



By History Web Committee

12/3/2012



JUPITER
Nature's Wonderland

All eyes are turned towards Jupiter, the most beautiful and ideally located spot on the east coast. Close to everything of importance, Jupiter, the townsite on the Dixie Highway, inland waterway, Jupiter River, Atlantic Ocean, Florida East Coast Railroad and thirty minutes from Palm Beach. To this nature's beauty spot will be added modern buildings, plazas, parks, boulevards, bathing casinos, hotel, yacht harbor and club house, in fact, everything that goes to make a modern, up to the minute city.

No lots over two blocks from the Dixie, 200-foot Jupiter Concourse to the ocean, streets now being hard surfaced and construction of houses already in progress in the first section. Now on sale at prices so low that we may be oversold quickly. With such a wonderful location, such desirable property, with big development under way and backed by practical men with practical ideas, who command the wealth and artistic genius necessary for realization, assures emphatic increases in values of this property an inevitable and logical certainty. To choose a homestead or business location at Jupiter is a privilege—a privilege from nature. Make your selection NOW. Prices will be advanced in a few days. Secure your part of Jupiter. Courteous salesmen on the property.

JUPITER SYNDICATE, Inc.

OWNERS AND DEVELOPERS
JUPITER SALES SYNDICATE
112 W. P. Beach
Exclusive Sales Agents
Cars Leave Every Hour

H. C. Daniels
607 Citrus Bank Bldg.
W. P. Beach
The Estate Co.
300 Mitchell Bldg.
Jacksonville, Florida.

M. C. Clover
Bldg.
Lake Park Hotel
W. Palm Beach
Cars Leave at
10 a. m.—2 p. m.

Jupiter Incorporates —1925

Why Did Jupiter Incorporate in 1925?

Many Jupiter residents know the Town of Jupiter was incorporated in 1925. Residents may remember the Town's 75 birthday party celebration held in 2000. Jupiter is now 87 years old, so it is time to look at the Town's beginnings again. This article will discuss the events and time period surrounding incorporation, and make some suggestions about WHY the Town of Jupiter came to be.

The Incorporation Process

The First Step – On January 8, 1925 thirty-four male registered voters, living in what would be the corporate limits of the new town, put out a notice to all other voters in those corporate limits about a meeting. This meeting was scheduled for February 9, 1925 at the Public School House to select officers, organize a municipal government, and select a corporate name. This notice was published in the Palm Beach Times five times. The notice was also posted in public places in the area – the Post Office, Bowers Store, and the Wayside Inn¹.

We can surmise that the thirty-four men who sent out this notice were the “movers and shakers” behind

Jupiter becoming a municipality and maybe they can give some clues as to why they suggested incorporation. So let's take a look at them. They are a mix of Jupiter's most prominent early pioneers with some less familiar names.

The "Founding Fathers"

Here they are, in the order they appear on the incorporation documents, and some facts we know about them:

R. Tomasello - Rudolph Tomasello was a member of a pioneer family that moved to Jupiter in 1919. He started Tomasello Pest Control around 1928. He was a Town Commissioner from 1925-1928 and 1930-1931. The minutes of July 12, 1927 note that Commissioner Tomasello was the Sanitary Commissioner and he was in charge of distributing crude oil to control mosquitoes.

E. F. Bowers – Another pioneer, E. Frank Bowers ran the Bowers Store. He first ran a trading post in Indiantown with his brother Joe.² “Town Hall” was a back room of Jupiter's Bowers Store. Mr. Bowers was a Town Commissioner 1925-1928 and 1931-1935, when he passed away.

Wm H. Reeves – Mr. and Mrs. Reeves were mentioned in Mr. Frank Shuflin’s diary in 1916, so they were very early residents.³ Mr. Reeves was the Town’s second Mayor from 1925-1927, and a Commissioner in 1931-1932. The Reeves ran the hotel known by several names including the Wayside Inn. Mr. Reeves passed away suddenly when he was a Commissioner.

Eli D. Sims – The Sims family came to the Jupiter area to homestead in 1895. Mr. Sims was a Commissioner from 1925-1927. He was Chairman of the school trustees. He was a contractor. He passed away in 1927.⁴

A. E. Sims – Arthur E. Sims was a son of the Eli D. Sims who homesteaded in Jupiter. He was a Martin County Commissioner for 15 years, and a Commissioner of the City of Stuart.⁵

A. L. Brown – The only record found was a letter in the March 27, 1928 Town Commission minutes saying “The Clerk read a letter from A. L. Brown of Salerno, Florida asking for a discount on balance due the Town for street assessment \$76.00 on lots 2 & 3 Blk. 7 Pine Gardens.” The 1930 US census showed Mr. Brown living in Salerno, with his occupation listed as a fisherman.

A. J. Brooker – The Brookers were a pioneer family who first settled in the Hobe Sound area in the late 1800’s. They moved to Jupiter in 1927. No record found of an “A. J.” Brooker, but an A. B. Brooker lived in Jupiter in 1930, according to the US Census. He was born circa 1878 and was a laborer on a truck farm.

J. S. Hepburn – James Segwyn Hepburn was one of Jupiter’s earliest pioneers, arriving in Jupiter in 1888 by steamboat. (His brother-in-law John Grant was with the Life Saving Crew.) The Hepburns lived in an old abandoned steamboat for a while that was used as a hotel. They then homesteaded on the Loxahatchee River across from Pennock Point. Mr. Hepburn was a fisherman.⁶

John Kern - According to the 1920 census, John F. Kern was born in New York circa 1881, and his occupation was listed as a machinist.

R. B. Griffin (Rufus) – According to the 1920 census, Mr. Griffin was a Station Agent for the FEC Railroad in Jupiter. He was born in Georgia circa 1874. By 1930 he had moved to the Lake Worth area and was an express

agent for the railroad. The census records going back to 1900 show him working for the railroad, so that was probably what brought him to the Jupiter area sometime after 1910.

J. Pehrson – According to the 1920 census, Mr. Pehrson came to the US from Sweden around 1886 and was a farmer. He was a Commissioner in 1925.

Herman Trust – The only records found from Jupiter were from the Commission minutes of November 12, 1927 when Herman Trust and E. W. Trust were stricken from the voter registration list, along with 81 other names, and in February 1928 when Herman



Rudolph Tomasello with spray truck 1928

Trust was

debited for \$4.00 in police fees, and credited \$4.00 for 1927 tax. Herman and his wife Ella May lived in Baltimore in 1920 and 1930 according to US Census records, so they were “short time” residents of Florida. His occupation was listed as chauffeur.

J. Thomas Ziegler – Early pioneer who came to Jupiter in 1896 from Philadelphia to raise pineapples and ferns.⁷ He was a Commissioner from 1925-1926 and in 1929 (for two months.)

F. R. Ham – Fontelle R. Ham was born in 1895 in Alabama, and according to the US census still lived in Elba, Alabama in 1920, where he was the manager of a turpentine still, so he moved to the Jupiter area after that time. By 1930 he had moved to Jensen Beach with his parents; per the census he was a salesman.

F. H. Shuflin – Francis “Frank” H. Shuflin arrived in Jupiter from Columbus, Ohio in 1913, and had a business taking people fishing on the Loxahatchee River from Shuflin’s Tavern.⁸

Kelly Oglesby – Mr. Oglesby was first mentioned in 1916 in Mrs. Frank Shuflin’s diary. He worked at the Bower’s store, and then purchased his own grocery

store.⁹ He was a Commissioner from 1936-1938, 1940-1942 and 1946-1947.

Albert J Wehage -The 1930 census showed his occupation as carpenter in the nursery industry. He supervised most of the work on the Rood-Williams American Legion Post building, which was built with material from the old school building.¹⁰ The Town of Jupiter Commission minutes also show that he was the Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce in 1927.

O. O. Matthaus - The 1920 census showed Otto O. Matthaus as being born in Germany circa 1879. His occupation was listed as a house carpenter.

Wm. T. Bogardus – Mr. Bogardus, Sr. was a New York undertaker who moved to Jupiter in 1922 to become a fern grower. He also worked part time for Ferguson Funeral Home, conducting funerals in Jupiter. His daughter Evelyn married Jupiter’s first mayor, John Ziegler.¹¹ He was a Commissioner from 1925-1930, and was appointed “Commissioner of Publicity” in 1927.

Geo. Crane – The 1920 census showed George R. Crane was born circa 1878 in Texas. His occupation was listed as bridge tender for the FEC railroad.

M. A. Cadwell – There is a picture of Mr. Cadwell in the Loxahatchee Lament with a 650 pound fish, and the caption says he had a fishhouse.

Thos. F. Dempsey – In the 1930 census a man by this name, born circa 1888, lived in West Palm Beach, and listed his occupation as a building contractor.

J. D. Durham – The 1920 census shows a John Durham living in Jupiter. He would have been born around 1853, and listed his occupation as a bridge tender for the County.

W. H. Brooker –According to “The Loxahatchee Lament,” William Brooker moved to Hobe Sound when he was very young. He grew up on a pineapple farm. After moving to Jupiter, he had a farm and raised vegetables. He died at the age of 93, and worked raising and selling pineapples until less than a year before he passed away.¹²

R. E. Williams (Robert) – Census records show there was a Robert Williams living in Jupiter in 1930. He was born circa 1888, and listed his occupation as caretaker

of a truck farm. Robert E. Williams is on the voter registration listing of February 1929. R. E. Williams was paid \$9.00 in 1928 for a truck and helper. He was a Commissioner from 1925-1926

J. L. Savage – J. L. Savage is shown in the Jupiter voter registration listing of February 1929. There is a Joseph L. Savage shown in census records as the brother of Charles Walter Savage, so he is probably the J. L. Savage of this list.



William H. Miranda

V. C. Savage – The father of C. W. Savage was named Vincent according to US census records. He lived in the Jupiter area in 1910, occupation listed as a laborer.

M. E. (Ed) Williams – Mr. and Mrs. M. E. Williams were stricken from the voter registration list in January of 1929.

W. H. Miranda – William H. Miranda was a Town Commissioner from 1926-1927. He was the Clerk of the Town of Jupiter in 1927, and also served as tax collector. He might have had a business with W. H. Reeves, as a 1930 Town Resolution refers to a company called Reeves and Miranda. The minutes of July 30, 1927 noted Mr. Miranda was ill in Miami. He was a “late-comer” to Jupiter, since he was in Ohio in 1920, with his occupation listed as a blacksmith. But his sister Wilhelmina “Minnie” married F. H. Shufliin, so that is what might have brought him to the area, since the Shufliins arrived from Ohio in 1913. By 1935 he had moved to Dade County.¹³

J. E. Williams - Although there is not much information available about the names M. E. or R. E. Williams, there is a lot known about James E. Williams. He is considered Jupiter’s first Police Chief. According to an article written by his wife for “The Loxahatchee Lament,” he moved to the area in 1917 from Arcadia,

Florida. He worked for the Jupiter police for three years and then took a job with the West Palm Beach police department. After leaving the area and returning after the depression, he became bridge tender on the old A1A Bridge.¹⁴

C. W. Savage – According to information from his daughter in the book “The Loxahatchee Lament,” Charles Walter Savage was born in Fort Orange, Florida and he came to the Jupiter area to work at Potter’s Orange Grove. He married Mary Evelyn Hepburn in 1910 and they had twelve children.¹⁵ He was a Town Commissioner from 1935-1941, and the Mayor from 1941-1946.

John Wilson – The Wilsons came to Jupiter in 1914 from New Jersey. They raised ferns.¹⁶ John Wilson was born in Ireland circa 1873, according to census records. His daughter Bessie Wilson DuBois was the well-known historian of the Jupiter area. Mr. Wilson was a Commissioner in 1926-1927.

Melvin H. Hayes – Mr. Hayes was on the Town Commission 1931-1943, (and Mayor from 1939-1941). According to the 1930 census he was born around 1877, was a boarder with Mr. Reeves, and his occupation was listed as garage mechanic. He did work for the Town in the late 20’s to mid 30’s, supplying ice, and working on streets and trees. He ran for office twice in 1927, but lost both times.

John Ziegler – John Ziegler was the first Mayor of the Town of Jupiter, serving in 1925. He grew up in Jupiter, and became a prominent local attorney.

The Second Step - On February 9, 1925 the incorporation meeting was held. John Ziegler was elected the meeting Chairman, and W. H. Miranda was elected Secretary. All the meeting attendees were listed.¹⁷ There were forty-six people in attendance. But of these attendees, 12 were females with the same last name as the thirty-four men who put out the original notice. There were just five new surnames: R. C. Albertson, E. C. Root, Eva Abbott, E. F. Hubbal, and L. Prevatt.

So it can still be safely said that the men behind the original notice were the men behind the formation of the Town. (As a point of interest, the first motion was made to create a corporation with the name Jupiter, FL. This motion was rescinded and replaced with the corporate name of the **TOWN** of Jupiter, FL. So today

Jupiter is still a town, and not a city.)

The first officers of the Town were elected: Mayor John Ziegler and Aldermen W. T. Bogardus, W. H. Reeves, E. F. Bowers, John Pehrson, R. Tomasello, Robert Williams, Eli D. Sims, R. C. Albertson, and J. Thomas Ziegler. Others elected were Wm. H. Miranda for City Clerk, and M. E. (Ed) Williams as Marshall. Lots were drawn for the terms in office.

On February 9, 1925 the incorporation meeting was held.

Oaths were taken, the information was entered into Corp. Book 8, page 224 of the State of Florida, and the **Town of Jupiter was born.**

Why Incorporation?

Now that we know the principals and the process, we can ask the question - why did these gentleman come together to form the Town of Jupiter? We do not have Town Commission minutes prior to January 11, 1927 so we need to make some assumptions for 1925 to that date.

The first place to look is in the memories of the Jupiter pioneer families. The book “The Loxahatchee Lament” is a reprint of pioneer memories which were first printed in the local newspaper in the early 1970’s. Contributors included the children and grandchildren of the earliest pioneers.

Three recurring themes appeared in the book. First of all, the pioneers who talked about why their family moved to Jupiter gave a reason that had to do with wanting to better their situation. People moved here to get involved in a business such as a fernery or dairy, or own a farm, to take advantage of the fledgling tourist industry, or start a business to serve residents such as a store or service station. So one reason behind incorporation must have been to “get ahead.”

Secondly, several of these pioneers noted that there was a land boom in the area in the mid-1920's, and that more settlers were moving to the area. Finally, some pioneers commented that Jupiter's "old-timers" did not want to sell their land, so it was hard for developers to get enough acreage to start a subdivision.

Florida's Land Boom

With these three themes in mind, let's now explore the history of the land boom in Florida. There have been many books and papers written about this extraordinary time; this article will just touch on some highlights.

How great was this boom in the "roaring twenties?" Frederick Lewis Allen writes in "Only Yesterday: An Informal History of the 1920's," about Miami in the summer and autumn of 1925: "The whole city had become one frenzied real-estate exchange. There were said to be 2,000 real-estate offices and 25,000 agents marketing house-lots or acreage. The shirt-sleeved crowds hurrying to and fro under the widely advertised Florida sun talked of binders and options and water-frontages and hundred thousand-dollar profits; the city fathers had been forced to pass an ordinance forbidding the sale of property in the street ...to prevent inordinate traffic congestion." He wrote "The whole strip of coast line from Palm Beach southward was being developed into an American Riviera."¹⁸ **Surely the "founding fathers" of the Town of Jupiter were reading about all this in their daily newspapers!**

Looking back in hindsight, it seems incredible that people could believe in making large profits in a land boom that took Miami from a 1920 population of 30,000 to near 150,000 in 1925, including all the visitors and newcomers.¹⁹

But there were several reasons that people believed they could attain these huge profits. The first is the most obvious – with Florida's wonderful climate people wanted to move here!²⁰ Another reason was the ability of middle class people to travel to Florida and invest in real estate because educated and skilled working Americans in the North and Midwest now had paid vacations and pensions – and most importantly they now had automobiles to make the trip!²¹ Also, this was the era of "Coolidge prosperity." Americans believed in the materialism and prosperity of the times, which

made it seem that anyone could become rich with the proper investment. A person thought he not only might be able to afford a house in Florida for vacation, but "he was also fed on stories of bold business enterprise and sudden wealth until he was ready to believe that the craziest real-estate development might be the gold-mine which would work this miracle for him."²² People thought this prosperity would be long lasting, and



Dammers & Gillette Co. sells property

Florida legislators fueled this frenzy by promising never to enact a state income or inheritance tax.²³

This land boom escalated until many of these speculators from up north did not even visit Florida to sell land! They instead hired young people to show land to prospective buyers and accept a "binder" on the sale. These new owners planned to sell the land at a profit before the actual payments for the land became due.²⁴

People living in the Jupiter area were not just reading about new development in "far away" Miami or Coral Gables. There was a land boom closer to home. Palm Beach County had one of the largest boom areas in Addison Mizner's Boca Raton. The Palm Beach Post and the Palm Beach Times both participated in the developer's campaign with article after article about new projects. These articles emphasized the profits made by investors.²⁵

A New York lawyer had been offered \$240,000 for a strip of land in Palm Beach eight or ten years before the boom. In 1923 he accepted \$800,000 for it, and when it was broken up into lots they sold for a total of \$1,500,000. By 1925 some claimed the same land was worth \$4,000,000!²⁶

And also close to home, in early 1925 the city of Stuart felt ignored by Palm Beach County government, particularly when they learned they would receive only \$250,000 of a \$6,000,000 bond to build roads in the County. (You needed roads to sell land for subdivisions in these boom times.)

So by April of 1925 citizens were organizing to become a new county and Martin County was born on May 30, 1925. And Jupiter Island, after years of careful and slow development as a winter colony for northerners, also entered the boom when the island was sold in 1923 to Olympia Improvement Company and then re-sold in 1925 to a company called "Picture City," which intended to make Jupiter Island and the Hobe Sound area an east coast Hollywood.²⁷

All of this underlines what the Jupiter pioneers recalled as a land boom in Jupiter in the mid 20's. Anna Minear, a Jupiter pioneer who came to Jupiter with her mother in 1901 to spend the winter with her uncle Henry Pennock, recounts in the Loxahatchee Lament there was "a land boom in 1924 and 1925 during which most of today's Jupiter streets were laid out."²⁸

The Land Boom Comes to Jupiter

We have further proof of how this land boom "came to Jupiter. "The Palm Beach Post had an article dated July 18, 1925 where the Town limits were expanded south to the northern boundary of the Town of Palm Beach, and west to the East Coast Canal. At the same time a "one-half million dollar bond issues for streets and improvements will follow."

By the fall of 1925, a Palm Beach Post article dated September 9, 1925 had a story about a referendum where property owners voted 41 to 25 to form a special road and bridge district and float a \$200,000 bond. "Six roads were to be built and rebuilt and a bridge over the coastal canal constructed according to plans." Roads mentioned were The Indiantown Road, Dixie Highway, Center Street, and Wilson Road.

Only four months after the Town was incorporated, an advertisement in the June 21, 1925 Palm Beach Post proclaimed "For Sale, Townsite of Jupiter, containing 570 acres fronting 2 miles on the Dixie Highway and 2 miles of water frontage."

The Jupiter Syndicate which owned this land was located in Toledo, Ohio and incorporated on October 15, 1925 according to State Division of Corporations. The principals were Howard Lewis, George S. Mills, Robert Newbogin, James E. Brailey, Thomas H. Tracy, and W. A. Gosline, Jr. They were all from Ohio. Their registered agent was D. W. Van Vleck. He was also listed in the Palm Beach Post as the

engineer who was in charge of developing the property owned by the Jupiter Syndicate.

Mr. Van Vleck was an Ohio native who remained in Jupiter for quite some time after the end of the land boom. He was mentioned often in the Commission minutes starting in 1927 as the City Surveyor, Town Clerk, Tax Assessor, and Tax Collector. He was on the Town Commission from 1935-1936.

To choose a homesite or business location at Jupiter is a privilege – a privilege from nature.

By October of 1925, the Jupiter Syndicate was advertising in the Palm Beach Post their Townsite as "Jupiter – Nature's Wonderland," and promising "modern buildings, plazas, parks, boulevards, bathing casinos, hotel, yacht harbor and club house, in fact everything that goes to make a modern, up to the minute city." The ad went on to say "No lots over two blocks from the Dixie, 200-foot Jupiter Concourse to the ocean, streets now being hard surfaced and construction of houses already in progress in the first section."

The broker was located in the Lake Park Hotel in West Palm Beach, and cars left every hour to visit the property. The ad told prospective buyers the lots were: "Now on sale at prices so low that we may be oversold quickly. With such a wonderful location, such desirable property, with big development under way and backed by practical men with practical ideas, who command the wealth and artistic genius necessary for realization, assures emphatic increases in values of this property an inevitable and logical certainty. To choose a homesite or business location at Jupiter is a privilege – a privilege from nature. Make your selection NOW. Prices will be advanced in a few days. Secure your part of Jupiter. Courteous salesmen on the property."

The language of this advertisement is straight out of the flowery school of the ads during the Florida Land Boom. Especially the fact the syndicate was promising

A large return on the investment!

The Palm Beach Post had more information on this development, publishing an article entitled "Intensive Development is Planned At Jupiter" on November 6, 1925. From the positive tone of this "article" it is difficult to tell if this was written by a reporter or the property owners themselves.

The article adds to the advertising information by noting that "Philip Foster, noted landscape artist of Cambridge, Mass., who planned and laid out San Jose, Jacksonville's most beautiful subdivision" was in the city with members of the Jupiter syndicate. (So we know they at least visited Florida and did not conduct all their business from Ohio!) The article explained Mr. Foster had completed the plans for the development that included five miles of oceanfront property, and the Jupiter Concourse, a 200 foot wide thoroughfare that would run "direct from the center of the city to the Atlantic ocean, at the intersection of the concourse and Jupiter river a magnificent hotel will be erected, which will have spacious grounds and plazas amid surroundings of tropical beauty." A civic center was also promised at the intersection of the concourse and Dixie Highway. The article went on to say over half a million dollars in reservations had been made during the **past week**. Once again shades of the Florida Land Boom!

By the end of 1925, the Phil Foster Co. was the exclusive agent for another area called "Jupiter River Estates" in a large advertisement published in the Palm Beach Post on December 12, 1925. This advertisement proclaimed the "sub-division" as approved by the "Town Board," and that "Jupiter River Estates is in reality a suburb within a city. That is to say, it is [in] the city limits of Jupiter, and but 25 minutes drive by motor from West Palm Beach." This ad tried to "back away" from the height of the land boom frenzy by stating they would not resort to exploitation, and they had no high pressure salesmen. They had no "expensive promises to fulfill save the ultimate promise of the great state of Florida."

That being said, the ad went on to say "the small investor may buy a block of lots with little cash, retain one or two lots for his personal use, erect a home and sell the balance of his property, making it pay for his land, the construction of his home, and reap a goodly

profit besides." So their appeal to the "business man, the farmer, the sportsman, and the small investor" still contained the land boom promises of how to get rich quick, with blocks of lots ranging from \$2,000 to \$15,000 per block with only 10% down and 10% quarterly.

Another force which added legitimacy to the final days of the land boom, and was formed because of the land boom, was that electricity was available through Florida



Captain Sperry

Power and Light. According to the FPL website, FPL was born "in the final days of 1925 when Florida was experiencing the greatest land boom the nation had seen, cities were springing up overnight, residents were pouring into the state by the thousands and a dependable supply of electricity was desperately needed." American Power and Light Co. purchased the properties that were consolidated to form FPL on December 28, 1925.

It was not only lesser known businessmen who became involved in the land boom in Jupiter. The William Sperry family of Sperry and Hutchinson fame owned the Jupiter estate they named "Sun Sands" and used as a winter estate from the 1890's. In 1925 Sperry sold the 100 acre estate to a group of land investors headed by Felix Doubleday of New York for \$1,000,000.²⁹

According to an article from the real estate section of the Palm Beach Post dated April 25, 1926, Mr. Doubleday was the son of Frank N. Doubleday, president of Doubleday and Company, famous publishers, and Felix headed the international banking concern also called Doubleday and Company. Other financiers, who were involved in the new company called the Palm Beach Point Association, were W. T. Vanderlip, and Robert Norris who "has long been identified with the Duke and Biddle interests.

The article explained the land was to be divided into 500 lots and the intent was for high grade residential, so speculation and resale was not encouraged. (“Even though Mr. Doubleday was quoted in the article as saying “it is quite natural that handsome profits could accrue to those who buy now for resale” ...!)

By May 5, 1926 the Palm Beach Post said the Jupiter development was preparing for construction work that included Venetian steps at the end of every other street for landing passengers near their homes, with decorative boat slips on alternate streets. There were also plans to dredge a navigable lagoon 900 feet long and fifty feet wide, with a ninety foot basin at the end in the center of the property. The clubhouse would be at the end of the lagoon and “Venetian lighting will turn this lagoon into a veritable fairyland.”

The architect, Captain Hugo Rumbold (research shows him to be an English theatrical set designer and artist) designed “the principal decorative units, the clubhouse and casino” according to an article in the Miami Daily News on May 22, 1926. He said the location reminded him of the Grecian Isles where he spent his boyhood, so he decided on classical lines similar to Greek architecture and the Italian style of Palladio, rather than Spanish architecture.

Jupiter After Incorporation and During the Land Boom

All this planned development in Jupiter surely was an impetus for the Town’s incorporation. Jack Ziegler recounts in the Loxahatchee Lament: “Before the days of ad valorem, the Jupiter Woman’s club played a large part in keeping the town going. Cake sales, bake sales, bought uniforms for the baseball team. Dances raised money. Somehow in 1925 Jupiter decided it should be a town.”³⁰

With these developers coming to Town, more formal steps were needed to handle the growth and raise money than the assistance of the Woman’s Club!

The Town documents showed that the first Commissioners, who were also the Town’s “Founding Fathers,” helped the developers, and also wanted to control and profit from the development.

The very first ordinance adopted by the Town set license fees for folks wanting to do business in Town. Very high rates of \$250 were set for businesses such as “advertisement or trade inducement company

or individual” and “auctioneers in real estate.” Here was an opportunity for revenue?

The second ordinance adopted in April of 1925 established streets and avenues and building lines and established Dixie Highway as eighty feet wide. The Commission also passed an ordinance in April whereby all plans for buildings had to be approved by the Commission. An early method to control development?

“Venetian lighting will turn this lagoon into a veritable fairyland.”

We already mentioned the Town annexed additional land in July of 1925, and also in July the Commission adopted a resolution to investigate many aspects of becoming a “real” town government. The Commission wanted to establish a system of side walks, a sewer system and water works; to have a Town Hall, a jail, and a fire department; and to drain and fill overflow lands. They also wanted to widen some streets. The resolution also suggested investigating a “Publicity Millage” for publicity purposes – surely an indication the Town was planning on cashing in on the land boom for the benefit of its citizens!

Finally, in what can only be viewed as helping the plans of the developers, in October 1925 the Commission passed an Ordinance to widen the “Central Florida Dixie Highway, known as the Indiantown Road,” west from the Dixie Highway, to one hundred feet in width. And in January of 1926, the Commission established by ordinance a “Public Avenue, Park and Promenade” two hundred feet wide from the intersection of “the Central Florida Highway (also known as the Indian Town road) easterly to the Atlantic Ocean” and the Mayor was “hereby directed to secure from the owner or owners” of any of this land, deeds and easements. Thus the Jupiter Concourse was officially born in the records of the Town.

The Land Boom is Over

Of course, we know Sperry's estate Suni Sands never became Palm Beach Point, which is why we still call the area Suni Sands today. The land reverted back to Mrs. Emily Sperry not long after the grand announcements, because "by New Year's Day of 1926 the suspicion was beginning to insinuate itself into the minds of the merry-makers that new buyers of land were no longer so plentiful as they had been in September and October, that a good many of those who held binders were exceedingly anxious to dispose of their stake in the most Richly blessed community, and that Friendly Sun and Gracious Rain were not going to be able, unassisted, to complete the payments on lots."³¹

It took a little longer for the boom to reach Jupiter, so it took a little bit longer to collapse in Jupiter, but the boom everywhere "began obviously to collapse in the spring and summer of 1926. People who held binders and had failed to get rid of them were defaulting right and left on their payments." And then a 1926 hurricane finished the boom off.³²

Benefits from Incorporating During the Land Boom

Although these grand plans for Jupiter never came to fruition, it is interesting to consider if any benefits accrued to the Town from the decision to incorporate during the land boom period. An article from the Palm Beach Post dated May 3, 1926 sheds some light on this question.

The article states that James Brailey, of the Jupiter Syndicate (Jupiter Townsite project) "declared that his company would continue its efforts to complete the program outlined for the community." He perhaps was reassuring Jupiter's citizens, and his investors, because by then the boom was winding down.

The article listed items which could be considered benefits to the Town as lights on Dixie Highway, the concourse, the road that led to the ocean, and a water supply system being installed which could serve 500 people. In addition, Jupiter Lumber yard bought a new site for their factory.

Work was being started for the bridge over the Loxahatchee, and as the article said "what is probably the largest single structural project in Jupiter is the new high school, which is to cost \$160,000, and plans for which have been filed. This is now in the process of

construction." So it is up to us to judge after 87 years have passed whether the men who chose to push for Jupiter's incorporation got enough value for their actions during the great boom time in Florida to consider their decision a wise one.

And it is also true that many early pioneers did not sell their land to the developers, so after the land boom collapsed, Jupiter was able to continue on as it had before the land boom began

Sperry's estate Suni Sands never be- came Palm Beach Point.

What Remnants of the Land Boom Exist in Jupiter Today?

So we know that Suni Sands remained Suni Sands and never became Palm Beach Point, and we know the high school and bridge were actually built. What about those other two large developments promised for Jupiter?

"Jupiter Townsite" the sub-division promised by the Jupiter Syndicate, never had the "modern buildings, plazas, parks, boulevards, bathing casinos, hotel, yacht harbor and club house," but the Syndicate did file plats with the Town in April of 1926 and January of 1927. The area was bounded by Hepburn Avenue, and Dixie Highway, and the Jupiter Concourse ran through the middle. Jupiter Concourse was where Indiantown Road is today, and the streets in the subdivision were Venus, Evernia, and Fern Streets, on one side of the Concourse, and Third through Ninth Streets on the other side. And the 1927 plat shows "Daturo" Sreet. So we can see that this area does exist today with the same street names, and the "Jupiter Concourse" (Indiantown Road) does continue toward the ocean.

The last mention of the Jupiter Concourse found is in the Commission minutes of September 17, 1937 when a Commissioner was asked to draft a W. P. A. project for the improvement of Hepburn Street from Center Street to Jupiter Concourse. Sad evidence that by this time the Florida Land Boom was long over and the country was in the midst of the Great Depression!

The other major subdivision, "Jupiter River Estates" sold by Mr. Phil Foster in December of 1925, was platted in March of 1926. Central Dixie Highway (an alternate name for the old Indiantown Road) ran through the middle of the subdivision and crossed Jupiter Creek, which also ran through the area. Street names were Indian tribes, except for Todd Street. Some names were Cheyenne, Comanche, Potawatomie, Hawie, Chippewa, Arapaho, Cherokee, Choctaw, and Caloosahatchee. These are street names that remain in the Jupiter River Estates area today.

So the land boom died, and then Jupiter suffered severely from the great hurricane of 1928, then slipped into the depression with the rest of the country. Jupiter went back to its small town atmosphere and folks in the Loxahatchee Lament recounted memories of good fishing, making a living, and home grown parties and fun rather than fancy casinos and yacht basins.

But the Florida Land Boom certainly left its mark on Jupiter, and contributed greatly to its becoming a municipality in the first place.

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- 1 Town of Jupiter Incorporation Papers – Records of Incorporation, Palm Beach County, Volume 8 Page 224
- 2 “The Loxahatchee Lament” (Vol. 1 © 1978 The Stuart News Company, © 1978 Cary Publications, Inc., All Rights Reserved.)
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