



By Wilson Horne



Memories of Kelly Oglesby

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Copied exactly as Mr. Horne typed his memories

Kelly was a remarkable man, tall, thin and always moving. He lived with his wife Lillian and daughter Mary Jane (name was Betty Jane) just East of the RR Crossing on Center St. under huge (huge) live Oak trees. Kelly previously worked at the Bower's store on Eganfuskee around 1915-25. In the 20's or 30's he bought the 2 story George Osborne (In 1930 Jupiter, George C. Osborn was listed as a grocery store merchant, living near Ruby and Elzie Lanier) or Clark store located about where Lainhart & Potter is now. At that time Old Dixie was West of the RR tracks with a crossing at Kelly's. There was no crossing at Indiantown Rd.

The store was a combination gas, hardware and grocery. The gas pump had a 10 gallon clear tank at top and it was pumped with a long handle and drained into the vehicle by gravity. One variety only about 70 octane. Oil 30 wt. was kept in a 50 gallon tank and pumped into quart bottles. Kerosene for lamps, heaters and stoves was in another pump, bring your own jug. Air was free, the drive up apron started out shell but over the years changed to bottle caps.

Inside were basic groceries, bananas on a stalk, candy

counter, hardware room meat counter and a telephone booth. Kids would be sent to the store with bicycle or wagon and grocery list. No self service.

Kelly would bag the stuff and include a copy of the running bill. Parents would come to town on Saturday and pay on their running account and receive a bag of penny candy for the kids. Kelly had a walk in meat locker and if you wanted say, pork chops, he would bring out part of a carcass, throw it on the wooden butchers block, steel his knife and hack and saw and cut the chops. Then he sprinkled salt on the block, scrubbed it with a brush onto the saw dust covered floor. He kept punch cards, a form of gambling. I bought my first watch there, a Westclock Scotty pocket watch for \$1.50, I still have it. (Wilson showed the watch to the audience) Years later when it would stop, I would pry off the back and rinse it out with Kerosene and it would go on ticking.

This is not why Jim Snyder called me a pack rat in his book, 5000 years on the Loxahatchee. That remark was because I had saved Judge Knotts Historical Brown Wrappers from the Post times for Sundays of 1972-83.

There was a locked bread box out front. Before daylight the Holsum bread truck would come by and fill it. By

day the box was used as a bench. The drink box was iced down daily and contained Nugrape, RC Cola, Suncrest, Nehi grape, Cola and Root Beer.

When business was slow, Kelly would take off his apron, tell Shorty his helper (Elbert C. "Shorty" Root) to watch the store, call his bird dog Monk and go chasing Quail in the woods South and West of the store.

During the war years, 1941-45, Kelly made a deal with White, the FEC Section hand foreman who lived across the tracks with his wife and kids, Harold, Mary Nell and Dorothy for enough used rail ties to build a hog pen behind the store. This helped people who ran short of meat ration stamps.

Around 1940 Kelly hired Al Coston mainly to take over the meat counter. Al was so successful that he his wife Marie and daughter Barbra built their own meat market on the corner of Center & Old Dixie and specialized in Western meats.

Around 1950, Kelly sold his old store and built a new one South of the Old Dixie bridge. The roof was held up with railroad rails. A local elderly couple by the name of Snyder parked their Vintage car on the north side of Kelly's until closing and watched for hours as the locals came and left. An early drive up movie.

I mentioned Clark, he had the prettiest daughter in town, then she started wear-glasses. In those days there were only 6 people at school who wore glasses, The Principal, 2 teachers and 3 kids. In those days wives did not have first names, they were Mrs. Jack Smith.

The Bowers store faded during WW II, Apartments upstairs were rented to service-men. McGeehee (Lester McGeehee) who married Ruby Bowers and had two kids, Mary Annis and Bobby, ran the store until he took over as Rail master at the FEC Station unloading railcars at the siding for supplies going to build Camp Murphy. Ruby worked at the Big Dollar store on Indiantown Rd. for many years. Her sister Ruth married Charlie Baird who spent 29-years in the Navy. During the war he was an Air Comptroller at Morrison Army Airfield (later PBIA), A Jupiter commissioner for 8 years along with Kenneth Myers and Kelly Oglesby and fire chief for over a decade. He is survived by a son Raymond, a charter boat Captain. After the war the Bowers store became a bar where the pastime was to stick a Pabst Blue Ribbon paper label on the back of a bill fold and try to throw it up and stick it on the 30 foot ceiling. (Wilson went on to explain that back then, the Pabst Blue Ribbon Can had a ribbon actually tied around the

top and a paper label that would come off into the ice bin where it was kept to cool.)