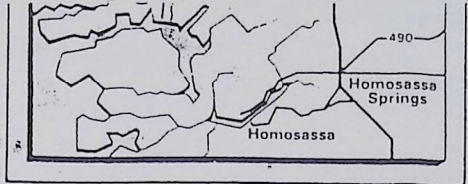
The great hope for Ozello lies with the state's Conservation and Recreational Lands (CARL) program, which buys environmentally sensitive lands to protect them.

"We're hoping they'll buy this area before it gets overdeveloped," says Wanda Wells, a real estate agent who's lived in Ozello since 1971.

Most of the marshland encircling Ozello is either owned by the state or slated for purchase in the future. Residents follow the CARL program closely, looking for the state to seal the buffer around Ozello and protect the community's future by preserving a way of life reminiscent of the past.

"It's so special because it's unspoiled," said Thelma Henderson, secretary of the Ozello Civic Association. "We're probably one of the last of the unspoiled coastal areas."

Settled soon after the Civil



War, Ozello established itself as a fishing community of a few families living on islands. No one is sure how the community got its name, but Helen Brown, who came to Ozello from Crystal River as a bride in 1932, offers this version:

"I can only tell you what was told to me," says Mrs. Brown. "Mr. Pratt was the postmaster. He asked everyone to submit a name. He sent the names to the Postmaster General and he picked Ozello. But Mrs. Macrae told me that Mr. Pratt told her that Ozello was the only name sent in."

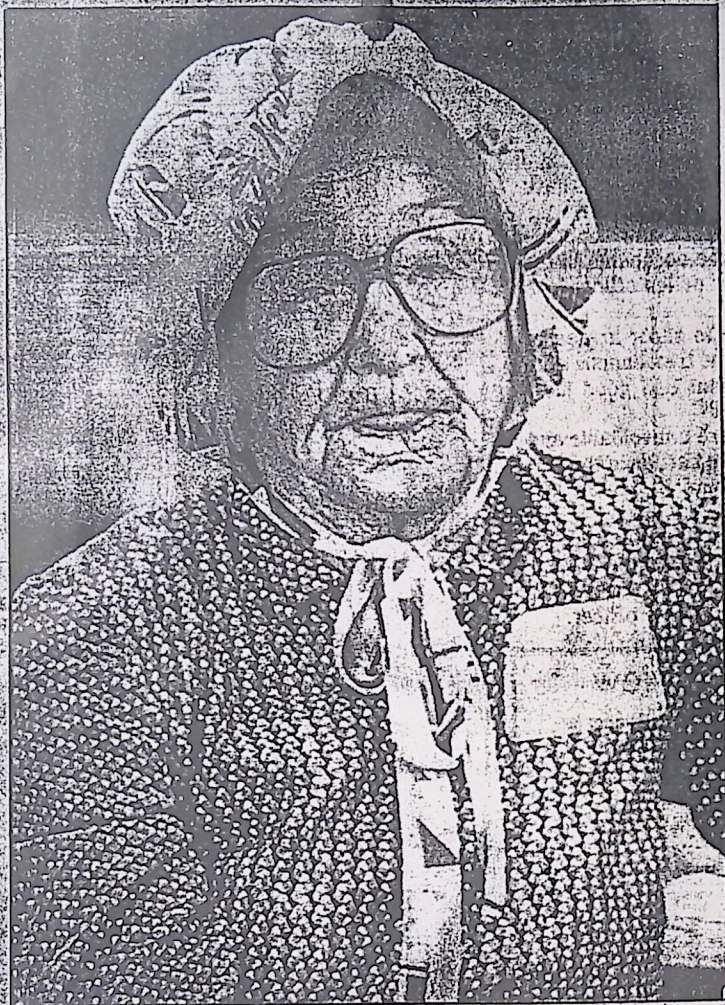
Ozello doesn't call much attention to itself. In 1940, the community's first, and last, blessing of fame came along when Ripley's *Believe It or Not* featured the Ozello school, a one-room schoolhouse in the middle of a small island.

From 1888 until the school closed in 1943, students and teachers commuted to school by boat. Known to the locals as Schoolhouse Island, Ripley's dubbed the island "The Isle of Knowledge."

Yesterday, at this year's Pioneer Day, the community's annual celebration of Ozello's heritage, the students and teachers of the old schoolhouse were honored. The Citrus County Historical Society plans to rebuild the schoolhouse, battered away years ago by storms.

Zeke Wells, who grew up in Ozello, remembers rowing his eight brothers and sisters to the school every morning, an arduous task that sometimes took more than a half-hour when the current was against him.

"That's the reason I ain't no good now," says Wells, a ruddy-faced and healthy 66. "It wore me out."



Tribune photo by KYLE DANACEAU
May Head Giddings, 93, once a longtime resident of Ozello who lives in Pasco County, relaxes after a potluck meal Saturday.

Ozello revels in its history

Residents, former residents and people from nearby turned out for the Ozello Civic Club's Pioneer Day.

By DEBORAH ROBBINS
Tribune Staff Writer

OZELLO — More than 130 area residents drove down a winding road, across three bridges and stepped back in time Saturday at the Ozello Civic Club's Pioneer Day.

Women wearing ruffled, full-length dresses, topped with sunbonnets or crepe hats, minced daintily across the lawn accompanied by men in overalls, cowboy hats and suspenders. Young and old alike feasted on home-cooked casseroles and took part in horseshoe contests, bag races and other games. History was the topic of the day as neighbors and friends remembered Ozello as it was in years past.

Civic club historian Jane Hindman said she came up with the idea for Pioneer Day after she began researching the community's past. She said the town was established soon after the Civil War.

"Ozello, which doesn't even have a post office now, had a post office in the 1880s, before Crystal River did," she said, proudly. "Ozello is rich in history. We just think we've got an ideal little community

here, and we want to let people know we're proud."

Last year, the civic club held John Brown Day in honor of John Brown, 78, a lifelong Ozello resident who has a road there named after him. This year, she said, the group decided to honor all the pioneers with special honors going to one of the town's oldest residents.

This year's honoree, Agnes DeBusk, sat inside the civic club building surrounded by dozens of DeBusks who still live in Ozello or who grew up there.

DeBusk, who declined to reveal her age, said she had been living in Ozello for more than 50 years. She said she was pleased to be singled out.

"I think it's great, it was a real surprise," she said, surrounded by beaming fellow DeBusks.

Brown, who was seated outside under a shade tree, said the small community had changed a great deal since he was young.

"This right here was nothing but orange groves," he said, indicating the Civic Club's headquarters and Ozello Trail beyond.

Jeah Patrick, a former Ozello resident who sat nearby polishing off the last of her picnic lunch, said Pioneer Day was a good way to keep people in touch with their roots.

"I think this is a deserving kind of recognition for these people," she said, gazing at the laughing, gossiping guests. "Most of these people were born and raised here. They're great people."