

Ten Mile Lake Narrative

The following narrative is based on an interview with Julia Moseley at her home on Ten Mile Lake on February 17, 1999. The interview provided information, which combined with survey, biological assessment, and other agency's data illustrates the past, present, and future trends of the lake.

Julia Moseley



Neighbors pictured on Albert Brooker's dock on Ten Mile Lake in 1957. Note the historic water clarity.
photo from the Moseley Collection

The Moseley Family has a long and intertwined history with Ten Mile Lake and the Brandon area, especially Limona. Julia's grandmother, Julia Daniels and her husband Charles Scott Moseley moved to Limona in 1882 with their child Charles Scott Jr. and two step children, Florence and Claude Moseley. The family relocated from Illinois to Limona to take advantage of the warmer climes. Another son, Hallock Moseley, the father of the current Julia Winifred Moseley, was born in their log cabin on Ten Mile Lake. They bought property near a new settlement established by the Elgin National Watch Company, for whom Scott had worked as an

inventor in the burgeoning watch manufacturing business of the 19th Century.

Through letters written and compiled by her Grandmother, combined with her own experience as a Ten Mile Lake resident, Julia has been able to document her individual perspective of social life in the area, including the characters and the realities of pioneer life and of the continually changing landscape in the area. The Nest, the home built by the Moseley's, remains to this day as a bridge between the past that was once experienced by residents of the area and the present that is now Brandon.



Karl Moseley on Ten Mile Lake in 1907. Pictured in the background are the Dopp family barn and house that no longer exist.
photo from the Moseley

A look at the changes over time to the social and natural environment is possible through the industry of people long gone and those living such as Julia. Efforts like the book Come to My Sunland, based on Julia's grandmother's letters and co-edited by Julia and Betty Crislip, give us a keen appreciation of the then largely untouched Florida landscape. Such books, combined with the memories and perspectives shared by residents, paint for us a picture of the past, a commentary on the present and an outlook for the future.

Julia, a third generation Moseley, has spent much of her life on the shores of Ten Mile Lake and has a wealth of knowledge about the social and natural changes that have occurred in the area. This information is shared with another third generation family on the lake, the Clites as well as old-timers such as the Hamptons, and by newer residents, most of whom have lived on the lake for over a dozen years. When asked about her motivations for amassing the information she has, Julia replied, "I have been doing it all my life. Part of it is curiosity and part of it is that you live here. If you are aware of your surroundings, then you are concerned and you want to gather information about the world you live in."



Ten Mile Lake viewed through the oak hammock on the Moseley property in 1938
photo from the Moseley Collection

Julia is active in gathering data that has helped to raise a voice in the decision making process concerning actions that will effect the natural environment in her area, and by necessary extension, the social environment. With other concerned citizens, she has addressed zoning issues, proposed development, lake health and historic preservation. Efforts such as hers and other concerned and motivated individuals in the area have salvaged the history of Ten Mile Lake and provide a baseline

against which to assess changes the passing of time has brought.

Ten Mile Lake



Sailing on Ten Mile Lake in 1938
photo from the Moseley Collection

Ten Mile Lake is located in the DeLaney Creek watershed, just a stone's throw from State Road 60 and the Brandon Towne Center. It is a 22-acre sinkhole lake rimmed by oak, longleaf pine, and scatterings of cypress that were planted by early residents.

Ten Mile Lake is sometimes referred to as Lake Cathy, both names still explainable through stories of their origin. Julia remarks, "It has two names, we like to call it Ten Mile because that is the old name and we have another [Lake Cathy in the area]...so to avoid confusion I like to stay with Ten Mile. Now, this name was changed from Ten Mile when [Albert Brooker] who had that 10-acre plot next to the Moseley's... was down at the County...and someone said, 'Well Buckshot, wouldn't you like to name that lake after your daughter?' and he said, 'Why, sure.'" For a time on the maps, the lake became Lake Cathy. In addition to being the old name, Ten Mile has historical significance associated with its name. On this subject Julia explains, "It's from the old courthouse. You measured things from the old courthouse [along what is now State Road 60]. You went out two miles and that was Two Mile Branch [a creek and the site of Charlie's Market]. You went to Six Mile Creek and you came out here and it was ten miles from the old Courthouse. State Road 60 is the old road blazed across the state from the early days of Fort Brooke."



Unlike roads used for wagon and horse traffic, this path leading from the Moseley cabin to the lake was for foot traffic. (1898) photo from the Moseley Collection

In the course of researching their book, Come to My Sunland, the editors uncovered history concerning the early existence of State Road 60. The following information is taken from their book: "Formerly an Indian trail, it was later used as a route for mail, troops, and supplies between Tampa's Fort Brooke and Fort Mead in the state's interior. For this reason, it was sometimes called Government Road. Freight expresses-broad-wheeled, tarpaulin covered wagons drawn by three or four yoked oxen were used for this commerce. The road was also used for recreation. A prominent Tampa pioneer, Capt. John T. Lesley, described a high stakes horse race in 1859. Race participants stopped to water their horses at the lake, even then called Ten Mile Lake because it was ten miles from Fort Brooke."



Early settlers benefited from life on the lakes in many ways, including recreational.



photo from the Moseley Collection

The central location of Ten Mile Lake made it a well-utilized lake by pioneering families. Julia muses, "Remember, the old settlers used the water for everything...It was drinking water, they used it to water their horses, they bathed in it. If they shot game, they went and washed it in the lake and then cooked it in a pot and ate it. So they used it for everything...They enjoyed it, they used it for economic reasons because they could probably sell the edibles out of it, the fish and the turtles...They made every type of use they could make out of it and without it, they would have been lost."

A good example of the early use of Ten Mile Lake comes from the History of the Lithia Community, written by Elam Bryant. He explains how, in the old days before the turn of the century, the lake was used as a camping site on the way to Tampa by a community of produce farmers. The story is related in Elam's words, "Before everyone in this community had cars we all went to Tampa with horses and wagons to carry our products to sell. These were sugar cane, sweet potatoes, Irish potatoes, syrup, eggs, and in the spring, we would carry fresh vegetables. We would all get together and drive in wagon-train form. We would all camp at Ten Mile Pond, a lake west of Brandon, then on to Tampa to do our trading, then back to where we camped the night before, returning home the following day."



The Moseley property retains the historic oak hammock that

The relationship between the lake and human settlement began early and continues today. The lake remains to be appreciated and utilized by residents and more recently by commercial development. Over time, these relationships have accelerated changes in the lake that would have occurred naturally.

welcomed early pioneers



Ten Mile Lake's northwest shore in 1942, note the 5 cypress planted by Grandmother Dopp
photo from the Moseley Collection

The lake is presently the setting for 12 residences, an apartment complex and two commercial developments. Interspersed in the built environment are traces of the vegetation that used to line the lake's shores. Long leaf pine stands and oak hammocks sheltering scrub and palmetto made up the natural setting when the pioneers came. Stands of cypress were an addition by early pioneers. Julia relates a story about some of the cypress lining the shore, "It is interesting to note these cypress on the

west shore. There are five of them and Grandmother Dopp planted them. Over here on my side we have cypress that were planted by a Great Uncle of mine ... he was very interested in everything that grew around here and he thought it would be nice to plant cypress. Well, Grandmother Dopp noticed what he was doing and also planted cypress..."

Few stands of trees remain as tribute to the historic look of the shoreline. Some have been casualties to the cycles of nature and have succumbed to lightning or age. Much vegetation has been removed to facilitate development.



These two photographs illustrate the shoreline vegetation on the south shores of the lake.
photo from the Moseley Collection

Changes in the vegetation lining the shore occur in natural cycles, as evidenced by Julia's observation, "The land does change with a succession of plant growth... When the lake is low, you get young plants coming in ... oak trees, pines whatever... The Moseley homestead land is naturally very diverse, from sand pine scrub to oaks, to pine, to magnolia, to something like swamp tupelo with herbaceous growth by the lake." The relationship between humans and the natural environment often serves to accelerate and compound the natural changes.



Human occupation of the lake has also had an effect on the quality of the water. Residents on Ten Mile Lake have been active in sampling the water of the lake to identify trends and address problems. The first lake water sample was taken in 1957 and showed the water to be drinkable. Later measurements would change, encouraging concerned parties to continue testing to this day. Specifically, they have tested for coliform bacteria, suspended solids, nitrogen and

Map of Ten Mile Lake drawn by Mike McFail photo from the Moseley Collection

phosphorus among other measurements. The residents on Ten Mile Lake have financed some of the testing; Lakewood Place Apartments has financed other efforts. The testing, albeit spotty, indicates a lake with good water quality. They have had periodic bouts with algae blooms, but after "waiting it out" as recommended by the EPC, the water cleared. "Other than that, we tend to just have really green algae."

Ten Mile Lake has an identity as a haven for wildlife relative to the high-density development surrounding it. Sandhill cranes, spoonbills, osprey and at one time 22 American egrets made their home on the lake. In the winter time, eagles still come to fish, a reminder of when a point on the shoreline was called Eagle's Point. Fishing still occurs on Ten Mile Lake, and in the 1980's, Mike McFail, a fisherman and resident of the neighboring Lake Chapman mapped the bottom of the lake using his depth finder. The resulting maps are peppered with references to landmarks surrounding the lake, such as "an orange flag, a shattered pine tree, tall grass...".



The girls of Ten Mile Lake pose on the Moseley's adjustable dock in 1933 photo from the Moseley Collection

The level of Ten Mile Lake and the fluctuations normally associated with lake cycles have been altered to some degree by the association of the lake with humans. New development has led to recontouring of the land and the alteration of natural drainage patterns with more land now under parking lots and rooftops. Residents once expected the cyclical rise and fall of the lake, as evidenced by the old Moseley dock, the end of which could be raised or lowered to accommodate a fluctuation in lake

level. We now attempt to control nature and the cycles that have been the norm for millennia, and to facilitate this, dig ditches and canals, put in culverts, drain lands, and pump up shorelines. Only time will tell if these efforts will help or hinder nature to balance the overall effect.

Development



The chain of three lakes, Chapman South, Gornto and Ten Mile taken in 1988 shows the burgeoning development in the area photo from the Moseley Collection

Documented interaction between humans and Ten Mile Lake commenced well over 100 years ago. The early homesteaders and Florida Crackers settled the lands around the lakes, incorporating them into their lives. Ten Mile Lake, today home to 12 residences, two commercial developments and an apartment complex, was developed early in the social history of the Brandon area.

Julia, in researching the book she wrote with former



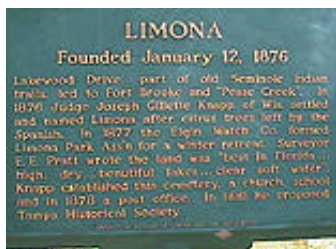
The heavy growth of vegetation on the shore marks the site of the canal, dug by Burt Coe, connecting Lake Chapman and Ten Mile Lake

Limona resident, Betty Crislip, is able to relate stories about early development surrounding Ten Mile Lake. "The first thing that happened was the saw mills. This man and his wife came down from Illinois in the 1870's and he had two sons and they all went into the saw mill business. The younger son had his mill over there and his name was Burt Coe. One year [1900] was particularly wet ...so he knocked off work and took the crew and dug this immense canal between the two lakes [Ten Mile and

Chapman]."

The clearing of the land brought agriculture and additional residential development to Ten Mile Lake. The Dopp family lived across the lake from the Moseley family. The Browne, Coe, Week, and Wilder families, in addition to other pioneers who did not live on the lake, spent much time visiting its shores. Their names are associated with stories that explain much about the nature of life in the early days of settlement east of Tampa.

Through the early decades of the 1900's, the area east of Tampa experienced little population growth, and Ten Mile Lake remained a pristine, spring-fed lake. State Road 60 has brought an increased population to the Brandon area, which in the early years before 1900 and up to the 1960's retained a rural atmosphere. Julia relates a story about the development of Brandon, which without a railroad, in the early parts of the century lagged behind other centers of development in the area. "...They were off the first railroad track that was being laid down through Mango, Seffner and Dover in 1883. In 1890, the second railroad was going through Limona, Brandon and Valrico but without a depot for Brandon ...Victoria Brandon had the engineer from the railroad lay out the city of Brandon. He said, 'Now, what shall we name it?' and she said, 'I don't know.' And he said, 'Well, how about Brandon?' John Brandon [Victoria's husband] was the one who gave the land for the church and the school and he was in the area early on... So after his death, when his widow thought Brandon was getting left out of the new railroad's depots for Limona and Valrico, she didn't like that. Victoria got the other Brandon women together and said, 'We're going to have a depot,' ... They all funded it and she got this [engineer] to lay out the streets. That's how Brandon came into being."



Historic Marker for the Limona settlement

Brandon's development was given a big boost then, compounded when they got a post office, and later when they were made the site for the County's consolidated schools. Conversely, Limona began to lose its identity. On this subject, Julia comments, "Limona had a post office from 1878 to 1964 and when they lost it in 1964, they began to lose their identity because they consolidated with Brandon and a lot of this consolidation means you are coming

together around some nucleus and in this case it was Brandon. Valrico ...maintains its identity, Mango does, Seffner does and Durant does, Limona is

known, but not so much. It is an older community and it just has single family homes, a civic center, a church, a Limona elementary school, and the Brandon Academy."

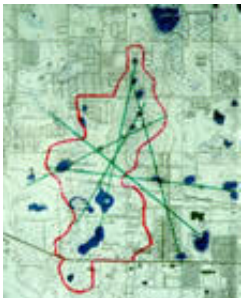
A portion of the identity of historic Limona still exists today in the hills surrounding the original settlement in the form of the many sinkhole lakes, early valued by E.E. Pratt in 1877. A historical marker on the corner of Lakewood and Woodberry speaks eloquently of the land and lakes E.E. Pratt was sent to survey by the Elgin National Watch Company. He wrote that the land was, "...the best in Florida...high, dry...beautiful lakes...clean, soft water."



State Road 60. In the background is the wooded Moseley property.

As Brandon became the nucleus around which the population east of Tampa was settling, the area surrounding Ten Mile Lake changed as well. State Road 60 has been widened several times over the years, entailing a loss of property for the Moseley's and other residents on the lake's south shore. The widenings have facilitated increased traffic and commercial development along the well-traveled artery. Until the 1960's development was moderately paced. After the 1960's it took off. Development

brought many changes for the families and the natural environment surrounding Ten Mile Lake.



Map depicting the Limona sub-basin within which development is occurring.
photo from the Moseley Collection

The Brandon Town Center was proposed in the early 1980's and was built despite the unsuitability of the land and the objection of residents. The sprawling mall is situated within a basin located just to the south of Ten Mile Lake. As a result, townhomes and houses built surrounding the mall suffer periodically from flooding within this natural drainage area. The mall was accompanied by other commercial development lining the surrounding thoroughfares; two commercial sites are located on Ten Mile Lake. Both of the commercial developments were fought by residents living on the lake, and although they did not succeed in stopping the development, their efforts mediated the impact on the lake through restricted lake access.



This stand of longleaf pine and oak marks the proposed site for an apartment complex.

Commercial development was accompanied by higher-density residential development and presently the lake is the setting for a 345-unit apartment complex, with a possible 150-180 units being proposed. Once again, residents of Ten Mile Lake have united to dispute the proposal, and the hearings are still being conducted. Julia's property is particularly threatened, as it is adjacent to the site for building, and she has spearheaded efforts to have their concerns recognized and incorporated into the

development plans.

A town center for Brandon is in the planning stages to give a focus for the sprawl, which typifies contemporary Brandon. A center may be too little too late at this point in the game but it may be the last window of opportunity to address a long felt need. In a comprehensive land-use planning document recently released by Tallahassee, the recommendation was to control the urban sprawl. Julia comments, "This is very difficult to do...[people] want to live way out because they want to have a little piece of nature. Then you have where the county has already extended services and they need to have people living out here to pay for the infrastructure...that's the way it works...It's a cycle and it's regrettable." Meanwhile, Brandon continues to extend its development vines into areas retaining a semblance of the historic rural atmosphere, such as the areas surrounding the lakes.

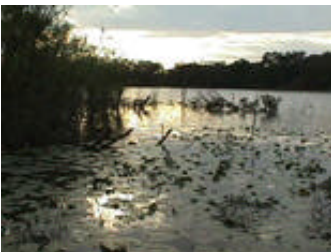
In the mean time, the development continues to have an impact on the environment, both natural and social. Battles are being fought to mediate the negative effects of development that is destined to occur. Citizens, including Julia have been uniting to reincorporate the Limona Improvement Association, which will give them an umbrella under which to operate to address issues affecting their area.

The Future



This beautiful oak stands as tribute to the majesty of nature coexisting with humans on the lake's shores

While this history has been created to explore the past, present and future of Ten Mile Lake from a social perspective, the breadth of its subject matter speaks to the effects that changes in the natural ecosystem have on many other aspects of the natural and social environment.



Ten Mile Lake today, looking west from the Moseley dock

Human's relationship with the natural environment stresses the need for comprehensive planning and proactive stances on the part of citizens concerned with the health of the environment and the maintenance of their quality of life. On these topics, Julia's experiences with addressing planning and development agencies can provide much in the way of understanding and producing an effective partnership between citizens and government. Julia comments, "You never get anywhere by saying, 'I want this'. You have to work

with them and they have to work with you. It's a growth process and you have to stay in the system to be effective... You are trying to make your ideas known and someone else is there, and picks up on them, and sees the worth of it and they go ahead and pave the way."

Citizens efforts, when well researched and well presented have the potential to sway, shape, or even change public policy and development planning. The efforts of citizens in the Brandon area who recognize the importance of speaking out to protect the things they value have experienced successes and failures. Perhaps most importantly, they have made it obvious to policy makers, planners and developers, that there is an active body of citizens in the area. They are concerned and are willing and able to educate themselves about contentious issues in order to have a voice in the decisions effecting their lives and the natural environment they love. Julia comments, "...we have a very cohesive group right around the lake. We've got third generation people living around this lake and they don't want anything to happen to this lake." Their intent paired with their efforts goes a long way toward insuring the perpetuation of the life they know and will not willingly surrender.