

A Brief History

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Before he died, Steen Nelson set down some of his early recollections in a booklet called "Old Time History of By-Gone Days of Lake Jessup settlement."

Another of the earlier settlers was Joseph Watts. He left North Florida and came to this area in an effort to keep his slaves.

By 1875 mail was being brought to Solary's Wharf twice a week by rowboat from Sanford. Efforts to secure a railroad into the territory had not met with success. But the post office itself had been moved inland not far from Lake Charm; and in 1879 the settlement which had sprung up around it was named Oviedo by Andrew Aulin, Sr., the first postmaster.

In 1886, the long sought railroad finally came into Oviedo. The new railroads—there were two—made possible the shipping of Oviedo's crops to Jacksonville and the northern markets. Within a very short time Oviedo became one of the state's largest, busiest shipping points for citrus.

Religion was an integral part of the town's life. The townspeople held religious services from the very beginning. At first the services were interdenominational, but by the middle 1880's, there were both Baptist and Methodist churches. By 1890 Oviedo had grown to four churches, a school, two drug stores, five general stores, and a number of specialized businesses, including a newspaper.

People from the north were encouraged to settle here. The Lee and Todd Real Estate Company distributed a brochure which claimed that "there is no more healthy place in the state than the plateau south of Lake Jessup." The area was claimed to have "intelligent, hospitable, law-and-order loving people, good preaching every Sunday and plenty of young and old bearing groves."

In 1894 disaster struck. A hard freeze hit the orange groves late in December, followed by another in February of the following year. Many grove owners were ruined. Steen Nelson wrote that "some of them nearly lost their minds." Many of them left, never to return.

The more determined stayed. They replanted groves, cut trees back to the stump, plowed under frozen vegetables, and began to piece their lives together

again. New settlers slowly replaced those who had left. But it was to be 25 years before the effects of the freeze were to be completely overcome.

In 1910 land was selling for less than ten dollars an acre. The town had grown somewhat, but had the reputation of being "sleepy"—that is, if you didn't live in Oviedo—and if you knew where it was, even. Often, when asked how to get to Oviedo, people would reply that they didn't know.

Freezes were not the only hardships that the people endured. In 1914 fire wiped out much of the downtown area. Fifteen years later the only bank was bombed. To this day the bombing has remained an unsolved crime, although some sources offer theories. One of these includes vague references to "Chicago boys." The bank folded soon afterward in the crash of 1929.

In that same year the fruit crops were decimated by an infestation of fruit flies. At one point the situation became so bad that growers dug huge pits in which to bury the infested fruit.

In spite of their hard work and worries, the townspeople still found time to relax. Oviedo at one time had a bowling alley and a movie theatre, where "live" piano music was featured while the reels were changed. The circus came to town regularly, and picnics and fishing were favorite pastimes. There was a touch of metropolitan culture, when traveling actors from New York presented plays in the long summer evenings.

Then the country suffered in the depression of the thirties and Oviedo suffered too. Proud but needy citizens tried to avoid resorting to welfare. The government sponsored the construction of a swimming pool and employed local labor to build it. But this was only a partial solution. Food stamps became a well-known medium of exchange in the stores.

But the community survived. It was incorporated in 1925. By 1927 there were 10 miles of paved streets. Four years later 24 street lights were installed at an operating cost of \$80,000 a month.

Oviedo had another rather famous resident during those years. Theodore Mead, an internationally famous botanist, spurned several huge offers of money if he would reveal his botanical secrets. He devoted many years to the

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development of new strains of orchids and gladioli. He is credited with producing the first white orchid, but was less successful in developing a black amaryllis.

Eighty-two young men served in the armed forces during World War II. Four of them gave their lives. Gas rationing was taken seriously in Oviedo. One man drove his car to church on Sunday, and later discovered that someone had painted a yellow streak along the middle of the car on either side.

With the close of the war, the economy improved, but the population remained relatively stable. In 1946 the original Wheeler Fertilizer plant was destroyed by fire. It was replaced by a new, modern plant. A year later the roads to Geneva and Chuluota were paved. In 1948 the Citizens Bank first opened its doors. Until that time, if you wanted to buy a meal, you had to go to a hotel. Now there were cafes.

Gwynn's Cafe was located on the southeast corner of Broadway and Central. It gained statewide fame for its mince and banana cream pies. Truckers coming from Jacksonville would time their meal stops so they could enjoy some of Mrs. Gwynn's pie.

By 1949 Oviedo had once-a-day Greyhound bus service to Orlando. That year, construction totaled more than \$75,000. This included the Citizens Bank building, Spencer's Store, and an \$8,000 canning kitchen. By 1950 Oviedo was the second largest town in Seminole County, with a population of 1,800.

Nearly a million crates of celery and a third of a million crates of citrus were being shipped from here each year. And the town now had a new fire truck, although the building to house it was not built for some time.

A city hall was built in 1950 at a cost of \$18,903. The town was beginning to feel the pangs of growth. Zoning problems arose. An increased city budget required more time, and more careful planning. With the selection of the FTU site in 1964 came the promise of greater growth and more growing pains.

One of Oviedo's most renowned citizens, Dr. T.L. Mead, famous hybridizer of orchids and an entomologist, left his mark in the scientific world, and on social life in Oviedo.

Mead, who died in 1936, had an

85 acre estate in the Lake Charm area where he conducted experiments with plants and accumulated one of the world's largest butterfly collections. His work and estate attracted many thousands of visitors and some of the great scientists of the world to Oviedo.

The noted researcher was a native of New York, where he attended school. He first visited Florida in 1869 with his parents and moved to Oviedo from Eustis in 1886, where his work in hybridization of orchids, amaryllis and caladiums attracted national attention.

Mead was also active in civic affairs in Oviedo. He was said to have had a colorful, jovial personality, and sponsored the local Boy Scout Troop. His wife, Edith, who died in 1926, was also active in civic work.

Until the early 1960's, however, there was no memorial to Mead in Oviedo, although Orlando had dedicated a large park to the scientist. Even today, the only local remembrance of Mead is the subdivision that bears his name, Mead Manor.

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Evelyn and John Lundy

Grandfather was Pioneer Settler

"My grandfather, A.J. McCulley, was a pioneer settler here, arriving by horse and wagon with his blacksmith tools and well drilling equipment in the 1880's," said John Lundy. "He married Emma Catherine Wahgren, a Swedish immigrant, and built a two-story home across the street from 350 S. Central Avenue here in Oviedo.

"My mother, Elida Margaret McCulley, was born in this home in 1896 and grew up there. I was born in 1919, and lived in the McCulley home after the death of my father and up until 1940 when I married Evelyn Cheek."

John was a combat infantry soldier, serving in WWII in Europe where he was awarded the Silver Star medal for gallantry in action. He voluntarily swam a river which had thin sheets of ice in it to recover two rubber rafts. "I continued paddling one of these rafts under intense enemy automatic weapon fire until we had the entire company across the river."

Later, he worked for an insurance company and built the home he lives in, the log home on North Lake Jessup, when he came back to Oviedo to retire in 1983.

The Lundy's twin great-grandchildren are the sixth generation to be born in Oviedo.

"Growing up here was probably the finest thing that ever happened. There weren't more than 1,000 people here; there were no locks on the doors. If someone borrowed something from my grandfather at the blacksmith shop, they'd write a note, 'borrowed such and such and I'll have it back by noon Monday' and they always did.

"There was no juvenile delinquency; you knew everybody and if you did something that wasn't right and proper, your folks knew about it before you got home. There was nothing worse than a trip to the woodshed with grandfather.

"It was the depression when I grew up, but there was plenty to eat. Everybody farmed. We had 40 acres on Lake Jessup and one acre was a home garden where we grew things for the house and canned them.

"That gave us enough to eat until the next growing season. We had three acres and two acres were muck and we farmed for the house on Central.

The road, then, was paved just this side of Boston Park. If you went on, to Orlando, you were in dirt and most people got stuck in the sand.

"Paul Mikler was in my graduating class (Paul was the first interview for the Heritage Issue.) The naughty things we did were to go out on Halloween and cut cane from a sugar cane field and eat it. That was a real big deal.

"One year, some boys put a two-holer outhouse on top of the schoolhouse. Everybody knew who did it, and they had to take it down and put it back where it came from. I don't think there was any punishment....

"There was no electricity, no running water, no indoor plumbing—we cooked on a cast iron wood stove and the laundry was done in the back yard with a fire under a cast iron cauldron. When I was a boy, that's how things were. Living was totally different.

"At those times, kids had to muck out the stalls, milk, bring in the eggs. It

was part of living. Nobody felt imposed upon. They got used to working when they were young.

"Our only entertainment was church and school, and once a month the girls got together and made sandwiches at somebody's house; they took turns, then the boys brought the drinks.

"If I had any free time, I'd go fishing at Lake Charm or the Econ. Jimmy Lee and I hunted and camped and fished. We cut through the woods from the Econ to the St. John's river where highway 46 crosses it now. Today it's all fill. At the bridge, there used to be a ferry and a Mr. Singletary hand operated it across the river. The kids all swam, of course. I think Mr. Singletary was paid by the county.

"One summer, there was a Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever scare, and all the farm animals had to be dipped in a solution to kill their fleas. Someone dug a big pit out by the cem-

etry and they lined it with impermeable materials and dip.

"The animals would be led in one end, go in over their heads, then come out the other side. We had to be ready to get them or they'd take off. The solution stung them.

"I decided to ride our donkey through the woods to the dip, and we got into the scrub and he was bitten by a bumblebee. He took off, and it took us three days to find him.

"The teachers I remember were Mrs. Thompson for English (she was so strict that a lot of people didn't like it, but she did us a world of good); and Kitty Young, who taught Spanish.

"We all had to have two years of it to graduate. Lot of times the boys were kept out of school to work in the fields and didn't graduate until they were a lot older. It was the depth of the depression. There was no way to get in trouble, then...."

IN 1946, OVIEDO CELEBRATED THE
END OF A WORLD WAR, DANCED TO
THE MUSIC OF GLENN MILLER AND
BEGAN TO DISCOVER WHAT
HOMETOWN BANKING WAS ABOUT.



Indeed, times were different in 1946. It was a gentler time and the era of a great nation progressing as never before. That year, The Citizens Bank of Oviedo first opened its doors for business, and for generations we've been proud to serve as your hometown bank. For these

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Local Dandies

The Lawton, Aulin, Lee and Leinhart families are represented as well as the Dwardy, McCall, Clark and Andersons, at this outing.



1936 Oviedo High School senior class

Founding family names such as Jacobson, Aulin, King, Lingo, Clonts and others were among the early Oviedo High graduates.

T.L. and Lacy Lingo

T.L. Lingo (for Thad Lee) Jr. and his wife, Lacy Aire Lingo, were good friends in high school and married after he graduated and went into the service in 1944. T.L. saw action overseas at Saipan and Okinawa, and was a member of the 34-44 Ordinance Company of the Army. "We were married on a three-day pass at the Baptist Church," Lacy recalls.

"Thad Lee III was born while T.L. was overseas, and the couple lived where Century 21 Real Estate is now on Central. They built their current home at 145 Myrtle when T.L. retired from a citrus firm in Mims. The garden, a real delight, is "full of things I brought from the Central Street home," Lacy said.

After the citrus business, the couple sold off their real estate, subdividing Pine and Shedd Street, then a property they bought in Murphy, North Carolina. "We owned a house there for eight or nine years, and vacationed there; then we sold off lots for homes."

"She helped clear the land," T.L. said of the energetic Lacy. "I do the mowing, here, she does all the rest" he said of the extensive landscaping on their home.

"We're surrounded by the Baptist Church, now," Lacy said. "We get along with them real well." A few years ago they sold their lots to the church

on the west side of their property, now used for church parking.

Both Lingos are now Methodists, although they began their married life with Lacy a Baptist and T. L. a Methodist. "We raised our children in the Methodist church and went together. T. L.'s dad was the Sunday School superintendent and his mother was the organist and pianist. They were real active in the Methodist church," Lacy said.

T.L. remembered his father, the former Oviedo City Clerk and insurance salesman, as an avid hunter and fisherman who took his son on expeditions to teach him. He also recalled how the family went to Daytona or New Smyrna Beaches for a week or two in the summer to fish and swim.

"T.L. had a black friend named Rabbit, Alphonse Rhodes (and later, his brother, Jimmy) who was always fishing and hunting with him. The family took Rabbit to the beach, too. That was real unusual," Lacy said.

"Dad was a self-made man," she said of her father, George Aire, written about here extensively. "He brought my mother here from Jacksonville where he worked in the shipyards. When the yards closed, he had a little farm on the Econ River and came here to live.

"I was born here in 1923 in a house he built on Central. He could do anything. He also worked at drill-

ing wells for Charlie McCully, then he made a drilling machine and went out on his own, drilling wells. He did a lot for the celery farmers, and drilled all the artesian wells for Nelson and Company. Both my mother and father lived to be 95. Both T.L.'s parents lived to be 84."

"What did we do as young married couples in Oviedo in the 40's? It was very, very quiet. We visited with our friends and took our children on boatrides; we called them boatcades, there were so many friends with boats. And on weekends, T.L. would go with his fishing buddies on the Econ or Lake Jesup. He also started the volunteer fire department."

"Yep, there were a lot of fires," T.L. said. "The first fire truck was a trailer pulled behind a pickup truck; then there was a tank truck with a board chassis. That was in '49 or '50. Up until then, if there was a fire we just let it burn."

He said the first man who responded to the fire siren got to drive the truck, and that was a coveted post. "We liked to drive fast," he said. "Everyone in town went to the fires," Lacy said. Eventually, there was another truck and some of the men had phones hooked up to the fire house. T. L. had such a phone.

The Lingos remembered Capt. Brownie who owned the farm where Citizen's Bank is now—"Not the

building, but the land around it," T.L. said. Lacy said Brownie sat on the bench in front of the barber shop on Broadway and spit tobacco clear across the street. "We'd go to town on Saturday night and park downtown. We'd have ice cream at the drug store and pick up a few groceries. The cones were 5 cents," they recalled.

T.L. was known for driving a "skeeter," a car with no body, just bracing and a steering wheel. "I made it out of a part there and a part here," T.L. said.

Eventually, he turned it into a muck truck to haul celery out of the field and made a fair amount of money while he was still in High School.

"Most of the time he was fishing and hunting, though," Lacy said. "We both had real good parents," she added and T.L. nodded.

Today she says that she likes to do the gardening at their home, seeing it as a hobby. "T.L. does the mowing and I do the plants," she said. The couple has been married more than 50 years, and they still count as friends Marguerite Partin, "she coached me in basketball in High School," said Lacy, and Tom and Hurley Mae Moon. Sparks Ridenhour, who was interviewed earlier, is T.L.'s sister.

Good Friends in High School

Clare Evans

Claire Evans was born in Oviedo to Frank and George (Georgia) Wheeler, and still lives on South Lake Jesup Street in the family home which was built in 1928.

She attended Asbury College and Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill, and married John Evans of Chicago in 1941. Mother of four sons, all of them still in the Oviedo area, Clare and her husband John lived their married life in Oviedo. He died 16 years ago.

"Wealthy people loved to cruise on the St. John's river after the Civil War. The boat stopped at Lake Jesup and let mail off and that was the route to Oviedo," she said.

"There were no railroads South of Jacksonville. Those who didn't come by boat, came by horseback and wagon, so this area was real pioneer country for southerners. And southerners came to Florida to start over. Their plantations and homes had been taken for taxes in Reconstruction or destroyed in the war.

"At that time (after the Civil War) a wealthy doctor from New York state, Dr. Foster, had bought property around Lake Charm and had sold lots to his patients in the North.

"He had a big home on the North side of the Lake. It was the original plaster home in this area. I can recall he had a tremendous cistern in back of the house and those people all caught their rainwater—especially to wash their hair in because it was so soft....

"My grandparents, the Lees (also Katherine Lawton's grandparents), lived on Lake Charm. In 1874, they were the only Southern family on the Lake. My mother's name was George. That's what the minister christened her, by mistake. Her mother called her Georgia, but she said, 'no, my name is George.' She had a very dry sense of humor.

"Katheryn (Lawton) has a very dry sense of humor, too. Her dad was quite a humorist; she comes by it naturally. She was very active until she fell and broke the pins in her hip. Katie (some people call her Kit) and I used to walk every afternoon. I miss it. She's kind enough to say she does, too.

"My mother came from a family of ten; there were two older boys who stayed in Sanford, and I have cousins there. Mother and her three sisters lived most of their lives here and were very supportive of one another. They enjoyed

one another and so I often saw and feel close to my cousins.

"It's so seldom any more that a family lives where their roots are. That had so much to do with how the country was in the last century. There were strong cultural elements then.

"Something which contributed to the stability of the families here was the Baptist Church and the Methodist Church. We're Methodists, but the churches always got along. In many families, the young men were Baptists and the women, Methodists and when they were married they kept their religion.

"My father was a Baptist but my mother was a Methodist, my sister's husband was a Baptist and my sister-in-law was a Baptist. With that much interconnectedness, there was a lot of mutual understanding. Until the last few years, we had the Easter Sunrise Service together and the Vacation Bible School together.

"We'd have Thanksgiving at the Methodist Church and the Baptist minister would speak, and then we'd have it at the Baptist Church and the Methodist minister would speak.

"Both churches were good citizens of the community. The people who were active in them were also civic minded, so it followed that the churches were civic minded. The Methodists did a lot of outreach to the community; they made available the Little League fields—leased them to the Little League for \$1 a year. Many players didn't know that the church had made them available.

"When I was growing up, Oviedo was a sleepy little southern town but many of the young people grew up thinking they would go away to college. They had that mind set and they did it.

"I had a wonderful time at Northwestern. A friend of mine had gone there for graduate work and I wanted to go on to school; I liked school. I met my husband after a year; his sisters lived in Evanston.

"Evanston is 13 miles from the loop, and the men who established the college travelled on horseback up a ridge which was an Indian trail. There were beautiful trees; I can see why they selected the site for a college.

I go back every few years and I love it. I majored in English, but I never intended to teach. I used my English skills in my correspondence for many years. With four sons, I was pretty busy.

She Grew Up a Wheeler

"I never thought, when I got married, that we'd live in Florida. John would leave at 8 A.M. and take the commuter train to the Loop (he was an accountant) and not get home until 5:30, and I said if we ever lived somewhere he could come home for lunch I'd be so glad.

"Anyhow, he visited my family and loved Florida. He liked the casual lifestyle, and it was his idea to move here. He made himself a Southerner. He used to laugh and talk about 'Those Yankees.'

"He was on the Seminole County School Board when Seminole Community College was established, and he was there when integration was decreed. That was a stressful time. Our phone rang off the hook.

"We had six weeks to go from total segregation to total integration, and that meant a fleet of new busses and we were a small county and couldn't afford it; but we did it. Everyone connected with the schools bent over backwards to accomplish it and Seminole County never had a serious racial incident as a result.

"Once, John came home from the office (he worked for Nelson and Company) when the boys were in Junior High and said he had an interesting morning. A delegation from Kansas had visited the school when they read about Oviedo's test scores being so much higher than other areas, and they wanted to know why.

John was asked by the principal to talk to them, and it was his opinion that Oviedo was a church community, where the churches were very active, and that the students had a stable family life (there was only one family in town that had been divorced, Clare reported at the interview).

Parents were very interested in their children and took an active part in PTO, Scouting, and Church. Another factor, Claire believed, was that so many people took family vacations. Since there were long summers, people wanted to get away and see what was beyond Oviedo, and the North Carolina Mountains were a day's drive. "My dad always said it was good for us to get above sea level," she said. "That was in the days before air conditioning.

"The Woman's Club was a potent force in the civic life of the community as well. Until the last few years, it was in the vanguard of every civic movement—now of course it can't be

in so many, but still does a great deal. The club started in 1906 as the Magazine Club, and joined the Federated Woman's Clubs in 1916.

"The Bean Soup Ladies came about this way: My sister, Louise Martin (her husband Bill's father was the town doctor for many years) is quite an idea person, and she had the notion that the Woman's Club could make money with bean soup packets for sale at Great Day.

"Jean Wheeler and Louise carried the burden of making up the envelopes of soup for many years—and then turned it over to a committee which now does this. Louise ferreted out where to buy beans at a good price and she and Jean figured out the seasoning. Louise loves to figure out how things are made.

"When we go out of town, her mind gets to clicking on a strange dish "How is that done?" Anyway, they put up packs of seasoning separate from the beans. You see that done now all the time in specialty stores, but it was an idea Louise had. We've had a booth at Great Day in the Country every year since the committee started. Maybe 1979—Louise can tell you.

"Growing up here had lots of advantages. The cousins, and then the handcrafts our mothers taught us. My mother arranged for a lady to have a kindergarten for the children in the neighborhood, because there wasn't any public kindergarten.

"I did that for my boys, too, with a woman on Lake Charm who had five boys. We got to go to Sanford to pre school, but then I had Arthur, David, and Charles in three years and didn't have time to take them to Sanford to school.

"I learned to hem and embroider when I took Home Economics in school and we learned to do those things, I thought I had a real head start. My grandmother Lee would take a beach house and we would spend time with her, rotating families. When the girls took Home Ec, the boys didn't take Woodworking.

"They took an agriculture course, and there was an Agriculture Agent in the school who taught them to cultivate a plot of ground. Frank can tell you about that.

"I remember one Christmas, Frank, Louise and I were hoping for a pony and dad told us to go outside and look around for our present and of course we knew what it was, so we

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Wayne & Karen Jacobs

High School Sweethearts

Wayne and Karen Jacobs were high school sweethearts. Married the year they graduated, 1965, they have lived in their house they built next to the Riverside Park since 1974.

Wayne was born in Chuluota to the family that founded that town, and Karen came to Oviedo in the 8th grade. Karen's father was Leonard Jansan, and Wayne's family and her family have been researched back to Sweden and England by Karen, who spent years on the project.

She is now President of the Oviedo Historical Society and the head of the Museum of Seminole County History at 5 Points. Wayne is a cattleman and does land clearing. They have three children, two graduated from Oviedo High, as they did.

Karen: "I'm busy working on the High School Reunion, and I'm trying to find a picture of the old gym. I've asked everyone I know...."

"When I researched my family, it took five years. I have volumes. Then I did Wayne's, and I have every proof I need from England to Massachusetts to Virginia. From Virginia to North Carolina there are some gaps; then I have it from North Carolina to Florida."

Wayne: "We started the whole thing of selling our land. My two brothers and I sold the land Twin Rivers is now on. We sold 2000 acres, and all the building started. It was sold in different stages. Then came the Clonts, and the Evans with Kingsbridge. It's

Evans

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looked down the rows of citrus behind the house (there has been citrus there for 100 years) and we spotted a little black and white pony.

"Dad made a wagon for it and we took neighborhood children for rides. Later, he had a sled made and when the Mediterranean Fruit Fly infestation came, and the fruit dropped, Frank would put a tub on the sled and pick up the infested fruit and drop it in a special pit full of lime so the fly wouldn't hatch.

The pony's name was Tony, and Frank and Tony worked hard on that fruit fly invasion. Frank was very faithful."

pretty out here (in Twin Rivers.) They've done a good job with it."

Karen: "I loved growing up in Oviedo. Everybody knew everybody. We had the same teachers every year. Coach Mikler taught history in 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grades. He always taught us history.

"Mrs. Neeley, Donna (her husband and son Larry were the owners of the Oviedo Outlook newspaper) taught us English, Spanish, Speed Writing, and Speech.

"She had taken a Dale Carnegie Course and was the most inventive teacher. One day, we came in to the class and she had drawn all the shades and turned out all the lights. She put on a record which included footsteps and ended in a loud scream and said, 'now tell the story you have heard in that music.'

"Another time, she gave us the problem of being in an area that was burning with five minutes to decide what five things to take with us when we left our homes. I still have that paper.

"The classes Wayne and I were in together were from Novella Aulin Ragsdale. We took bookkeeping and typing, all the office skills. Everyone took those courses. The science teacher was Betty Palmer; she taught Biology 1 and Biology 2. Virginia Staley, Mrs. Merritt Staley's wife, was the gym teacher and the girl's basketball coach. We only played half court with different rules....

"There were only 33 of us in the graduating class of '65. I can tell you where they all are. The class was real close. Wayne can tell you about the sports."

Wayne: "Football didn't start at OHS until '61. Arthur Scott was our football coach, and I played guard. Our team was 9 and 1 our last year, and we went to the Rainbow Bowl and won the State Class C. Division championship. The first year we played, we lost to Titusville 49-0.

"Titusville was always our rival, and fights would break out at the games. I also played baseball; I played left field. The whole town turned out for the games then."

Karen: "Even if a person had nobody playing, like a son or nephew, they knew someone on the team. The football field was built by the residents. I remember they wouldn't let the pep club

go to the Ocoee games, either, because they were a big rival like Titusville."

Wayne: "Saturday and Sunday nights were the only nights Coach Scott let us date. He said girls and football don't mix. We had a 9:30 week night curfew, and he'd call to be sure we were in and ready for bed. Nobody ever complained about what he did; winning the game was the most important thing."

Karen: "In high school we had a dress code. We couldn't wear shorts. In '63 culottes were in, and all the girls wanted to wear them. Some got sent home to change. Clyde Holder was the principal, and we couldn't even wear slacks. We had to wear dresses."

Wayne: "Some of the local guys put mirrors on their shoes to look up the girl's skirts. In the '60s, that was the only entertainment we had. Mimi Bruce said there was nothing to do that wasn't legal or moral. Actually, it wasn't that bad as long as you didn't get caught...."

Karen: "There was no hand holding or kissing in school. We did fun things; we invented things to do. We'd watch American Bandstand with Dick Clark, things like that. Hurricane Donna closed the school, but nothing much was damaged. A few large trees were blown over.

"I always knew Wayne, but we didn't start dating until 12th grade. We wrote love notes. He'd write 'what are you doing tonight?' and I'd write 'nothing.' He'd write back, 'do you want to go out?' and I'd write back, 'yes.' I still have those notes. Everyone passed notes back and forth."

Wayne: "I suppose you've learned about the hangout at the Pure Oil Station on the corner of Broadway and 426. There was a coke machine outside and we'd watch the cars come by."

Karen: "If they were unknown cars, they were Winter Park kids looking for the Oviedo Lights."

Wayne: "We'd come back from a date, and there would be no traffic. From Colonial Drive to Oviedo there wouldn't be another car. You didn't want to break down."

Karen: "In those days, we could go from Oviedo to Sanford in 10 minutes with no traffic. The kids would go to A&W at Lake Barton on Colonial Drive. They had curb service. Or they'd

line up for miles to cruise through Steak and Shake in Winter Park.

"I went to Park Avenue elementary, Lakemont, Glenridge, and Oviedo High as the boundaries for the Winter Park schools changed. The family lived in Goldenrod. Also, I went to church in Orlando, so I knew lots of people in Winter Park and the city. Wayne was more a country boy."

Wayne: "We came in town once a year." (He was kidding.)

Karen: "Anyhow, I'd get him lost in the city and he'd get me lost in the country. Another thing we all did was drink cherry coke and talk at the drug store on Broadway where the pet store is now.

"We missed integration by two years; ours was the last segregated class. Jackson Heights was the black elementary school. After that the blacks went to Crooms in Sanford.

"Most everybody in town was either a Baptist or a Methodist. The Baptists always ran the vacation bible school. The Methodist Youth had MYF dances and the Baptists could go because the dances were church-sponsored.

"Since everyone knew everyone, if someone did something wrong everyone knew about it and called the child's parents. When somebody got a new car, everyone knew all about it right away."

Wayne: "I remember one year I had to miss football practice to help my parents take the prunings out of the groves, and the coach brought the whole team out to clean up the groves so I could practice.

"We don't know who blew up the bank, but we've heard lots of stories. And it was a good time to grow up in Oviedo."

Karen: "That's right. I loved growing up here."



Thomas Moon

Farmer and Postmaster

Thomas Moon, farmer and postmaster, came to Oviedo when he was 18 and just out of High School. He has lived at 111 Clark (and across the street, he said) for more than 60 years.

His oldest sister, Martha Ann, married Charles Lee, Jr. and moved to Tennessee. His younger sister, Mary Velora, married and moved to Georgia. His brother, Clyde Reese Moon, stayed in Oviedo and died 15 year ago.

Like Sparks and John Riedenhour, his home is situated on a large lot that is beautifully landscaped. He has 14 fruit trees and gave Fall Glow tangerines to the Voice reporter, who said they were the best she had ever tasted. At 78, his health is failing but he keeps the yard all by himself.

"I've been a success at farming and didn't get fired as Postmaster; those are the only two careers I've had. My boss in Orlando never called me on the carpet about anything, so I feel real good about that...."

"I was born in Hiram, Georgia. My father was a cotton and corn farmer and we lived about 30 miles West of Atlanta. We moved to Atlanta in 1926 when my father went into steel and bridge construction, and I graduated from Fulton High School there.

"My mother's brother, C.L. Clonts, was after us all to come to Oviedo to farm, and my father didn't want to leave my grandmother so we

delayed doing it. When grandmother died we moved—in November of 1938.

"I worked with Uncle Roy on the celery farm, and also served 16 years as a substitute rural carrier at the Post Office. I left to go in the Army in 1942, and I landed in the Philippines and at Okinawa. I was a buck sergeant and ammunition supplier.

"George Means, Paul Mikler, Frank Wheeler and I are the only 52-year members of the Oviedo Post 243 American Legion.

"In 1938, Oviedo was a very small citrus and farming community and everyone knew everyone. It was a friendly town. There were 1,100 to 1,200 people. It's always been a good place to live.

"There were 40 or 50 celery farmers when we came here, but we were such a small outfit we contracted with Chase and Company in Sanford to handle harvesting and selling of our celery. We were among the last half-dozen farmers left, as big business took over and absorbed the smaller farmers.

"Celery brought \$1.50 a crate in the '60's, and that was extra good. Our farm was at Mitchell Hammock and at that time Seminole County was known as the celery capital of the world.

"Sanford grew it on Sandland in the winter time. Those were flat fields. We could grow it later in the season,

here, than they could in Sanford as we grew on muckland.

"We built this house in the Fall of 1947. My wife was a Lake Mary girl, Jane Cochran. I met her before World War II at a dance in Lake Mary and when I came back from the war she was working at Sears and Roebuck.

"I guess another of my jobs was as Justice of the Peace in 1961-65. Did I marry anybody? I had a couple of requests, but I sent them off to a preacher. I was the coroner and held preliminary hearings.

"It was a thing that was O.K. for one term—like the Army. I saw people burned up in their homes and two or three shot and some killed in accidents. That wasn't a very big job, I just did that on the side. George Kelsey was the constable when I was coroner; things happened, just like in a big city, just not as much.

"I also ran the municipal swimming pool for six years in the '40s and '50s. We had a good recreation program. I opened the pool and cleaned it weekly (we'd drain it and scrub it) in 1946 and the American Legion raised money from it's 4th of July Barbecue and bought a pump and a chlorinator.

"I had a good friend in high school whose father was a stamp clerk at the Post Office there and I took the Civil Service Exam when I graduated.

"In 1964, John Currier was the

Post Master and he was killed in a car wreck on the Chuluota bridge. My current wife, Hurley Ann Wainright, was a clerk in the post office and she temporarily took the Post Master job.

"I took the exam in 1966 and got the appointment in 1967 as Postmaster. I retired in 1980. The Post Office used to be where the Karate Academy is on Broadway and Central.

"I began the third Rural Route when I was there; the town was growing about 12 per cent a year. I just asked Scott Perry (the current Postmaster) how many rural routes there are now, and he said there were 34.

"We were boaters and had a place on the St. John's River when the boys, Thomas Junior and John, were growing up. I built my first boat out of a Chris Craft kit.

"We'd put in the river and it was so clear; we did the Palataka River and we'd also go from Oviedo to Sanford, and fish at Silver Glen Springs on the West Side of Lake George. Now I understand you can't get in the river there.

"Seven months after I retired my health went to pot. Both of my wives have been wonderful during my hospitalizations and operations. I've been lucky.

"I guess I've got claustrophobia; I can't sit around the house and do nothing."

Marguerite Partin

Paul Mikler's Female Counterpart

"As Paul (Mikler) was to the boys, I was to the girls," agreed Marguerite Partin, now retired but still living in her lovely Mead Manor home with its large pool.

"The girls (her daughters) taught swimming there while they were in college, and of course it was built before there were automatic pool cleaners, so I have to vacuum it out. I don't mind."

Marguerite Partin was born in Chattanooga, Tennessee and was moved to Lakeland when she was three months old. She went to college there and got a License of Instruction from Florida Southern. At OHS, she taught first grade for eight years, then got her BS at Stetson and retired to raise her daughters.

"But they kept asking me to come back, so I did and stayed 23 more years, teaching fourth grade." Her husband, Jim Partin, died four years ago in 1995. The Partin School is named for her.

"I was looking for a job in Sanford, and the Superintendent, Mr. Lawton, told me he was full up there, but he had a first grade position in Oviedo. My dad and I drove out to see Oviedo, which I'd never heard of, and it was a little bitty country town out in the middle of nowhere, we thought.

"It was in the boondocks. But I liked Mr. Cooper, the principal, and accepted the job and of course the next year Mr. Lawton said I could have any position in Sanford I wanted and I said, 'can't I stay in Oviedo?' He wasn't surprised. He told me he knew I would like Oviedo. We were invited to places, and anything we'd ask of the parents, they'd do it."

That's how Marguerite Partin described her introduction to the town that was to be her home.

"I married Jim Partin, and had two daughters. I always said I wouldn't marry a man who was a farmer and

live in a little hick town, and when I told my parents I was going to marry Jim they asked 'are you sure? You always said you would never marry a farmer and live in a little town and that's what you're going to do.' I told them I was sure.

"I was the girl's basketball coach, the cheerleader sponsor, and Paul Mikler and I chaperoned the bus trips when the boys and girls went together. For State and Regional meets, I'd drive the cheerleaders and stay with them at the hotels."

Marguerite said she played basketball in high school and in college, and tennis, and that now girls' basketball is as rough as the boys'—a fact that wasn't true then, since there were different rules for girls. "Paul and I used to argue about who got the gym for practice, and he usually did.

"It wasn't a regulation gym—it was 40 feet wide instead of 50. It was in a building behind the old high school, a tin building with an open side and plastic that rolled down there to cover it from the elements.

"We arranged dances for the young people after most of the home games. They were usually in the gym or in the cafeteria. Since the school was small with just about 300 students, everyone knew everyone. We still arrange reunions for several classes at a time, and we have one coming up.

"My first grade class had 45 students and Ben Ward was one of them. He built Mead Manor and we lived in our new house there for 32 years, I told him I wanted some of the proceeds for the subdivision, because we were the second or third street in, and Palm, our road, wasn't paved. The town really took off when Mead Manor was developed.

"Most of my best friends are former students. I see them all the time, and of course I'm older but we're still friends. At Halloween, children and then grandchildren of my students come to my door.

I'm so lucky to have lived a long time in the town where I taught, and to know so many people. I still play bridge every week with Virginia Mikler, Sparks Ridenhour, and Kat Lawton.

"I'm a cheerleader for my three grandsons, all of whom played sports at OHS or Lake Howell. My grandson is a pitcher for the UCF baseball team, and I go to all the games. Mike Tsinsky is my son-in-law, and his two boys have played sports.

"One son-in-law, Mark Bellhom, was drafted by the Oakland "A's." His grandfather was the principal at St. Luke's school, and both my girls are teachers: Marilyn, an elementary teacher and Suzanne now an administrator at Seminole Community College.

"What are some of the things I recall when I first came here? Being excused from school at lunch to attend the Woman's Club meetings (Mr. Cooper, the principal, took my class); the "Teacher's House" on Broadway where four of us lived when we first came here, with the principal downstairs and the teachers upstairs.

"The next year, the principal moved to a house and a coach and his wife moved in. We often said if that old house could talk, what tales it would tell!

"Broadway looks the same or better than it did when I came here. Dr. Schmidt's office on Central was built by the town for Oviedo's doctor, Dr. Stoner, and the Woman's Club furnished the waiting room.

"In the old Memorial Building were fund raisers and square dances and sock hops and wedding receptions. The Woman's Club furnished the kitchen, and when the building was refurbished, the Woman's Club gave the kitchen again. In interim years it had been used by the Fire Department.

"I was on the Memorial Building Committee when the building was renovated, and worked to see it was

used for all those civic activities again. And of course, it is!

"The original Woman's Club House was on Central, about where the little house at the corner of the 419 turnoff is. During the war, it was used to roll bandages for the war effort, etc.

"My husband was active in the American Legion, and he helped the Legion build the municipal swimming pool at Sweetwater Park.

"There was also a recreation building there and the young couples would gather and have dances. At the end of the school year, we'd have a picnic at Sweetwater Park for the school children.

"At this year's class reunion, no one will believe the growth in Oviedo. We're so lucky to have so many nice people moving here....

"I'm so glad I'm in good health and can enjoy my friends and grandsons and their games. Today is the only day I could have been interviewed; I have games to go to all the other days, or bridge to play. Yes, I still work at the Polls on election day.

"A young man from Partin interviewed me for a class project and he wrote 'and she lived in a house.' He seemed surprised there were houses, then. The school sent me his essay. It was very well done.

"I guess the people moving here don't realize how this was mostly celery farms. My husband was a celery farmer. We could sit on the ground beside the rows of celery and not be able to see over them, they grew so tall.

"It was amazing...Jim, my husband, had 15 acres here and 15 acres out on Lake Jesup. He sold the property on Lake Jesup some years ago when he quit farming, and the people who bought it built a lovely home on it. I never wanted to live there. I was a city girl—Lakeland was pretty well settled when I lived there. I wanted to live in the center of Oviedo."

Old Laws and Statutes

One of the most incredible laws, passed in 1925, said if a Marshall or Sheriff purposely allowed a prisoner to escape "he would suffer the like penalties and punishments as the escaped prisoner was sentenced to."

Horses and mules could not be tied to shade trees, and "motorcar parking" was restricted to the right side of the street, and at no less than a 45 degree angle.

Cursing and using a sling shot—for some reason these offenses were lumped under the same law—brought a \$50 fine or 50 days at hard labor.

There were strong laws, of course, dealing with the selling of liquor and gambling, and with the advent of indoor plumbing, it became illegal to dispose of "human excreta" except in a "sanitary watercloset."

In 1938, in an effort to keep "certain types of men" from settling in the area, an update to the "Rogues and Tramps" law promised a month at hard labor to "Persons who use juggling, or other unlawful games or plays, common pipers and fiddlers, pilferers, common brawlers, persons who habitually misspend what they earn, and wander and stroll from place to place with no lawful purpose...who are able to work, and yet live off the earnings of wives or minor children."

Frank Wheeler

Frank Wheeler was born in Oviedo in 1920. He attended OHS, then graduated from Stetson in 1943. In the Navy in World War II, he was in the Training Command of the Pensacola Air Station.

He has been on the Stetson Board of Directors for 29 years, served as chairman, and received an honorary doctorate in 1983. In 1945, he married Jane Moran of Geneva, his High School sweetheart, and they have been married 53 years.

The couple has two children, Mimi (Bruce) and Ben, and five grandchildren, who are 6th generation Oviedians.

"I recall my father; his father, my grandfather Wheeler, was a Civil War veteran and had moved from Georgia with his first wife. She died and grandfather Wheeler married a local girl...my father and his brother, Lee Wheeler were his second family.

"He ran a large sawmill; there was a lot of virgin pine and other timber around Oviedo. When it was cut out, grandfather Wheeler moved to Dade City and had a sawmill there, then died.

"My father was 11. At that time, he had relatives here and so my Uncle took an oxcart from Oviedo to Dade City and loaded up my father's possessions and moved him back to Oviedo until he was 76. Mother was a Lee, and they married here and had three of us kids. (Claire Evans, Louise Martin, and Frank.)

"My father had to quit school in the 4th grade and go to work. There was no Aid to Dependent Children then, or any kind of welfare. He had to 'root hog or die poor.' When he moved here, he did what he could to make a living.

"A Mr. Crutchfield, an agent of the Atlantic Coast Line Rail Road, took him under his wing and taught him Morse Code. At that time, the telegraph was the only communication with the outside world, Western Union, and when Mr. Crutchfield died father became an agent for the Coast Line Railroad and did it for 25 years.

"There were very few roads here in those days and almost all commerce came by rail. The depot was a lively place, then. When the Mail train came in, it was the job of a local black man to haul it from the station to the Post Office. Sometimes, the ruts in the road were so bad nobody thought he'd make it, but he did.

"Meanwhile, my father bought a home place with a small grove. In the 1894-95 freeze, which was about as bad as '89, there were some trees that survived and he coaxed the grove into production, then acquired some more citrus.

"He was so successful he left the railroad in the 20's and went into business with an old Swede, a Mr. Nelson, who had a packing house over here. Soon, dad bought him out but kept the name, operating as the Nelson brothers since it was an established name in the trade. (Here, Frank indicated the framed citrus labels in his Nelson and Co. offices, bearing the Nelson name.) We continued to ship under the Nelson name until we closed the packing house in the 1989 freeze.

"The 1917-18 freeze and resulting damage to the citrus trees brought the growth of vegetable farming as a cash crop supplement. Celery became prominent in Oviedo, and Joe Leinhart was one of the first celery growers in the Oviedo area. As more and more land was cleared, there were hundreds of acres of celery grown here.

"There were two railroadsthen: the Atlantic Coast Line to Sanford, now the Cross Seminole Trail, and Seaboard from Orlando through Winter Park and out to Oviedo. All produce was shipped by rail, and there were two trainloads that went out with 25-30 carloads every day in the Spring season, March through June.

"My father helped organize the Citizens' Bank of Oviedo in 1946, and was its first president. He was also active in the Baptist Church and his father had been the first Deacon in 1869.

"In those days, no church had a full time pastor, and the first and third Sunday of the month we went to the Methodist Church and the second and fourth Sunday we went to the Baptist Church. My mother was a Methodist, as were the two girls. My father was a Baptist. That was never a point of controversy in our family.

"In Oviedo in the 20's, there was one telephone operator to service the small number of people who had phones. Nobody bothered with telephone numbers. We'd just pick up the phone and say, 'I want to talk to Mrs. so and so.'

"I remember when power came to Oviedo. Everyone had kerosine lamps, and some had Delco generating systems which had just enough

power to crank up the lights in the evening and cut them off before bed.

"In the late 20's, we got power, but there was no such thing as small motors and nobody had refrigerators. The ice man delivered 50-100 pounds of ice two or three times a week.

"Another interesting thing, there were no paved streets. Route 426 was a sand bed if I ever saw one. There were sand beds along Hillcrest, and no sidewalks. Few cars could get up it if the season was real dry.

"All the farm work and grove work was done with horses or mules. The fruit was brought to the packing houses on wagons, 20 boxes on a wagon at a time. Everything was just bone hard labor. That's all anybody knew.

"From my earliest childhood, I remember going to things in the community and going to church. If there was something going on at the school, a play or Mayday, then the whole community went. At the churches, the whole town turned out.

"We knew everyone in town and they knew you, and if you did something naughty your folks knew about it in short order. It was one for all and all for one when we grew up. If there was a tragedy or a misfortune, the whole community did what it could to help the situation. Oviedo is still pretty much that way today, I think.

"The people who initially settled Lake Charm were wealthy northerners who came in the wintertime for the milder climate. Dr. Foster had a houseboat and he would cruise down the St. Johns and come to Lake Jesup in the winter from New York.

"He enjoyed hunting and fishing, and there was plenty of that, and he bought property and brought his friends. These people had money and education, and the local folks were primarily refugees from the Civil War.

"The latter had nothing but a desire to work, and the two came together as a mix. The influence of that generation is still felt here. These people along with the pioneers already here resulted in combined efforts of a unique society in the small, rural community.

"Dr. Foster brought my grandfather Lee from up in Columbia County, Lake City, to look after his groves and plant new groves. He had 10 children and many lived here all their lives. C. S. Lee was the young-

Simply "First Citizen"

est, and he lived to be 99. He died seven or eight years ago.

"My mother and her three sisters lived here all their lives. The influence Dr. Foster had was carried forward; it was very significant. The very first Methodist church was organized as Foster Chapel and was built where we live now on Lake Charm.

"After a while, it was used as a winter home for retired missionaries. The place was known for years as Foster Chapel; now it's the Methodist church.

"As the community grew, the moral tone has always been at a relatively high level. Like-minded people are attracted to our town for that reason, it's what their looking for...When the University came 30 years ago, it made a big change in the educational content of the community. The professors and administrators came with the U and that meant lots of good folks lived here.

"Even before the University came, a great percentage of Oviedo graduates went on to college. That was just what their parents expected. There was an English teacher, Mrs. Anna Thompson, who taught us so well that we could all pass college English after her course.

"She was a grandmother to almost all of us. She made you want to make her proud of you. She'd take as much interest in you as if you were her own child.

"The company? (Nelson and co.) The first building here was the citrus packing house. I revamped the machinery, got modern equipment and mechanized the operation. Then the big metal building was the fertilizer plant.

"The whole area was agriculture and cattle, and citrus and vegetables--we used lots of fertilizer. Dad built the plant in 1936-37. He hired a chemist that used to be with Swift and Company and he worked with the growers here on the formulas.

"It grew stuff. Not everything takes the same kinds of fertilizer; he had to formulate for sandy soils and muck soils. The other buildings were warehouses and offices for the fertilizer operations. With the freezes, there wasn't the need for fertilizer. It dried up so it wasn't economical to keep producing it.

"We sold the business to a concern in Leesburg. We built the Oviedo Shopping Center in the 1960's. There

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Katherine Lawton

Born on Hillcrest, Surrounded By Cousins

Katheryn Lawton was born in 1906. Her father, Winburn J. Lawton, was also born here in the house next door to Katherine's, at 28 Hillcrest.

She attended Oviedo schools, then majored in Mathematics at Wesleyan College in Macon, Georgia. With the aid of a live-in companion, she still attends meetings of the Women's Club.

"I can really confuse you with my relatives. Claire Evans and I are first cousins; her mother and my mother were sisters. The Wheelers are kin on both sides. My father and Frank were cousins and George (Mrs. Wheeler) and my mother were sisters....

"My father had orange groves and the grocery and general store in the building still standing at the corner of 426 (The computer store.) There was a fire and most of the buildings burned up but daddy's didn't because it was brick. It's been changed a lot since then....

"In those days, groceries were delivered. The store had a big walk in freezer and he kept meat in there, and when someone ordered 'meat' and didn't specify, he got steak because that was what he liked and he brought some home for us.

"I ate an awful lot of steak as a child. There was a big barrel full of

brine that held pickles as big as this (gesturing with a full thumb and forefinger) and that were as long as this (gesturing about 6 inches) and when we got a nickel for candy, we bought pickles. They were really a treat.

"My house has four rooms and a bath upstairs and a bedroom and bath downstairs. That's enough room for Cindy, Black Beauty (a Persian cat) and me.

"In the old days, Oviedo looked somewhat like it does now, but the road out here (434) was clay and it was the best road to town. Hillcrest was a dirt road, and when they got rained on it was slow getting somewhere....

"When we were young, there were four of us, my two brothers and one sister. Only a brother in Plant City is left. We played cards and had a croquet set by Central and played with paper dolls and when my father made a trip to Baltimore to buy stock, he brought my sister and me two beautiful dolls, I had mine for years.

"I used to play bridge with Virginia Mikler's mother (who lived on Hillcrest in an apartment in the Mikler home.) At Wesleyan, it was a Trustees Rule never to play cards, but I did and one of the people in our foursome was a teacher.

"I always thought she was rash, because if we were caught they'd send us home, but if she were caught she'd be fired. Wesleyan was the oldest women's college. My father went to Mercer, which was a Baptist school.

"For a few years, 8 or 10, I taught school in Sanford. My uncle was the Superintendent of Schools, and he was my father's brother. He put me in different grades when they needed someone. After a time, I went to business college in Orlando and learned to be a secretary/bookkeeper.

"They got me a job with Florida Power and I went to whichever Florida Power office had someone on

vacation. I'd fill in for a few weeks, and Florida Power paid my room and board and my salary.

"Then I went to work for Nelson and Company doing the billing, taking orders for fertilizer (they didn't ever have me mix the fertilizer) and writing letters. Claire Evans's father owned the fertilizer plant.

"The fertilizer dust would blow over on my rose bed and I had beautiful roses. I worked at Nelson and Co. for 25 to 30 years and they had a big dinner for me at the San Juan Hotel when I retired. I didn't want them to do it, but they said they did it for the men. I didn't want a watch—I had a watch, so Jean Wheeler selected a nice pin which they gave me.

"Then someone quit on short notice and they had me come back until they could get someone else. At the end of a month, they asked if I wanted salary or if I wanted a typewriter and I took the typewriter. It's a nice electric typewriter.

"When I was growing up in Oviedo, we had lots of parties and get-togethers. My parents had a horse and carriage, and we would go visit my grandparents who lived on Lake Charm. My grandmother said my mother, Lydia, wanted to get out of the house with those four little children.

"I remember when my grandparents moved across Lake Charm and I rode in the rowboat with my grandmother and the china and silver. They told me over and over, 'don't rock the boat.' The house where they lived was torn down, and Bill and Louise Martin built there. The old house my grandparents lived on is the land the Evans boys live on, now, at the corner of Lake Charm.

"One early settler was Dr. Mead for whom Mead Manor was named. He owned acres and acres of Mead Manor land. He started the Boy Scouts in the area, and raised orchids and perfected the first pure white orchid.

"His wife started the first library in a building downtown and got the books, I guess, from her wealthy friends in New York where she was from.

"My mother was a charter member of the Women's Club. We swam in Lake Pickett and Lake Charm, but I never liked it much. At Wesleyan, I almost didn't graduate because I couldn't dive, but I swam two lengths of the pool. The gym teacher was disgusted with me.

"I had to go to Orlando to get my clothes, and there were only two places where they had shoes small enough for me. We wore hats to church, and my mother fancied hats. They were quite becoming to her, and I saved several and won a prize a few years ago at the Women's Club for the best hat.

"I've always gone to the Methodist Church here, and my mother did, but my grandfather Lawton was a Baptist preacher. I don't remember him; he died when I was young.

"I've been to a lot of places in Europe, most of them two to three times. I went to most of the countries, but not Russia. In Mexico, my sister and I saw the bullfights and it wasn't too gruesome.

"I bought inlaid tables in Italy; I went with Claire (Evans) and Mrs. Wheeler, Claire's mother, Georgia. Her name was Georgia, but everyone called her George.

"We went to Europe on the QE II and came back on the Queen Mary. We went first class, because we didn't apply in time to get a lower class and I'm so glad we were first class. It was wonderful.

"In the morning, we ordered for the day and they said if there was something we wanted that wasn't on the menu, to write it in. The sky's the limit, in other words.

"I'm blessed to have good health and good companions who take me anywhere I want to go."

Wheeler

From page 9

was a drug store and a grocery store in the first two buildings. The whole site was a ridge, and we filled it in. A man outside of town wanted a lake, and I dug it for him and used the dirt for fill. You didn't need permits in those days.

People said, 'do you every think you'll fill up that hole?' We couldn't afford to do it today."

Old Laws and Statutes

If your barnyard animals are the type to wander, you better hope they don't traffic in Oviedo's streets and sidewalks.

According to a 1925 ordinance passed by the Oviedo City Council mules, asses, cows, goats, sheep, calves, and hogs can not run at large, while chickens and other barbyard fowl are not allowed on the city sidewalks. This is just one of many strange and often silly laws passed since Oviedo's incorporation in 1925. However, a check of court records show that no roly-poly Oviedo swine has appeared shackled in court for violating this ordinance for quite a few years.

To protect and preserve the morals of the town, the council in 1925 passed an ordinance concerning "The Dress of Women," which read: "It is unlawful for any woman to appear downtown or in any public place indecently dressed or dressed in such a manner as to suggest the advertising or plying of an improper mode of life."

Another law in effect prevents women from entering any establishment where a pool or billiard table is in use.

It was also illegal in 1920's Oviedo to spit tobacco on the sidewalks, or ride a bicycle or tricycle through the streets without "a gong or bell attached to warn those who might otherwise be in danger."

Tom Estes

Tom Estes was born at Orlando Memorial Hospital and lived all his life in Oviedo, graduating from High School here in 1962. His father was R. W. Estes, Ted Estes, who built the pre-cooler on Central.

He died when Tom was 12, but there are many memories of his life here. Tom served a term in Viet Nam in the Army, then traveled extensively in Europe and the Orient. He is now finishing his degree at the University of Central Florida in anthropology.

"I've read the recollections of the interviews in the original Heritage Issue, and there are a few things I remember that haven't been mentioned: The swimming pool was open Tuesday and Friday nights and there was a juke box and pin ball machine in the tin shack by the pool. There were always large crowds there in the summer.

"Another memory is of the Scout Hut behind the pool. My earliest memory of it is in 1952, and it seemed to be old then. There were three packs meeting there, with six, eight, or ten boys in each pack. Mr. Dawson, a cattleman for Duda was the scoutmaster. Don Ulery was another in the 50s. He had two sons and a daughter and wanted them to have scouting experience.

"At my father's ranch, named 'The Gap,' there was an institution. It was called the Econ Eating Club. My father bought the ranch from Mr. Lee; it was located at the corner of 426 and Lockwood—it started there and went to Snow Hill Road.

"Anyhow, Mr. Lee had a tin shed there, about 20 by 30 feet, with a large picnic table. My father had a well dug and the second and fourth Thursday of the month men from town and other towns gathered there to have a big feed at lunchtime.

"Sometimes there would be venison steak, sometimes fresh fish. My father had a cigar box that read '50 cents for lunch; 25 cents for children and delicate eaters.' People paid on the honor system.

"They came on a regular basis. Martin Anderson of *The Sentinel*, Joe Rutland, Winter Park bankers—they all came for the stuff they couldn't get in the city and the camaraderie.

"Later on, there was a gathering of men at the old packing house in the Black Hammock at the corner of Florida and Elm. You'd see 30 or 40

cars there, and since it rained every afternoon in the Summer, they'd come and play poker when they couldn't work. Pretty soon they'd be looking for a cloud in the sky, they wanted to play so badly.

"A character I didn't read about was Enoch Partin, who lived on a hill behind the Baptist Church. I think he was Marguerite's father-in-law and he had an old Maxwell. The story goes he had driven it to Orlando on a Saturday and was going down Orange Avenue and a policeman was directing traffic.

"He signaled to go left and the policeman shouted, 'you can't go left here.' He replied, 'I can, if you get out of the way.' Enoch would slow down every time he turned a corner and was a real slow driver, and some of his boys rigged up a wire that connected to the throttle (the accelerator) and went under the dashboard.

"It came through the back seat, and when Enoch would slow down to about 10 they'd give the wire a jerk and the car would shoot forward. It would give him a thrill.

"Tip and Arthur Partin and John Lundy were cousins and a brother, and Tip and Arthur had a pet monkey. They'd throw it at John, who was scared of it, all the time.

"I really missed May Day at our school. And another thing, going up for the plays; they were just corny skits, but we thought they were great. When I was in High School they stopped them because of the missile scare and we had a study.

"They also cut out May Day in the late '50's or early '60's. In 1957 my sister, Kay Estes (Dodd) was May Queen; in '58 it was Shirley Partin. I never did know why they cut that out.

"At the end of the school year, we'd have half a day and the grades from 6 to 12 would go to Sanlando Springs, where the Springs Housing development is now. There was a pool with a slide, and we'd have a picnic and swim in the springs and it was lots of fun. We didn't ever go there, except for that end of school event.

"Back in the '40s or '50s, some of the boys put a donkey on the roof of the school. I don't know how they got it down, cause donkeys won't back up, you know. That was a lot of excitement.

"You know, I loved the way people recalled how we looked out for one another. That was so true. And if anyone had a problem with a teacher, woe was him when he got home. That's changed, as well.

"I remember another incident. Some of the boys put chickens in the library; I think that was in the '50's. The story was they didn't like the librarian, and one weekend there were chickens and dogs and cats in the library when it was opened Monday morning. Ben Ward's father made him go to Mrs. B. G. Smith and apologize for taking her chickens.

"Another amusement was the hearse. It was an old Packard 12 cylinder. Oviedo had a semi-pro baseball team and it was the only thing large enough to carry the team; they rode around in the hearse. I don't recall who owned it, I think it was Henry Wolcott who worked at the filing station and used it to push cars because it had lots of torque and power.

"When my father bought Dr. Martin's old house in the '50s, there was a skeleton in the barn that he had left over from Medical School. Some men were tearing the barn down and

one of the boys saw the skeleton and asked if he could have it. They put the skeleton in the hearse and rigged up some lights and they'd drive around with it....

"Chain gangs would come and maintain the road here, and every now and then one of them would break out. My father would come home and get his pistol and shotgun, and it was the only time we locked our doors.

"Roz Nogel owned the drug store in the '60s, and he was loud and obnoxious but if there were tickets to sell or a house burned down he wouldn't let people out of his store until they contributed; he'd hound you to the ends of the earth if you didn't. It was always a good cause and nobody cared. We'd go there every day and drink vanilla pepsis.

"When I was 13 or 14, I had a Model A Ford and Geneva had its centennial with a big parade; I was asked to drive in the parade but I was underage. George Kelsey, the constable, knew how old we were and as long as we didn't hot rod around the neighborhoods we were all right. I went to the parade and there were lots of deputies and the sheriff but it was a different era."

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The Old Oviedo School Building, now a part of Lawton

Sunday School Picnic at White's Wharf in 1911

Ed & Ima Jean Yarborough

Ed is 3rd Generation Cattleman

Ed and Ima Jean Yarborough have lived in their house on route 426 in Geneva since 1956. Ed is a third-generation cattleman whose 6000 acres have been worked by his uncle and grandfather before him.

Ima Jean (Bostick) moved to Geneva, where her father was offered employment, from Ocala in the 8th grade. At that time, the school in Geneva only served the community until the 8th grade.

After that, students went to Seminole High School in Sanford. Both graduated from there. Ima Jean was one of four girls; Ed was the only brother to three sisters. The couple has four children and five grandchildren.

Ed: "I was born in Daytona. My mother had a sister there, and the train went there, and she went to Daytona when I was about to be born and came home two weeks later. When I came back from the service, I needed a birth certificate. We found the midwife who delivered me in Daytona; she was still living. I got my birth certificate in 1956."

Ima Jean: "When I moved to Geneva, it was full of orange groves and orange blossom time was heavenly. The town was populated with retired people and people from the North and those senior citizens enriched my life greatly. I had hated the idea of a move, but I really came to love it."

Ed: "My grandfather, E. H. Kilbee, and my uncle W. G. Kilbee,

started the cattle operation. It's a cow-calf operation. We raise calves to about 325 pounds, then send them to market where they're shipped to feed lots. They began it at the turn of the century.

Ima Jean: (Indicating a family photo on their living room wall) "All the children learned to ride on Tonka, our horse. If they fell off, he'd just stand there. The children were working the cattle with their father as soon as they learned to ride. Sometimes before they went to school."

Ed: "I never saw a movie until I was eight years old. Seminole High School was one of four in the county: Oviedo, Lyman, Seminole, and Crooms. Everybody was poor, so we didn't have much recreation. We'd drive to Chuluota to see our kin about once a month or so, but otherwise we'd use our gas to go to work.

"We'd go swimming in the Horse Pond on Snow Hill and Old Mims Road. Only five of us graduated from the 8th grade when I graduated. There wasn't a fence law. The cows ran loose. In 1949 the fence law was passed, but our family had fenced them in years before there was a law. People would have to fence their gardens and their houses; the cattle were branded and roamed all the way to Mims."

Ima Jean: "We just had the 120th anniversary of the signing of the Methodist Church Charter. Before we had a stop light, it was a flashing warning light and there were many wrecks."

Ed: "I remember buying a five acre tract on North 46 for \$125 in 1943. I had a chance to buy the Handiway and BP locations for \$200 and didn't do it. Times were hard, then. We lived good and ate good because we had lots of hogs.

"After she came back from Daytona with me, my grandmother kept me and my mother cooked at the school for \$3.50 a month. Then dad got on with the Seminole County road department. His name was J.W. Yarborough. He retired as county road superintendent."

Ima Jean: "My mother is Lucy Fore, and she just retired a few years ago from working for Seminole County. She's 82 now."

Ed: "I couldn't play sports in high school because I had no way to get back and forth but the bus. My sister and I went together when I was 18 and bought a chartreuse Ford convertible. I probably was making more money from cattle then than I do now. In 1949 and 1950 the price was 29 cents a pound, and gas was 20 cents a gallon."

Ima Jean: "We'd go to the Red Barn, a nice spot on route 50 where they played good country music. Besides, there was dances in Geneva every other Friday at the community hall. And there were football games on Friday nights."

Ed: "Many a day, I'd leave home at 7 A.M. and not get home until 6 or 7 at night. It was a long day. In the last

50 years, I've killed about 150 to 200 rattlesnakes in the woods. Several dogs have been killed by those snakes.

"Once, about 4 P.M. the clouds over the field looked bad. Lightening hit, felling a pine, and the pine had a barbed wire fence attached. It rolled down the hill and killed three cows. A ball of fire ran down that fence."

Ima Jean: "Community service is strong in this family. I've been a Sunday School Teacher for 25 years and am still in charge of day care at the Geneva Methodist Church. Ed is spending his 26th year as a director of Citizens Bank. I'm a member of the Geneva Citizens Committee and a past president of the Cattleman's Auxiliary."

Ed: "She went all over the country being a spokesperson when she was President of the Cow Belles, later the Cattlewomen."

Ima Jean: "We're still doing that. I'm promoting beef at Winn Dixie on Howell Branch Road soon."

Ima Jean said she was active in the Genealogical Society and Historical Society and the whole family helped with civic matters like the 4th of July celebration in the town.

She said that Ed was a county Commissioner for two terms, as was his Uncle, and his grandfather was a commissioner for four terms.

"It's community, church and family for us," Ima Jean concluded.



C.R. Clonts showing off his
First Tractor in 1940

Seaboard Railroad, Shipping Celery from
Black Hammock in 1927



Virginia Mikler

Virginia Mikler came to Oviedo in 1941 to teach Home Economics at the school, then called Oviedo High and located where the Lawton school is now.

Her family lived in Jacksonville, and her father was a travelling salesman who had visited the Lawton Store and thought Oviedo would be a good place for his daughter to work. She married the coach, Paul Mikler. (See his story.)

"I remember when I got to Oviedo in '41 there was one traffic light. The community was close knit. When daddy brought me to Oviedo to teach, he insisted we stop at the court house and meet the superintendent of schools, Mr. Lawton.

"At that time, the whole county office was Mr. Lawton and his secretary, Gertrude. Mr. Teague helped out during the summer. Mr. Lawton came out of his office down to the car, leaned in the window, and said 'do you know how to make good biscuits?'

"When I came to teach, I arrived on a Saturday and school was to start

the following Monday, but there was a case of polio in Sanford so school was delayed for two weeks. Many in town hosted bridge parties for the new teachers during those two weeks. I remember Mrs. Coates serving guava ice cream.

"The principal of the high school then was Mr. Cooper, and he spent every summer in North Carolina and stopped by to interview me in Jacksonville. He was the first person I met in Oviedo. The place I boarded was with Louise and Martin Gore, in a house directly across from the school. Louise made beautiful dresses.

"She boarded two of us, to help her husband out with finances, but the first month she was in the red at the grocery store. She had fed us too well. She later became a teacher.

"After the war, the Methodist church was built on King Street. The money was in the bank—it was saved from the war years when you couldn't get building materials.

"Oviedo was a self-help community. Citizens raised money to build the Memorial Building and a medical

building on Central Ave. The Woman's Club paid for furnishings in the clinic waiting room. When Dr. Stoner came, we were so glad to finally have a doctor in Oviedo.

"Many were still going to specialists, like OB-Gyn, but after a while everyone went to Dr. Stoner for everything. He delivered babies at the clinic, and I remember Gertrude Lucas had her sons there. He took our son's tonsils out in 1953. The clinic had four rooms in back, two on either side of the hall.

"The Memorial Building was an all-purpose building. It was City Hall as well as the site for wedding receptions, athletic banquets and youth dances. It was a well-used community building.

"We teachers used to have to get a shot every year. I think for TB. There were no theaters close by; the closest was the Colony in Winter Park or the Vogue at Mills and Colonial or the Beecham on Orange Avenue. Now we have 22 theaters in Oviedo. Everything has grown like that.

"I remember when Governor Kirk

Her Father Picked Oviedo

came here and turned the first spade of dirt for UCF. It opened in '66 for upper-classmen and for others in '54-'65. It was just woods out there. Phil Goree, who lives in Tusaswillanow, was the first comptroller and spoke to the PTA about the changes we were going to see with the coming of the University.

"I thought, I know everyone in town and I'll get to know the faculty one at a time. How naive I was. Lots of the UCF folks did move here. Winter Park Hospital (which opened in February 1955) and UCF provided employment for many Oviedo residents.

"There were no restaurants. It was such a big thing when the Town House opened. Then when Tommy Estes opened the Oviedo Inn, and it seemed everyone in town came to the opening night. That was sometime in the 70's.

"Up until then, the drugstore was where everyone gathered. There was a lunch counter and a lot of the town's young people worked there. The drug store was on the main street, as I remember, but then it moved to the Oviedo Shopping Center."

Paul Mikler

Paul Mikler was born in Slavia in 1916 in a cabin on what is now Mikler Road. His father was the first settler of Slavia, and Paul was one of 12 children.

He attended Oviedo High School which included grades 1-12, then went to the University of Florida where he graduated in 1939. He taught history and coached basketball and baseball at Oviedo High until 1972.

Married in 1945 to fellow teacher Virginia Balkcom, he is the father of four. He has lived on Hillcrest Street in Oviedo since 1957. He received a Master's Degree in 1948, also from the University of Florida. A Sergeant in World War II, he taught illiterates to read in an Army program.

"I'm proudest of helping boys and girls develop scholarship and character and the will to succeed. With the Lord in your heart, you can't lose. Oviedo has always been a moral town. It's an honorable town and I'm proud to be a part of it. It stands for something, morally and spiritually."

That's how Paul Mikler summed up his interview, the first for the Heritage Section of the Oviedo Voice.

Mikler recalled how his mother and father helped found St. Luke's church, and how with their 10 children (twin girls had died in Slovankia) they made up a sizeable part of the congregation as it met in homes in 1912. He told of the first preacher, S.M. Tuhy who was called in 1935, and of building the wooden church in 1926 that still stands behind the new St. Luke's.

"My parents were farmers, and they came from Europe and had no idea of soil and weather conditions in Florida. In time they learned that celery

was the best cash crop, but we raised all our own vegetables.

"When we'd hitch the wagon and go to Orlando for groceries, we'd have to leave early in the morning so we'd be home by nightfall. Papa would water the horses in Lake Ivanhoe, and the grocery store was on Orange Avenue.

"My brothers were all good athletes and they taught me well. I majored in Physical Education and History at Florida, and after two years of teaching elsewhere, Mr. Lawton called me back to Oviedo. I had offers to go to many places, and I was a little reluctant because it was my home town but it worked out all right.

"I had known lots of places where co-coaches undermined the authority of the coaches, and I was all alone at Oviedo. We only had a few hundred students, but when we saw a promising athlete in the 5th or 6th grade, we'd work with him and by high school he was a fine athlete.

"Our basketball team went to the State Tournament eight times, and we were state champs in 57, and runners up in 55 and 65. We were conference champs four straight years and unbeaten in the conference.

"In baseball, we went to the regionals three times in a row, in 64, 65, and 66. It was fun to teach two sports. When we went to the state tournaments, our supporters only had to make two or three phone calls and we had the \$350 to \$400 needed to go for four days and stay in the best hotels. Of course, I told the boys they would miss school for three days and they liked that.

"When we played a basketball game, the spectators filled the gym. It was an event. Now there are so many sports

that even the parents can't go to them all.

"Some other achievements I'm proud of: in 1962, Oviedo formed the Oviedo Athletic Association, a private organization of people determined to have football at the high school. John Courier and others promoted the idea, and now the field is named for him.

"The field was built for the first game opposite Dunellin, and the association built the field. We got the fence up that night. The third year we had a team, we went to the Rainbow Bowl where the best team played the best North Florida team. We were unofficial state champs, cause we beat them 28 to 7.

"We had a really strong athletic program. I'm proud of the program I built as Athletic Director. I always believed in high academic standards and sportsmanship.

"As an example, we played the state semifinals and got beat real bad. Our team formed a big circle on the field and someone said, 'what are they doing?' I said, 'praying' and the guy said 'praying? When they got beaten?'

"Another thing I'm proud of: the Little League Officials came to me in the '60s and asked us to set up a Little League program. I was worn out, just coming from the gym, but I said I'd do what I could and I contacted Dr. Stoner and Ann Leinhart.

"Stoner was president. Ann was secretary-treasurer, and I got the uniforms and the sponsorship. That year, four teams played at the Methodist Church field. Our concession stand was a washtub filled with ice and four cases of soda. That developed into a program that today is one of the best in the state.

"In 1963, we started the Babe

Ruth League with Casselberry, Longwood, and Oviedo and won the league championship for four years. Then we played in the Sanford City League, and the Babe Ruth League died but was resurrected in recent years.

"For many summers, I headed a summer recreation program. Many children learned to swim in the municipal pool.

"I feel great that I was able to give so many boys and girls a chance to play sports.

"The changes I've seen in my lifetime in Oviedo? We had 1800 people here for 100 years. It was amazing when UCF moved here; that was a turning point. Ben Ward and others promoted and built Mead Manor, the first big subdivision.

"That started Oviedo in motion. When I grew up, the town was all citrus and celery farms, probably 50 farms. Most people had a little citrus grove which they took to market to help support the family.

"Seminole County had 9-foot roads, and when two cars met one had to yield half the road. We probably had no more than 25 telephones in town, and everyone knew the operator and there were party lines.

"I'll bet no more than five of my classmates had fountain pens; we wrote with quills dipped in ink bottles in the desks. Our school heat was a pot-bellied stove, and when a boy was acting bad the teacher would send them for coal to stoke the stove.

"I was in the Army from 1943-1945; We had a program developed at Northwestern University to teach illiterates to read. We spent five hours a

Continued on page 15

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Sparks & John Ridenour

The Ridenours have been married to each other since 1960, both of them having lost their previous spouses to cancer.

Sparks was the daughter of T.L. Lingo, who was city clerk for many years and an employee of the Nelson Company.

John was a Maryland native who moved to Oviedo and built many homes here. Sparks had a son and John had three daughters and their blended family was 8, 13, 15, and 10 years of age. They live at 118 Hillcrest.

Sparks: "I've lived here since my first husband, Roy Clonts, built the house. My parents came from Georgia and my dad was Secretary/Treasurer for Nelson and Company. He also had real estate and insurance interests. My brother T.L. Lingo Jr. still lives on Myrtle Street, close to the house where we were born."

John: "I'm retired, but I act as the maintenance man for this park (indicating the extensive grounds and plantings around the home). I have help one half day a week, and a lawn service every other month.

"When I was in building, I did commercial building and home building, and have several homes here on Shed Street and one very nice one at Lake Harney. In the old days, we didn't have all this red tape (permits, etc.) and I quit building when I got disgusted with the red tape.

"Picture this, if you can. In Oviedo, when I got here in the 60's, there were few businesses on Central between here and SR50...and Red Bug Lake Road had bushes on both sides and was a little country road."

Sparks: "Where Albertson's is now was Lake Rosa, where we used to swim. It had a nice sandy bottom

and a dock. Albertson's really must have wanted that land to go to all the trouble of filling the lake and putting down rubber sheeting.

"When I was young, the downtown had a little store here; with the bank tucked in, and a filling station where the Pawn Shop is now. We'd go to Ropers (where Uncle John's is now) and eat in the car, with a hamburger brought out to us by someone who took the order on the running board.

"I went to Florida Southern and that's where I met Marguerite Partin. She was just finishing up as I got there. I still play bridge with her every week, along with Katherine Lawton. I majored in business administration and minored in English. I taught school for a while, then worked for Florida Power. After three years, I married Roy.

"The house on Myrtle Street was one of those old two-story houses built on brick piling, in the old way of doing it. It had a big front porch and a sleeping porch. My mother was the organist for the Methodist Church for 40 years. My father was a Sunday school superintendent for 30-40 years.

"When the old school (Oviedo High, grades 1-12) was torn down, Paul Mikler brought me a few bricks from the school to keep. I'm a charter member of the Garden Club, and have been president. Mrs. Augusta Covington, a real grand dame, started the club. They came here and built a house where ERS is now. Minnie Means, George Means' wife, was another charter member.

"For recreation, we used to go to Lake Charm Park. There were big trees there and we'd have weener roasts and

sit around the fire and talk afterwards.

"Dad drove down here from Georgia in a Model T Ford. Sparks is my mother's maiden name, that's how I got my name.

"I remember that artesian wells ran for years off Sanford Road and Artesia and I were brought up on sulphur water. Daddy had a grove in the Black Hammock and a summer house there, and we'd ride out every Sunday.

"He'd let T.L. and me ride on the fenders of the car when we were in the Hammock, but when we got to town we had to get inside the car. I learned to drive at 11, and daddy would let me drive in the Hammock.

"I remember when I was in High School, several students went to the Coliseum in Orlando to participate in Marathon Dancing. One girl got really sick from it. They'd dance until they dropped for 36-48 hours until the last couple standing got a prize. We loved to go to the Coliseum and dance to the Dorsey Brothers band and other big bands later on."

John: "I remember when I married her, she had to go to Orlando for her clothes and her shoes and her groceries.

Sparks: "I can recall when the garden club put up planters all over town, and for years Minnie Means and I took turns going downtown and watering all those planters."

John: "She knew everyone on 426 by the car they were driving. She'd say, 'oh, there's so-and-so coming home from town. There were so few cars between Winter Park and Oviedo. In 1960, I'd go the full length of Red Bug Road to Oviedo and not meet another car at night."

Paul Mikler

From page 14

day in a tin barracks with 110 degree heat teaching. More than 80 per cent of the men were reading at sixth grade level after the 16-week program.

"At Fort Jackson and Fort Bragg I played on a baseball team with two major leaguers: Smokey Burgess and Max Lanier of the Cardinals. They were my team, and the only one today I can do the lineup on.

"Other gratifying things: they named the baseball field at the high school for me, and I was put in the Seminole County Sports Hall of Fame in 1987. I was given a Life Membership in the Florida High School Athletic Association in 1965—that's their

highest award. I can go free to any high school athletic contest in the state.

"When I was in the hospital with cancer, I got a five-page letter from a former student who had reached a prominent position in this profession. He took time to write me to tell me what I had meant to him.

"Another thing: I work with Boys State, and one boy's stater spoke to us, then to the Historical Society. Phil Goree of UCF heard him, arranged for a scholarship and the young man got his medical degree. He came to see me as an M.D. in the hospital when I got my hip replacement. I was thrilled to play a small part in his medical career."

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Oviedo Band at White's Wharf in 1912

Paul Mikler, Charles Aulin and Tommy Staley at the Ole' Swimmin' Hole



Rex & Thelma Clonts

Thelma Clonts was born Thelma Lee in 1925, and Ray was born in 1922. They married and built the house on Hillcrest in 1952.

Thelma's father, Charles Simian Lee was born in Oviedo on Lake Charm, one of the 10 Lee children so prominent in Oviedo history. Thelma had three brothers and sisters. Ray was born in Georgia, and his father moved to Oviedo when he was an infant to manage a branch of a Georgia bank, then located in Oviedo.

His father was one of seven children brought up on a Georgia farm, and he borrowed money from an Uncle in Atlanta (who was a doctor) to attend Young-Harris College, then was hired by the bank.

Thelma and Ray both graduated from OHS; Thelma attended Florida Southern, then Emory U. where she received a master's degree in biochemistry and worked for a few years before marrying Ray.

Ray was in World War II and attended Curtiss-Wright academy in California while in the Army. He finished his degree at Stetson after the war, after serving in Okinawa. Their firm was C.R. Clonts and Associated Growers, which bought a farm in Zellwood in 1948."

Thelma: "Rex really ran the firm, C.R. Clonts and Associated after his brother's death in 1952. Rex's father had been a poor boy, and when he began to prosper he told all his relatives in Georgia to come on up to Oviedo and he'd give them a farm.

"At one time, there were 30 people who had shares in the business. At C.R.'s house, there was always a crowd of relatives, eating one of Rex's mother's scrumptious meals with hot breads and pound cake.

"It was like a restaurant. As the firm went on, there were quite a few widows who had shares, and it became a clumsy organization. Rex and our sons bought everyone out, eventually, and the firm became Clont's Farms, Inc. It was a real relief. Our oldest son was selected as farmer of the year for 11 states in the Southeast. The irony is, there is no more vegetable farm. It was sold this year, and Zellwood corn is having its last crop."

Rex: "We lived across from Claire Evan's home and I can remember riding my tricycle up to the Lawton house when friends bought it. I hitched my tricycle to a horse hitch, so it wouldn't run away."

Thelma: "When we were young marrieds, we didn't do much partying. There were lots of baby showers and birthday parties, but we weren't a partying town. I was in one of the largest classes at OHS. There were 16 of us. Six of us were girls, and we were all friends. Penny Oliff was one of a group of friends. My family lived on Lake Charm and my mother didn't drive so as a child I was relatively isolated and wasn't one of the town girls.

"I spent a lot of time swimming in Lake Charm, biking, and skating. I grew up in the Methodist church, and there were Sunday School picnics.

"Of course, the Works Progress Administration built the pool in 1934 and

it became a gathering place in the summer. I'd ride my horse through Mead Manor, when it was just woods, and go to the pool. There was dancing there in a little pavilion, but my parents didn't want me to dance. I was rarely here in the summer, anyway. My father took us to Waynesville, North Carolina almost every year."

Rex: "When I went to OHS, there were 164 students, and in the last four grades there were only 26 boys."

Thelma: "Often Ray would come to Sunday dinner with my brothers, and I'd visit his cousins, reared as sisters. We didn't date until I returned to Oviedo to teach a year after Emory, and his service days were over.

"I always say 'I married my milkman' because Rex's parents had a cow and he remembers delivering milk to our house as a boy with his uncle.

"He remembered me as a 'dirty little yard youngen' running around. Another thing about those days: I have a very clear memory of singing a solo at May Day when I was in third or fourth grade. I can still remember the words, 'To Wit, To Wee' about a bird..."

"Rex's father was with the bank until 1926, when he made enough on a celery crop to quit the bank and go into farming full time. Since he was brought up on a farm, he knew farming. My grandfather was caretaker for the northerners' groves, as you know, and he acquired groves of his own after the 1898 freeze.

"A grove at Lawton House property was selling for \$10,000, but after

the freeze my grandfather bought it for \$500 and coaxed it back to production. The northerner's tragedy was my grandfather's opportunity. He bought quite a few groves and property around Lake Charm.

"He had come to Oviedo with three children and \$100 from a Florida timber town where he and a partner had a bankruptcy. After he acquired many groves and property, he repaid his creditors up in his former town, Appalachicola, even though he didn't have to.

"When our children were growing up, it was an ideal time. Especially for the first three. If we didn't know where they were, someone did and would tell us. They could roam then.

"There were a few friends affected by drugs, but not many. They were a joy to rear. The younger two, almost four years younger, encountered the drug culture. Their crowd had a whole different attitude, it was like two different families.

"Rex and I and the children used to take the Methodist Youth Fellowship to Lake Pickett every Sunday afternoon that it was warm enough, and we taught the kids to water ski. Then we'd have a MYF service."

Rex: "You taught them to ski and you didn't know how, yourself."

Thelma: "That's right. When I was 33, Rex bought a new boat, and he was feeling a little guilty about the purchase and said, 'I'll give you anything you

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Jean & Harold Jordan

Always Active in Community

Jean Jordan was born in Racine Wisconsin in 1932 and came to Oviedo in January of '72 to marry native son Harold Jordan.

They were married at the Methodist Church. They met when Jean ran into Harold on an Orlando sidewalk, and went to coffee with him afterwards. Jean has held numerous offices in town, and worked at Broadway Lily's for 10 and a half years.

She retired to fight a battle with cancer. Harold was born in 1929 in Oviedo to Louis Edward Jordan Sr., a collector for Florida Power. He graduated from Florida Southern and University of Florida in 1952, then was commissioned an officer in the Navy and commanded the USS Malvern, a sonar-instruction ship based in Key West Florida.

He then attended Emory University and worked as a nuclear chemist

Clonts

From page 16

want.' I said I wouldn't say another word if he would help me learn to ski. So I learned to ski at 34.

"Many young married people had boats then. In the late 50's and into the 60's someone would call and say 'let's go' and we'd meet at the St. John's. Sometimes there would be as many as 20 or 30 boats. We'd pack a lunch and have a group picnic along the river. A few times we went up to Silver Springs, but usually we were on the St. John's."

Rex: "When the moon started coming up, we knew it was time to go home."

Thelma: "We did that for six to ten years. The Lingos, the Staleys, the Partins, and some others were regulars, and then others would come and go. The kids loved it, and we had a great time. It's been an ideal time to live in Oviedo, and I now enjoy new people coming in and having activities besides those in the church.

"I even have people to play tennis with. I play twice a week. Rex has had Parkinson's disease for 25 years, and I think he's doing very well, considering.

Rex: "Tell her about the groceries. When we were children, our mothers would call and order our groceries, and then they'd be delivered. We had a refrigerator on the back porch, and the delivery man would put our groceries away."

for years, first for others and then with his own business in Sanford.

Harold set the record straight on his financial history by telling how he formed the American Radioactive Chemical Company at Sanford Airport in 1969. He was licensed by the state of Florida, and at that time he posted a bond with the city of Sanford to clean up any radioactive spill.

Then the airport was an independent agency by act of the legislature, and when it came time to renew his license to operate with the state the airport authority said they were unaware of his work or any bond and immediately padlocked his laboratory. He had \$100,000 in orders that he couldn't fill.

"I made aspirin and other materials radioactive to trace their effects in experimental animals. There was a demand by pharmaceutical companies to make materials radioactive, so the residue could be traced in the liver or the kidneys of the testing animals.

"We made other materials radioactive to trace the food chain. Anyhow, I couldn't get in to prevent leakage, and the facility, which was locked for a month, became contaminated with radioactivity. We checked it daily with a Geiger counter when it was in operation, but we were locked out for a month. I lost the business and lost my home on Graham Street, where I had been born.

"Several years ago Jean and I bought the house here on High Street, and things are fine now.

Jean: "I keep myself very busy. I'm historian of the Methodist Church and historian of the Woman's Club and membership chairman of the Garden Club, where I'm a past president. Also at the Woman's Club I'm past president and chairman of the board of trustees. For years I was registrar for all the Girl Scout troops in town, and there were 27 of them.

"Did you know that when the Woman's Club got the sidewalks, they went from the corner of Broadway and Lake Jesup up to Wheeler's corner (Hillcrest) to Central. They were made of clay and boards for the children to get to school.

"The club members prepared iced cream and cold drinks for the trainmen

when the train was at the depot, and that's how they raised money for their clubhouse. The club started in 1906, and at that time, shortly after the freeze of 1898, many people had just pulled down the shades in their homes and left town. There was a lot of people helping people at that time, especially helping the black families."

Harold: "Celery farming was the main crop after the 40's freeze. The farmers made money at celery selling for \$1.50 a crate. During World War II, they got \$14 or \$15 a crate. They did well at that price."

Jean: "Dr. and Mrs. Mead gave Sweetwater Park to the Woman's Club, and they couldn't maintain it so they deeded it to the city. In the minutes of the club is the information that the ladies furnished Celery to the state convention as their club's donation during the depression. They had no money.

"When Great Day in the Country started, we had one table of white elephants. It certainly has come a long way since then. When we started, we sold vegetables from the Clonts and other farms, and had a scale and weighed the vegetables."

Harold: "I remember once during the 70's, Jean and I lived on Graham Street and a man ran though our yard with the police chief in hot pursuit. He had escaped from the jail, where the Town House is now.

"It just had one room, as I recall. Next door lived the preacher's son, Marlow Link. His father was Harold. We went to milk the cow, I dropped the pail full of milk, and we stopped at Fernell's grocery and bought milk and poured it in the pail. It didn't fool the preacher, and Marlow got a spanking.

"Also, during World War II, there was an observation tower in front of the Baptist Church and everyone in town took turns watching for enemy airplanes. We reported any planes we saw to a telephone number.

"That was Oviedo's radar system. The mayor, Joe Lienhart, had a siren on his car and he'd blow it when it was a blackout. (Blackouts were when everyone was required to turn out their lights in case of enemy attack.)

"Another time; we had a Billy goat and one day Mrs. Chance, the coastline agent's wife, found the goat in the Baptist church having lunch on the Sunday flowers and decorations.

Mrs. Chance was also relieving her husband at the station one day and saw her daughter, Billie, being chased by that goat through town.

"All through the 40's, the biggest thing was the 4th of July Barbecue. Everyone came. A pit was dug and filled with coals, then a grate put over it and a local black man who had a secret barbecue sauce (the recipe died with him, I believe) fixed chicken for the whole town. At that time, everyone in town had chickens in the back yard.

"Dad collected bills for Florida power, and we had a cowbell on the back porch and the people would come ring it all hours of the day and night and dad would go out and collect the light bill.

"In the 30's, during the depression, every Saturday night there was a government-sponsored free movie projected on the side of Faircloth's grocery. There was a vacant lot where the cleaners are now. I remember one movie with Joe E. Brown and his huge mouth.

"Dad was also on the Seminole County School Board for 27 years, and every summer James Gilbert, whose mother was Superintendent Lawton's secretary, and I cleaned the schools. We'd scrape the gum from under the desks and steel wool the floor and paint. We were the favored boys because of our fathers and mothers.

"We also lived next door to Judge Aulin, whom they called 'floorboard fifi.' He had a habit of stomping on the accelerator of his car to start it, then releasing the clutch slowly with the pedal floorboard. It roared. He never shifted gears—he started in drive.

"I remember one Halloween, Leon Oliiffe and Les Abel took a bike and raised it up the school flagpole."

Jean: "And then there was the time when Marguerite Partin and I were two of the members of the Memorial Building Committee, and we met for five and a half years on Wednesday night before it was finished. There was one delay after another.

"We cleaned it all up, then there was asbestos and we kept asking the Council for money. They'd make a joke of it when we showed up on Monday night. Finally, we got the plans ourselves; we had a volunteer architect, Ron Luman, and we planned the kitchen and redid the bath. It's finished, now, but it took a long time."

The Malcolm Family

In Oviedo Since the 20's

The Malcolm clan consented to the largest interview in the Heritage issue. Shirley Malcolm Sheppard, her daughter, Linda, her granddaughter, her brother Donnie, and her cousin Betty Malcolm Jackson gathered around the matriarch, 91-year-old Gladys in her Vine Street home situated on three lots and built in the 20's.

As Shirley, who works at UCF in the biochemistry department, wrote: "When you talk about Oviedo roots, you can't leave out an old family who has a lot of heritage here, the Malcolm family."

The Malcolms came here in the 20's when Cleo Malcolm married L. H. Gore and moved to Oviedo where L. H. grew celery. Other members of the family followed. The patriarch of the family, John Ganaway Malcolm, died in Oviedo in 1930 at Cleo's home.

"The two boys, James Lambert 'Doc' and John Irving 'Irving' Malcolm lived on what was known for years as Malcolm Hill—today it is Vine Street. Two sisters, Cleo and Vera, also lived in Oviedo. Vera moved away after a few years, but Cleo (Gore and later Leinhart) remained in Oviedo until her death.

"Doc and Hazel had nine kids: Jimmy, Jack, Bobby, Charlie, Dorothy, Betty, Kenneth, Keith and Joe. Betty is the only one who still lives in Oviedo. Irving and Gladys had two children, Donnie and Shirley (Sheppard), both of whom live in Oviedo.

"Doc, Irving and the Gores were always active in Oviedo civic life. Doc served on the Seminole County School Board for several years and he and Irving both were devout Masons. Irving was Master in 1947.

"A variety of talent runs in the robust Scottish Malcolm clan: music, acting, and sports. Dorothy had a beautiful soprano voice and sang many local functions in the '50's; Kenneth and Dorothy both won best actor and best actress awards at stunt night plays in the '50's; Shirley wrote several hit songs in the mid 1950s which were never credited to her; Gene Gore was a star baseball player and was captain of his team at the University of Florida; and Keith was on the starting lineup on the basketball team in the '50s when Oviedo won the state tournament.

"A street in Alafaya Woods development is named after the Malcolms as is the case with a lot of old Oviedo families.

"Daddy was a foreman at the Lake Charm fruit company, a compound where Interstate Batteries is now. There was an ice house, and ice was manufactured there in 1 foot by 2 foot by 5 foot blocks; conveyor belts carried it to the railroad cars that backed up on the siding there. We'd go to see him, and there would be deer, bears, and coons hanging in the same room with the ice making equipment. People would bring them in to be slaughtered. There wasn't OSHA then," Donnie recalled.

"I was in high school when it burned down. The old Lake Charm fruit company. They couldn't put out the fire; there were railroad cars in the way," Shirley said. "Besides, the fire company was a beat-up old truck," Donnie added. "Joe Beasley ran it after daddy left to go to be foreman at Nelson and Company," he said. "Then daddy went into farming. First with C.S. Lee, uncle Doc, and James Lambert; then, by himself."

Donnie recalled that one year of celery production, Irving had a bumper crop and loaded it on a boxcar that was diverted at a stop for six weeks. When it was located, everything was rotted. "He had mortgaged the farm and the house and the land to raise and ship the celery. Farming was a big gamble," Donnie said. "Daddy owned 40 acres, then, on Chapman Road. He farmed it with a mule. That and the house and the crop were gone."

There was a story about Irving that Betty recalled. "It seems when they lived in Georgia, there was a big fire. Everyone thought the baby (Irving) had died in the fire, but somebody unrolled a mattress that had been saved and the baby was inside.

"Dad was bright; so was uncle Malcolm. Dad skipped second grade and was put into 3rd from 1st, but he had to quit school later to work on the farm. I remember him reading the newspaper with Uncle Doc and they would sound out the words, then put them together. Sort of a precursor of phonics," Donnie recalled.

Donnie and Shirley remembered an old man who lived by himself in a small house by the fertilizer plant. "It

was Steen Nelson, the original owner of the plant," Donnie said. "He gave gingersnap cookies to the sparrows downtown. He and an older black man shared the hotel; Steen lived on one side and the black man lived on the other; that was the closest Oviedo got to integration," Donnie laughed.

"The Wheelers took care of him; that was in the original agreement when they acquired the fertilizer plant," Shirley said.

"There was a bench downtown with a spittoon and Jim Wilson and Joe Leinhart and Nelson would sit there and chew and spit. They hired a black man to clean it out," Donnie said.

All three Malcolms recalled George Kelsey, the constable and chief of police. "He was the only policeman for years, and he really had everything under control. He'd lend money to the black people when they were broke, and they were afraid of him and always did as he said. He did better than a 30-man force," they agreed.

"Another force for order was Doc Martin. Once, a drunken man was threatening the town with a pistol and he told a friend to get him. The friend brought him back, all right. He killed him. 'You told me to go get him,' was how the man greeted Doctor Martin," Donnie said.

Betty, Shirley, and Donnie all were delivered by Dr. Martin and his black midwife, Rosa Gray.

Shirley said, "There was a large huckleberry patch behind our house. It was full of palmettos, and that meant rattlesnakes, so daddy would put on his boots and go picking. He had five customers—Mrs. Evans, Mrs. Carter, Mrs. Wheeler, Mrs. Clonts, and Mrs. Lingo—and they'd buy all he picked and can them. Mama would can plenty, too." "And we'd swipe what we could," Betty said.

"How did daddy get to be such good friends with Thee Lee, Mrs. B. F. Wheeler's brother?" Shirley asked, and Donnie had an answer: "There were so few people here, they all knew each other real well. They got to be good friends."

The cousins remembered that everyone on Magnolia and Vine Streets had a chicken coop, and one year the Malcolms got turkey. "They came by mail, and you'd go to the post office and the chicks would be cheap-

ing," Betty said.

The cousins named the turkeys and couldn't eat them when Thanks giving came. The turkeys protected the house like watchdogs and ran after neighbor children during ball games. "We cried when they were killed," Shirley remembered.

The cousins had a solution for the bank explosion, as well. They said the bank's owner was consorting with a woman from Chuluota and her husband blew up the bank. They also said nobody ever found the money, but one bank official left town after the explosion, leaving a wife here, and never came back. "She was well fixed," said Betty.

They remembered Paul Arie who fixed up the old pre-cooler at the corner of 434 and DeLeon; he bought airplane parts after WWII and had a fuselage and a tail protruding from opposite ends of the building, as well as a machine gun mounted by the door. The place was known as Aire's corner and people said, "You arie in and stagger out." It was the only bar in town, until Tommy Estes opened the Oviedo Inn.

"Paul was still drilling wells when he was 80 years old," Donnie said. "He'd always have an unlit cigar in his mouth, chewing on it. He drilled all our wells on this street, and most of the other wells in town," Donnie added.

All were admiring of Ted Estes, who built the celery pre-cooler where the nursery is now on Central by the trail. "He was a hard working, wonderful man," they agreed. The Estes are related by marriage to the Malcolms.

Donnie recalled working on a milk truck from 5:30 a.m. to 8:45 a.m. on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings, then working for Ray Alford at his grocery store after school. "I was making \$16 a week in 1948," he said. He retired a few years ago from 38 years at Publix in the meat departments. "I went to work for store number 31," he added.

"I have a year to go at UCF before retirement," Shirley said.

She said that it ought to be recorded somewhere that Uncle Doc cleared the land and built the huts for the Black Hammock Fish Camp.

Truly, the Malcolms were a part of early Oviedo history.



Ben Ward, Jackie Kasell &
Penny (Mitchem) Oliff



Mayday 1942 at Oviedo High



The Old Gym at Oviedo, 1942

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Ed Duda

He Headed the Family Firm

Edward Duda retired this year as President and CEO of A. Duda and Sons, a post he had held for 20 years. Born on Mikler Road and educated at OHS, he is a graduate of the University of Florida, where he was recently named a Distinguished Alumnus.

He is the recipient of many honors in his professional career. A. Duda and Sons became a real estate conglomerate and hired a developer for its Mall, where the old celery beds used to be.

His wife of 43 years, the former Sayde Fleming, is a nursing graduate of Orlando Regional Hospital and mother and grandmother to his four children and 10 grandchildren.

Her sister, one of four, is Junie Duda who is married to Ferdinand, the current CEO of Duda. Ed and Sadye's first date was to the Junior-Senior Prom at OHS, after her family moved to Oviedo from Alabama when she was in seventh grade. Sadye was May Queen and a basketball star at Oviedo, and Ed played baseball.

Ed: "In the 30's and 40's, when all 12 grades were in the school, there weren't more than 40 or 50 kids in the whole place."

Sadye: "That's right. We knew everyone. Of course, we've only been back in Oviedo since 1978. Coming back wasn't the same. You know, you can never go home again."

"We have one son who graduated from OHS. The kids love to go to the MacDonalds' out on Lockwood because Ed and I are on the wall in pictures copied by Tommy Estes when he opened the Oviedo Inn. I don't know how MacDonalds got them."

Ed: "I spent two years and one day in the service, and stayed in school almost the whole time. After basic training in Columbia South Carolina, I took a test and qualified for officer's candidate school but I would have had to commit 3 years, and I said no thanks to that, I'll stay a buck private in the rear ranks. I went to clerk-typist school for eight weeks, then to stenographer school in Indianapolis."

"There were 40 in the class, and 38 guys trying to learn shorthand. All but two went overseas, but I went to Ft. Meade in Washington

to be a court reporter for court martials; then I became editor of the Second Army Bulletin, then I was put on Funeral detail.

"I was one of seven guys who shot a gun at the cemetery for an Army funeral. Sometimes we'd have two or three funerals a week, sometimes we'd go for weeks with none."

"Our duties then were to clean and shine our equipment, which was a gun and uniform and boots, so I played a lot of golf."

"My first funeral was awful. The guns shattered the silence and then the bugle played taps and it was the saddest thing. I didn't think I could stand doing it, but I got accustomed to it after a few more."

Sadye: "I had worked as a nurse in Dr. Stoner's clinic on Central Street in Oviedo, then Ed whisked me away. When we were in Washington, I worked as a nurse in Walter Reed Hospital. I had thought of becoming an Army nurse, but I was real glad I hadn't."

"The Army nurses did all the work. The Navy corpsmen were really good, too. When I had trained at ORMC, there were wards and wards of polio victims, some in iron lungs. Bubbar polio was the worst, and you never knew who would live and who would die."

"One summer I went to visit my grandmother in Missouri, and had to stay out of school a week in the fall to be sure I wasn't contagious with polio."

"I remember coming in to Oviedo. It was Christmastime, and all the orange trees looked like Christmas trees to me with orange decorations. It was beautiful. I never saw so many orange trees. Another thing, I loved the smell of celery around Lake Charm when it was cut. Cut celery had a wonderful smell."

Ed: "We had a town baseball team; it started before my time. There were some high school players and some already out of high school. They played on Sunday afternoons against other towns like Ocoee, St. Cloud, and Longwood."

"Most people would come out and root for the home team. They'd come and sit on their cars...there weren't many stands to sit in. That was before TV and the Internet."

"Paul Mikler was on the team. He was the coach of the Oviedo High School baseball and basketball teams for some time (see his interview). He is my uncle. My mother was a Mikler, and Paul was one of her brothers."

"In the Duda family, Dedko (grandfather in Slavic) came to this country in 1909. Bobka (grandmother) came three years later with the family. She died in 1930. My mother was Katherine Mikler Duda."

Sadye: "In high school, we went to wonderful dances at the Coliseum. Guy Lombardo, bands like that. My first date with Ed was to the Junior-Senior prom, the second was the same prom a year later."

"Then, he went on to UF and I asked him the year I was a senior. We were in the same home room in 7th and 8th grade. We had one teacher, Lois Ridell. I had just come from Southern Alabama and had an awful southern drawl. Florida isn't south. Betty Aulin (the artist, Betty Reagan) was my first friend. We still see each other."

Ed: "I went to Gainesville in 1950 and graduated in 1957; one semester I majored in Cultural Enrichment and was asked to leave."

"After the Army I went back. By then, Sadye and I were married, and we bought a trailer and lived in it for two years, then moved it to Belle Glade when I went to work on the farm there. There's a story about that."

"My uncle and father wanted me to stay in Oviedo and learn the farming business there, but I insisted on learning the business from the ground up and went to one of the family's farms in Belle Glade, where I was foreman in the fields. After work, I practiced plowing a straight line and could show workmen how to do it. After a year and a half, we built a house in Belle Glade."

"My uncle said later he didn't want me to go to Belle Glade but it turned out to be a good idea. I was appointed president of the company in 1977. I commuted for a year and the family moved up in 1978."

"So Tommy finished high school in Belle Glade as a senior, and Sammy had two more years of high school here in Oviedo. Sammy graduated in 1980 and he played on the football team that went undefeated until the final championship at

the state tournament."

Sadye: "We were supposed to stay in Belle Glade for 2 years, and ended up staying 21. It was a working town. When we came back to Oviedo, I worked at UCF one day a week as a nurse."

Ed: "I learned to farm growing up. In the summertime, my brothers and cousins and I would work in the family's celery seed beds. We made \$27.50 a week. The seed beds were necessary because celery is a six-month crop, and the first three months are spent in beds 4 feet wide and 300 feet long, shaded with muslin, until they are hardy enough to transplant."

"Finally, the plants go in the ground 24 inches apart, with 7 inches between the rows. The mall is right where the celery seed beds were. Now, the reason we quit growing celery in Oviedo had nothing to do with development here. We just had other places we could do it more efficiently. This year, we are one of two celery growers in the state. People would do it if it were more profitable."

"My uncles and dad designed and patented the mule train, which was a portable celery packing house. It had conveyor belts and 50 people worked on it, crating celery in the field. They did the same for corn. To build one of these machines now would cost between \$300,000 and \$400,000. Heck, A. Duda has some tractors now that cost \$100,000."

"Tom Morgan has a speech he gives to groups about the American farmer. He became the best spokesman for agriculture there every year when he hooked up with us (Tom, a former Oviedo mayor, was for years public relations head at A. Duda. He was hired away from UCF where he was head of the Journalism department)."

"He pointed out that the farmer is the linchpin of our economy, and that Americans spend 10 percent or less of their disposable income on food, as compared with 22 percent for Canada and 40 to 60 percent for Russia and China."

"In some countries almost all disposable income goes to food. Food in this country is like air and water, we take it for granted. Agriculture is our unknown hero; we

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Penny & Leon Olliff

The Lady Banker & The Mayor/Barber

Penny (Mitchem) and Leon Olliff have been married 53 years, and first dated one another in 9th grade. Leon's father was depot agent for the Seaboard Railroad and they came to Oviedo in '39, living on Central in one of three two-story houses where Priest Accounting is now.

His father was Edgar Marvin and his mother was Grace Olliff. Penny's family moved to Oviedo in 1926 to farm. There were five Mitchem daughters and Penny said everyone farmed then. "That's what there was to do. People called my dad Mitch and he was in citrus and farming all his life." She was a "babe in arms" in 1926. Her mother's name was Claudia.

The Olliff's have two children, Linda Cliburn of Oviedo and Larry Olliff of Venice, Florida., four grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. Leon saw Navy service in World War II, where he was a signalman aboard a destroyer escorting convoys across the Atlantic.

Penny went to Orlando Junior College, a vocational school in downtown Orlando, after OHS, and married Leon after working a few years when he was home on leave. After the war, he went to barber college and became the only barber in Oviedo. He was the mayor "and the mayor's office was in the barber shop," he said.

They still live in the home they built in 1952 on North Central, and Leon said "there weren't but about 50 cars a day that went by when we built it. Now sometimes we have to wait for 50 cars before we can get out of our driveway."

Penny went to work for Citizen's Bank the day it opened in 1946 as a teller and retired two years ago as a Senior Vice President. Leon retired as the town barber in '90. He opened the shop in 1949 in the Niblack building across from the Baptist Church.

Leon: "The Future Farmers of America had gardens behind the school in the '40s, and the students

raised vegetables and fruit on a little plot of land. The FFA class of '42 is pictured on the wall at MacDonalds on Mitchell Hammock Road.

"There were five in my class, and I was drafted, then another fellow drafted, then one girl quit so there were two in our graduating class. I finished in the service and got my diploma from the University of Illinois. My mother used to operate the canning kitchen. It was sponsored by the county and she was in a little building behind the back of the Memorial Building.

"She was the supervisor and taught folks how to can when they brought in their fruits and vegetables. Pickles and celery relish were the most popular."

Penny: "When we were kids, things were so different than what we see and do now. No TV; neighbors visited—sat on their front porches and swapped stories while the kids climbed trees, played tag, and hide and seek. Our parents enjoyed playing cards with friends. The men liked to fish, so often we would join friends with fish fries on the St. John's river bank."

Leon: "When I opened my barber shop in 1949, every business in Oviedo used to close for every funeral. At that time downtown Broadway was a busy street.

"There were five grocery stores: Farnell's Grocery, Lawton's Grocery, Faircloth Grocery, McKinnon Meat Market, Spencer's Grocery & Drygoods; then there was the D.D. Danile Store, Al Rutberg's Dry Goods, Oviedo Post Office, Citizens Bank, Niblack Office Building, Florida Power Office and a service station, among others.

"And the old men in the town—Joe Lienhart, Judge Aulin, Jim Staley, Jim Wilson and Jim Lee—they'd all sit on benches downtown in front of the barber shop and swap stories. Then at night they'd go to the Pure Oil Station and talk there."

Penny: "Has anyone told you that on the dot of midnight on New Years, when he was a kid, Ben Wheeler (Frank's son and Mimi Bruce's brother) would go downtown and turn on the fire siren?"

Leon: "I remember when we moved here from Ocala. I was 14, and I came later and took the train and then came from Sanford on the one pas-

senger car on the railroad. I was all alone in that car.

"The train went to the pre-cooler in the black hammock and stayed there two hours while the produce loaded, then went to the depot in Oviedo. It was so hot in that car, and we sweltered while we waited.

"If there was a fire in the community, everyone came and helped put it out. In fact, it was hard to get the makeshift fire truck down the roads because everyone was coming to look at the fire. That was the main excitement in Oviedo. We built a Model A Ford with a 200 gallon tank, then the American Legion bought a new truck.

"Roy Clonts had a lot to do with building that truck. It was open to the wind and I remember driving it to Chuluota one night in about 30 degree weather and I about froze.

"The Legion also took over and built a concrete dance floor where the wooden one had been at Sweetwater Park. It's now where the tennis and basketball courts are, I believe.

"Penny showed me a downtown watercolor of Oviedo in 1952, which she was given when she left the bank. It showed a cafe downtown and a filling station where the frame shop is now, as well as a two-story building where the Town House is.

"Leon said that the building was for a time TL Lingo's Insurance Building and that the A. Duda and Son's office was there. The company started there and the City Hall was there with a part-time clerk employee. The Masonic Lodge was upstairs.

"For a time, there was a cafe in the two-story building, and in front was a roundabout where a resident stepped into the center and blew his brains out."

Penny: "I used to listen to A.M. Jones, my brother-in-law who lived next door, tell tales about the town. You know, when you work you lose touch and A.M. knew everything. I used to love to listen. He was my source. He'd drop by every night."

Penny: "When we were in school, it seemed that Mikler road was really in the country, and the school bus picked those children up and then went to Wagner and Chuluota and Gardena, little settlements there along 434.

"You know, I wouldn't trade living in Oviedo for anyplace.

Ed Duda

From page 20

have the safest food supply in the history of mankind.

"The Mall? It's becoming a good addition to the neighborhood. We interviewed all major Mall developers and visited some of them because we wanted the best. Rouse malls were more integrated into their communities. It's working out pretty well, I think. Of course, there was some vocal opposition from a neighboring community.

"Oviedo is a nice place to live and I want my children and grandchildren to live here. If we don't have development here, there will be no good jobs and the children will have to go to New York to get a decent job."

Sadye: "We have two children living in Oviedo. Our grandson Jimmy is going to be a freshman at OHS and our granddaughter Jessica a 6th grader at Jackson Heights.

"Our 10th grandchild, a boy, is due this summer. We've done pretty well with grandchildren. Our children are reproducing quite nicely. I have friends who have grand-dogs and grand-cats, and I feel fortunate. I

love the convenience of having restaurants and shopping so close. I don't love the traffic."

Ed: "From a financial viewpoint, development is good for Seminole County. In the old days, Orange County got all the commercial development and their tax base is 60 per cent commercial and 40 per cent residential.

"In Seminole County, the percentages are reversed. Here, the homeowners have to pay for all the services: roads, utilities, schools. Development takes the burden away from the individual homeowners.

"Our children are better fed, better clothed, and cooler than we were when we were growing up, but its tougher now psychologically. There are so many more distractions and temptations now...I've owned my personal computer for two years, and I love to work on it."

Sadye: "After he bought his sailboat (the charter boat Ticket with a full time crew based out of Port Canaveral) I thought, this habit won't be so expensive, but now I'm not so sure...."

Louise & Bill Martin

Have Known Oviedo Since the 20's

Louise and Bill Martin were interviewed together at their request. Louise was born Louise Wheeler in 1921, Bill was the son of the Oviedo doctor and was born in Melbourne in 1918.

He attended Stetson University for one year, then went to the University of Pennsylvania. After four years in the Navy, he and Louise went to Boston where Bill got his MBA from Harvard and Louise worked for the Unitarian-Universalist Service Committee, in an overseas agency.

When Bill was school age, his father bought out a doctor's practice in Oviedo and the family moved here. A member of the Oviedo Town Council, he also was the organist at the Baptist Church for 25 years.

He was treasurer of the church for 42 years. Louise attended Bob Jones University and Florida Southern in business and English. Louise has been president of the Woman's Club and a member of her Methodist church building committee, as well as many other civic duties with the church and city.

They have two children, Louise and Clair's (Evans) grandmother on their father's side was a Lawton, and they once took their children to England to visit the town the Lawton's came from. "There was a Church Lawton and a family estate," she said. Their two children and Anne Hendrix and George Martin and they have four grandchildren.

Louise: "We lived on Hillcrest drive, across from the Clonts. We moved to Lake Charm on a lot that we (the three Wheeler children) all owned that had been part of the old Dr. Foster land. It was the high point on the lake. We hated to leave there, but it was a two-story home and had an acre of land and it was a lot to take care of.

"There's more to life than taking care of a house. We moved to Georgetown in Tusawilla, with a house half as big as the one we left. We've been here four years."

Bill: "When I came to Oviedo, there were the two churches with half-time ministers. My dad was active in the Baptist church, and Louise's dad was superintendent of the Sunday School.

"The book about Oviedo says I came here from Ocala, but that's not true. And the paper said Dr. Stoner

was the first doctor, but there had been five before him including my father, Dr. Simmons, Dr. Matheson, and two others.

"Mammy Jones was a black midwife and took care of a lot of the babies. She did a good job. If she had any trouble, she'd call a doctor. She'd jury-rig an incubator for the preemies with a hot water bottle."

Louise: "Has anyone told you about all the plays that came here in the 20's and 30's? We had an auditorium in the second floor of the school and it was like a little Chattoqua—the companies would come with costumes and local people would play roles.

"There would be one or two actors from New York or Chicago, and the rest locals. I remember the womanless wedding, where Bill Partin, who was a great big fellow, was the bride and Jim Pearson the groom."

Bill: "I remember going. Some of those people in the plays shocked me, I'll tell the truth."

Louise: "I also have heard the tales about the Lawton grandfather who was a Baptist preacher. He preached in Oviedo and Christmas, and he'd walk to Christmas every other week on Saturday, preach on Sunday, then walk back to Oviedo on Monday.

"He was Kathryn's grandfather. The people in Christmas got up a fund and bought him a horse. My dad and I did a lot of fishing. That's how I got my love of fishing. We went down to the river, the St. John's, or the creek, the Econ...."

Bill: "That's the third bridge over the Econ, the one they just built. In the old days, it was an Iron bridge (that's where the name of the treatment plant came from) and it was one lane and built close to the water; only the supports were iron, the bridge bed was wooden. When the rains came, the river was over the bridge and you couldn't drive on it.

"If my father was needed to attend someone sick in Chuluota, they'd bring a boat and ferry him across the river where the bridge was, and bring him back across."

Louise: "When my dad was on the Board of County Commissioners, and he foresaw that someday 434 would be an important road. He told the commissioners they needed to ac-

quire the right of way for that road.

"Then, it was a sand hill and people loved to go out in their trucks.... Anyhow, the commission did it and that's why we have 434 today.

Bill: "When the depression hit, the bank shut down; not the present bank, the Oviedo bank, the first bank. They said it was all right but then it closed. Someone put nitroglycerine in the front door out of spite and blew a hole in the sidewalk and blew off the front of the building."

Louise: "People said they heard the explosion as far away as Winter Park and Orlando."

Bill: "The pastor of the old Baptist Church, across the street from the bank, slept his six children on the porch and it blew them out of bed. It also blew all our chickens off their roosts and you never heard so much squawking in all your life. Everyone came out to see it. We had never had so many people in Oviedo."

Louise: "In those early days, when my mother was alive, there were pigs running all over town and the ladies of the Magazine Club got together and saw to it that they didn't run free. Then they waged a campaign and raised funds for wooden sidewalks.

"That was the beginning of the Woman's Club. They also started a garbage collection, and ran the fund drive here for the needy. Then the county took that on and it never was as successful as when the Woman's Club ran it."

Bill: "When I was on the next-to-last building committee for the Baptist Church, my proudest accomplishment was getting the baptistry behind a leaded glass door so you didn't see it in the sanctuary; in the old days, it was right in front of the altar.

"We did lots of weddings. I played and Louise sang. I got tired of gifts of shaving lotion so I asked people give some money to the organ fund. Music has been an important part of our lives. When we were married, our only furniture was two grand pianos. I had one from when I was seven years old, and Louise had one."

Louise: "Dad was fair-minded. He was that way in all his business dealings, and he took care of his

people. If the black people didn't have any work after the picking, he'd see to it that they had food and work in the summer. They'd clear the ground and work cleaning up the groves."

Bill: "Of course, there was no minimum wage then and it didn't cost much to live. Another thing, Rex Clonts and I were on the Town Council longer than anyone, and I got the water system for the town back about 31 years ago.

"I had a man in DeLand who showed me how to get bonds, grants, etc. We went to the University and asked them if they'd like to have water from Oviedo and thank heavens they didn't want it.

"The city of Gainesville is still furnishing water free to the University of Florida. We hired A.M. Jones to run the water department and he set it up well and kept it going. That's the reason it's successful today...."

"Another thing that happened in the early days. That was the soap factory. An outfit set up shop in the downtown and sold stock in a soap factory. Some people bought stock, and paid a lot of money. They formed a caravan to go to North Carolina to see the factory and when they got there, there was nothing there. It was a scam."

Louise: "Every Saturday night, the black folks would dress up in their Sunday best and go to town to shop. On Easter they paraded through town to church. They were baptized in Lake Rosa or in the Baptizing Lake on Mitchell Hammock Road."

Bill: "Some Sundays, a group from Antioch church would come and sit in the balcony of the Baptist church and sing a whole program unaccompanied; hymns and slave tunes. Everyone came to hear them. They were great."

Louise: "I remember the picking crews always had a lead singer and others would come in and go out in harmony. Even when the mule train (a celery picking machine) came in, they would sing. I loved to hear it."



Bank of Oviedo about 1910

Bank of Oviedo 1930

It was 1929, the year of the "Crash"—but in Oviedo, it was the year of the "bang!" Someone—nobody knows who to this day—blew up the Bank of Oviedo. Windows were broken blocks away as Oviedoans were rudely awakened from their slumber by the big bang.



Aerial View of Downtown about 1950

Arrow points to intersection of Broadway and Central. The road leading left goes to Winter Park, upper left to Sanford, upper right to Geneva, right to Chuluota and at bottom to UCF. The Nelson and Co. complex is right.

Mimi Bruce

Mimi Bruce was born in Oviedo to Frank and Jane Wheeler, and attended grades 1-12 in Oviedo, at Oviedo High School.

A graduate of Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, Tennessee, she came back to Oviedo in 1972 after marrying E.P. Bruce.

Mimi is the mother of Michelle and Martha Ann Bruce and has worked in the Nelson and Co. offices since 1985. There she oversees the citrus, the hardware store, renting out Nelson space, payroll and employee benefits, and fruit accounting. "I guess you'd say 'civic liaison,'" she said.

Elected Mayor in 1995, she says that job accounts for about two to three hours a day in evening meetings and personal projects. She has lived on Lake Charm since 1952.

The Trail project was an especially worthwhile adventure for Mimi. "It's been wonderful to work on a project that everyone agrees to; the Trail received unanimous support," she said. "The Trail enthusiasts were cheerleading the effort, and I remember my first meeting about it, when I was introduced to the concept, and the city swung into action because time was running out for the money that was allocated to pay for trails.

"As I thought about it, I went to Winter Garden and Dunedin. Winter Garden was a lot like Oviedo, a citrus town with a dying downtown, and what the trail had done recreationally and economically—well, it was a no-brainer to support a trail here. It was certainly an opportunity waiting for somebody to take it and make it happen. Seminole County was behind it, too, fortunately.

"I'm so pleased to see the city come forward and what its doing (renovating Railroad Street) as the city's part in the first phase of the trail. One day I was away from the office, and when I came in the next day and saw the trees and what they had done I felt like Dorothy in the Wizard of Oz, 'Toto, Where are we?'"

"The Trail has already made such a difference; it's been a real catalyst for here (the old downtown) and other people will catch on. We're planning some landscaping and marketing in the packing house here—it all takes too much time....

"When I was growing up, Oviedo was still a town of about 2000. There was nothing legal or moral to do. I remember that if we saw someone in town we didn't know, we'd register it.

"There were about 300 students in the school, and the total in my gradu-

ating class was 39. We've already had two reunions and this year we'll have the third. They've been every five years. Those who came back thought Oviedo had changed a lot then—wait 'till they see the Mall and the growth in the last five years.

"We had one stop light (at the corner of 426 and 434); I don't remember when it was not there. The municipal pool was at Sweetwater Park, and we'd often have dances with a juke box inside a tin structure where the tennis courts are now. It was closed to the elements, and that was about it as far as municipal entertainment.

"School sports were very important; we had basketball and baseball, and everyone went to the games. It was an excuse to leave town. We'd drive to Winter Park for movies and a hamburger at Steak and Shake.

"I met someone from Orlando who was a contemporary and she remembered going to Oviedo to the Oviedo Lights, a popular parking spot for young couples."

Mimi told her that the main recreation of Oviedo young people was to pick up someone driving from Winter Park or Orlando and lure them into the Black Hammock and then leave them

there. "It was our revenge," she said.

"I had transportation in high school, a station wagon, but the car wasn't mine. What I loved to do and spent most of my time doing as a young person was ride all over town on my horse.

"Lots of my friends in the Black Hammock had horses; it meant freedom to me...I could go where I wanted. I never showed the horse, I didn't get into that. I rode just for pleasure.

"I was a Brownie but never a Girl Scout. I was active at the Baptist Church, in the youth group. As teens we spent a lot of time boating and water skiing on Lake Picket and the river. At school there were plays and sports and dances after the Basketball games. I still remember Mrs. Partin with her 45 rpm records.

"My college major was English and psychology; it really didn't prepare me for what I'm doing now.

"As mayor, I'm proudest of the bigger picture: the reputation Oviedo is building for itself. All my life, the town was the poor farming community, just the stepchild in the county; we were made fun of or ignored. Now, we've become a shining star in the county."

Civic Liason, Oviedo Native

Douglas Allen

Douglas Allen was born in Tallahassee in 1927. His parents were Elnora and Wallace Allen. He came to Oviedo and worked for the Dudas picking celery for \$27 a week—\$20 more a week than he made in a dry cleaning establishment in Tallahassee.

"I said I'd never go back there," he said. He worked for Nelson and Company for 43 years as a picking boss. His five children all have college degrees, and he is a Deacon at Antioch Baptist Church. His son currently runs his business, Doug Allen Debris Cleaning.

"My wife, Edele, and I were married on the Lawton House porch. Mr. Lawton was living there; he was superintendent of schools and a justice of the peace. My wife had been working on a farm. There wasn't anything else to do in Oviedo in those days. We've been married 51 years.

"In those days, in the 40's, we

needed to do something else after we harvested the fruit. I'd take my grove truck (a small truck that brought fruit to the large orange carriers) and go North. Several years I went with my daughter, now at Seminole Community College.

She was a migrant worker. We'd go to North Carolina to harvest crops, then to Delaware and New York. I'd take a few from here, but mostly I'd round up workers when we got to our destination. When I was boss, I'd be paid by the box. I did pretty good.

"In the early 40's, Lee Gary was the mayor and I went to him and asked for paving for Stevens Street. He said ok if I got the right of way and I got everyone on the street to give the town their land for a street. He said he would name it Allen street but I told him to name it after the Stevens, because they gave the most land....

"I just had an operation last year, and I've been slow to recover, but I

enjoy fishing and golf. I used to play out on 520 and in Winter Park. I shot in the 70's, and I often shot a 72. I was raised up on golf in Tallahassee. Florida A&M had a course. My daddy was tree surgeon.

"When our children started school, the schools were segregated. The two older ones caught the bus to the Crooms school in Sanford. We had to pay to get them there and back. They'd catch the bus for Sanford at 5 A.M. My two girls and baby boy went to OHS after integration. My son was killed in the service in 1977. He would be 41 this year.

"I never had any trouble with people not working for me. I didn't fool with them if they didn't work. It was just that simple.

"My son played high school basketball and I went to all the games. I wanted to father him. The only way to have children is to keep up with them.

43 Years with Nelson Company

"It was tough for us in the 40's. Sears and Roebuck had a black water fountain and a white water fountain. In Oviedo, we couldn't sit at the lunch counter in the drug store. We could get a prescription, but we couldn't sit down and have a coke. I gained the respect of a lot of people in Oviedo because I respected them.

"I knew everyone in Boston Hill, the Scrubs, the Square, Johnson Hill, and Lawtonville. Those were the five black areas. There wasn't but 1500 people, white and black. Now all those neighborhoods are mixed. Our street is mixed.

"In the 40's, the blacks went to the white stores, but there was a black store over on Avenue B that sold a little of everything. Mr. Buddy Tyson ran it. Where the Town House is was the jail, and next to that was a service station. Bill Ward, then Mr. Henry Wolcott ran that."

Viola Smith

Viola Smith was born in Vienna, Georgia in 1904 and came to Oviedo to live with a brother in 1946. She married Johnny Smith and went to work for Claire (Mrs. John) Evans "the only person I ever worked for" for the next 40 years.

She was the main mother's helper for Wes, who was four when she joined the family. Arthur was nine months, and then David and Charles came along later. While working for the Evans' she built her present home on Aulin Ave. She still lives there with a companion.

"Changes? Oviedo was a small little town. Of course, downtown Oviedo is just like it was. But in those days I knew everyone by their cars. I could tell who was driving by the car they drove. It sure isn't that way any more...."

"I joined Fountainhead Baptist and was active in the church. I was president of the Mission. Years back, men didn't like to go to church like they do now, and the Mission was mostly women. What we'd do, we had a pastor the second Sunday and the first and third Sunday the Mission would meet and we'd have prayers

and singing and visit the sick and have prayers with them.

"As long as I could get around, I kept very busy. I did everything at the Evans. I kept house and looked after the children, washed the clothes (Mrs. Evans had a washing machine like we have now, not a wringer) ironed and cooked. I watched the boys grow up. I really loved those children. I never had any of my own although I wanted to. They were like my boys, I so enjoyed them.

"I still see the boys because they come by every Christmas with their families," she said, indicating a picture on her coffee table. "I keep pictures of their families.

"When I came to Mrs. Evans, it was through her aunt, Mrs. Roley Carter, who learned I wanted a job and Mrs. Evans wanted help.

"As soon as Arthur could walk, I'd take Wes by the hand and Arthur by the other and carry David and we'd go to town to visit the Choo-Choo. They didn't have strollers, then. We'd walk to my house on Aulin to see my husband's chickens and pig. They loved that.

The Evans' Boys "bylo"

"In the afternoon, I'd give them their lunch, then a bath, then get them dressed for bed. But I told them when they got up, they could walk with me. They called me 'bylo.'

"I guess Viola was too hard to say. We had a lot of walks. It wasn't as hot as it is now, but it was hot. They lived in the house on Central Avenue then. Mrs. Evans moved into the home place after Mrs. Wheeler died. I worked there, too...."

"My helper has been here four years next month. I got to where I wasn't able to keep house and the doctor put me in the hospital, then in a nursing home.

"My niece didn't want me to stay in the home, so she and her husband stayed with me and then got Thelma, my helper, to stay with me. The doctor had said I couldn't live by myself any more. His nurse would come to see me and I hadn't had breakfast...."

"I didn't live at the Evans' house. And I had Christmas and Thanksgiving at home. Sometimes, though, there

would be a family picnic on a holiday and I'd go along to help with the children. I didn't work Christmas and Thanksgiving after the boys were little.

"I'd get to the Evans' house in the early morning and fix breakfast and get the boys ready for school, clean up, wash and iron, and cook dinner at noon. It was a job to be after those boys—keep 'em clean and all. All the boys were nice boys, but Arthur was a quiet one from the beginning.

"He was a really good boy, but they were all good boys. They minded me, and I never had any trouble getting them to do what I wanted. I still have pictures of them when they were in school.

"Mrs. Evans was a really nice person to work for. She had to have been a nice lady—I stayed there 40 years."

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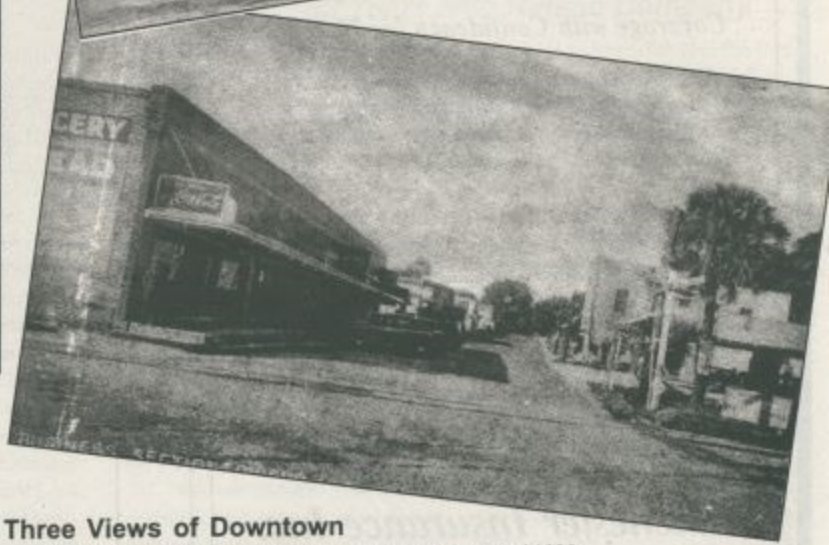
Oviedo in 1900

No traffic congestion at Central and Broadway back then.



Road to Sanford

The trip to Sanford was a real undertaking when this photo was taken.



Three Views of Downtown

Top: Looking down Broadway toward Chuluota around 1920.

Center: The Hotel about 1916.

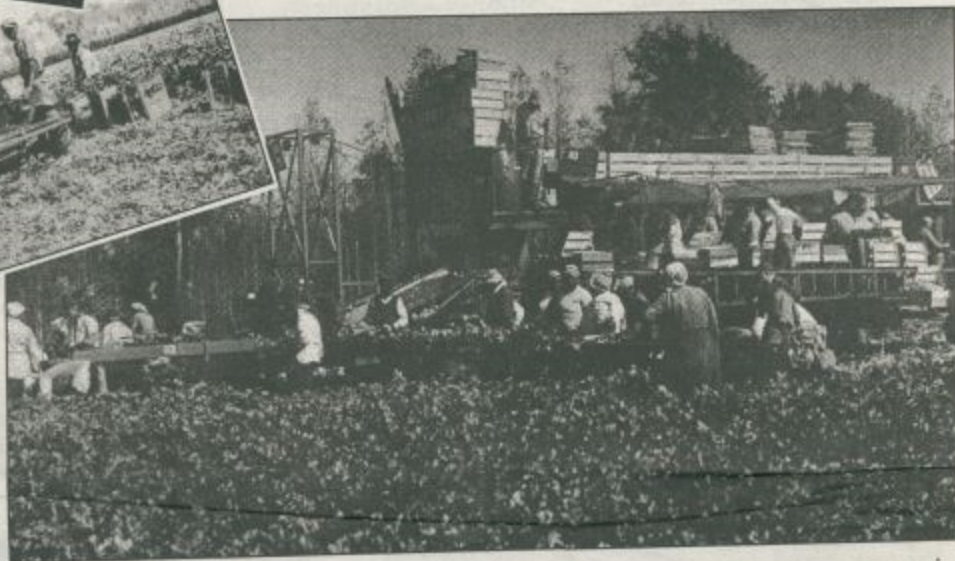
Bottom: Looking up Broadway toward Winter Park about 1940.



Celery harvest the old way...



...and with the automated "Mule Train" in the late 1940's



Other Reminiscences

Several more people were interviewed for the Heritage issue than are quoted here. Walter Teague, principal of Oviedo High for years, recalled coming to Chuluota to teach and living in a railroad house with his wife and young son.

He also remembered the glory days of Chuluota when it housed railroad magnate Flagler's Hotel, where even a U.S. president (no one is sure which one) stayed for a vacation.

Dr. Edward Stoner confirmed Teague's memories of Chuluota, as did Wayne Jacobs. Stoner recalled when he confronted the president of Winter Park Telephone Company in his hospital room and got him to agree to a rate reduction so Oviedo would not be a long distance call. Dr. Stoner was also a founder of the Little League, as recounted in Paul Mikler's story.

Another early resident, who shall be nameless, told of when her husband, a merchant who came here from the

North, encountered the separate but equal segregation facilities. He closed the black restrooms at his establishment.

"That meant that only black people came to our business, for a time," she said, "but one night one of our customers drove clear out to our house to tell us the business was unlocked." That spoke of customer loyalty, all right.

Another black mark on the history of the town was when the Oviedo swimming pool at Sweetwater Park closed. "It was filled in rather than be integrated," said one early resident. In general, though, integration was accomplished without incident.

"Things were pretty tense for a few years" one interviewee said, but the consensus was that Oviedo handled the abrupt change well. In her interview, Claire Evans recalled the efforts the county made to integrate the schools over the summer, and commended the town. So integration here was relatively painless.

Karen Jacobs, who is a font of information about Oviedo and whose residency stretches back to her high school years, told of Simon Harper, who was the first black to play sports at Oviedo High in 1969. He still lives in Snow Hill, I understand.

Another source for black history here in town is Ida Boston, wife of Russell, who belongs to the historical society and is writing a history of the early days. Repeated attempts to reach her for this issue failed, but her work will answer a lot of questions that Viola Smith and Doug Allen touched on.

Another interviewee was Jane Gaydick, one of the first residents of the Black Hammock, who told of a visitor from Connecticut who went for a walk and saw a bear and thought he was hallucinating.

"We had all kinds of wild animals here; now all we have are wild people," Jane said. She recalled panthers and many meadowlarks, snakes (we'd hear the frogs scream at night

when a snake got one)."

A fixture at the drug store soda fountain for 12 years, Jane talked about her manager Elsie Beasley whose husband Joe was the mayor. "It was like one big happy family. Everybody knew everybody. A group from the telephone company came in for lunch every day, and we'd laugh and joke," she said.

She also remembered one schoolboy who came in every day and ordered a dish of whipped topping. "No ice cream, just topping," she said.

Most of the interviews are recorded in detail, and in almost every case they have been checked for accuracy. It is our hope that only verified reminiscences are included here. They may be wrong, but they're how the respondents remembered them.

We hope you enjoy these visits with your townspeople, all of whom have earned the right to be remembered, themselves....

Letty Linhart
Oviedo, FL 1998

Cay Westerfield

Active in Civic and Political Arenas

Cay Westerfield moved to Oviedo in 1975, having come by way of Sanford and Owensboro, Kentucky. Her husband, a building contractor, was building construction coordinator for UCF. He died unexpectedly in 1978. They built a home on the Ellis property on Magnolia—the previous house was moved to a site where Red Bug Road is now.

"I was a member of the Planning and Zoning Board from 1980 to January 1, 1998. That made 17 years there. I was also the State Committeewoman for the Democratic party for 15 years, but I probably did a better job on the P and Z board," Cay said.

"The board met in a storefront on Broadway; I can't tell the chronology exactly. After all, that was a long time and I'll be 75 years old in a few months. I remember when Benny Ward (developer of Mead Manor) was the only developer; Alafaya Woods had been approved before I was on the P and Z board, but we had to approve sections of it.

They predicted they would build out in 10 years, be good if it built out in seven, and be blessed if it came in in five. It came in in two and a half years. They made a pot full of money on the PUD, but lost a bundle on a project in

California and went bankrupt.

"I remember when Twin Rivers and Equestrian Green were proposed, and I recall the latter didn't want to pave the streets. The developer said 'we're way out in the county, we don't need paved streets.' Of course, look where they are now. The city had a policy: the developer paved the streets and put a sidewalk in.

"Maybe you should go to the city and see all the things approved since 1980. There were 3,000 people then and over 20,000 now.

"Jay Bolton was the planner; he did more for this city, being sure everything was right. He died suddenly, I think of cancer."

"I served with Dick Addicks and Charlie Beasley and Nina Ralston and Troy Jones and Harold Henn—everybody in town was on the P and Z board during the time I was there. I remember a developer who promised a street bisecting a cul de sac so emergency vehicles could get there and he never built it.

"He came before the board years later for another permission and I told him, 'you promised us a street and never built it.' He said, 'lady, you've been here too long.'"

"Dick Addicks was most consci-

entious. He was a real asset. Most of the members came to serve the city; very few had agendas of their own.

"Magnolia Street was subdivided the year I was born, and there hasn't been any building on it for 10 years. The city has really changed, but not here. It's still the same with long narrow lots.

"We were lucky to build here. My husband wanted a big house like we had in Kentucky, with ten rooms and four levels but I said let's have a small home. I had four grown children and they helped me with Patrick who was 11 when my husband died.

"Nobody ever ran against me for precinct committeewoman, and I was the representative of Seminole County to the State Democratic Committee. I really enjoyed that. I was on the Central Committee of the party, and met all kinds of people who went on to higher office.

"Jimmy Carter came to meet us, so did Mondale, Gebhardt, Claude Pepper and Bill Clinton. Bill Nelson was always there, as was Bob Butterworth. I retired from that two years ago.

"When Patrick was 8 year old, he walked the precinct with me. When he was 18, he ran for precinct com-

mitteeman. Someone ran against him and he took an ad in the Outlook Newspaper, then stood at the polls a day with a sign. He's in law school now in Miami. He graduates this year, the plans to live in Oviedo.

"When my husband died, I was no longer eligible for his health insurance so I bought a policy. They wouldn't pay for an operation and the Insurance Commission said to get in a group policy. My daughter-in-law was a teacher and she told me to go to the school board and work in food service.

"I did and worked at Lawton washing pots and dishes. That was 15 years ago. I had always had a maid and I went home and rested for two hours after my dishwashing job. Now I fix breakfast, fill the catsup and mustard bottles, make peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, put away the breakfast things, and make the head start lunches. I begin at 7 a.m. and I love the kids and love working there.

"Am I an optimist? I guess I am. I always expect things to turn out for the best...."

"HELP FOR HEADACHES"

"My name is Hollie Ruscher. I was in terrible pain and misery. I had such bad headaches they would wake me up and I found it hard to get out of bed in the morning. Every week they seemed to get worse and the pain started affecting me at work.

"Then friends reminded me of the help they had gotten from Dr. Hyland at The Chiropractic Center. I went to see Dr. Hyland who said that she could indeed help me.

"In just a short period of time, I felt improvement. I have more energy and I am experiencing life the way it should be once again."

Hollie is now one of the many who can say they have gotten help and relief from miserable headaches thanks to Dr. Hyland.

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