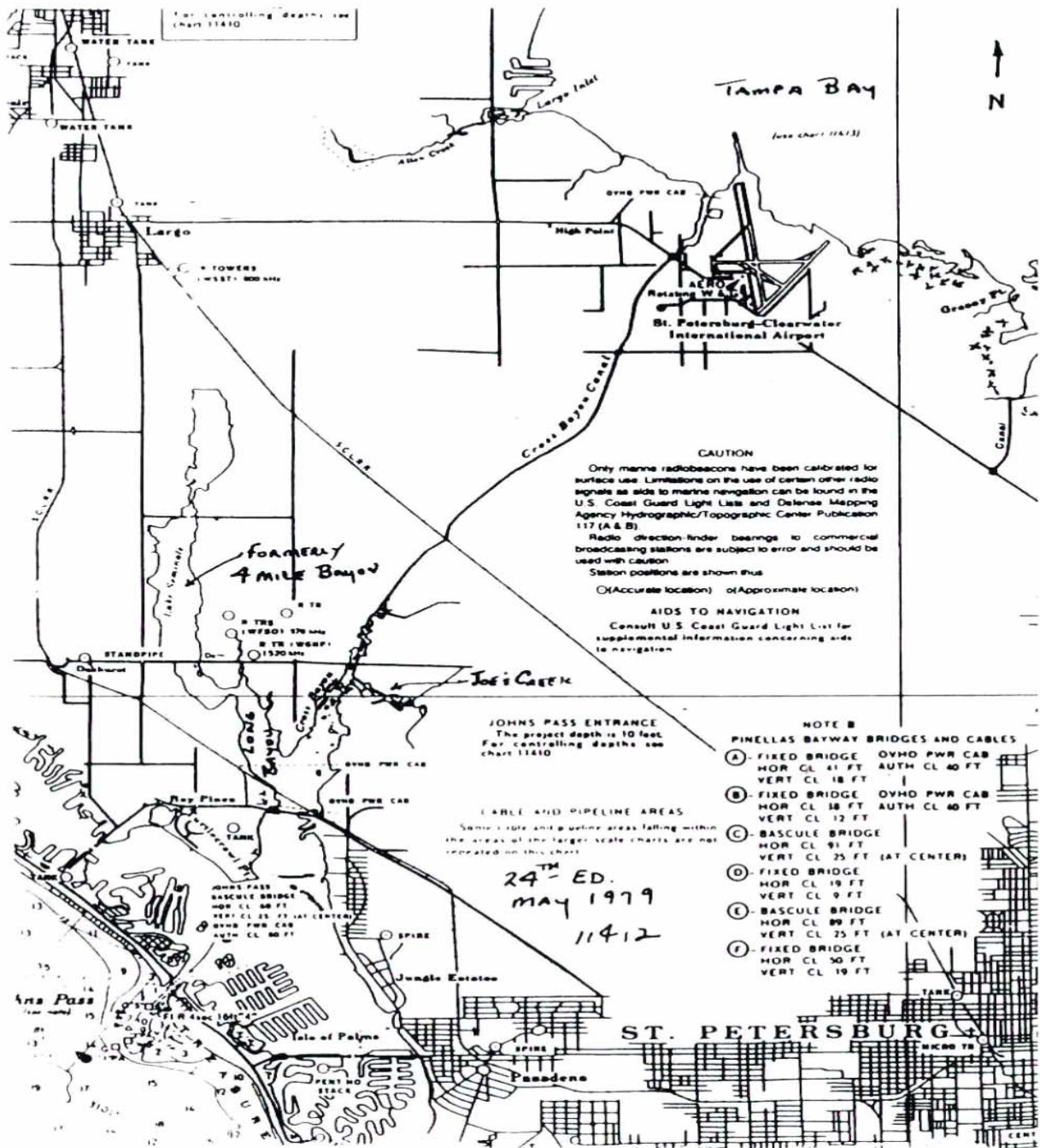


**History  
of the  
Cross Bayou Canal**

**1915**

# CROSS BAYOU CANAL



## INFORMATION ABOUT THE CROSS BAYOU CANAL

From *St. Petersburg Times* article - Sept. 21, 1964

Dredging started: Feb. 1916

Length of Canal: 11 Miles

West end: - Upper tip of Cross Bayou

East end: Tampa Bay at St. Petersburg-Clearwater Airport

Original Cost: \$150,000 bond issue  
Lake Largo-Cross Bayou Drainage District

Purpose: Alleviate flooding conditions in the section

Result: Lake Largo was drained dry

Bond issue: Around 1940 the district was taken over by the county  
The bonds have been paid off

World War II The canal was widened by the government at its Tampa Bay end to accommodate hydroplanes that might land there. Dredges opened it to a width of 200 feet and deepened the water so seaplanes could come in.

Width & Depth Originally the canal was about 20 feet wide and deep enough to carry a steady flow of water which rose and fell with the tides.

Tidal Rise There is an approximate two-foot rise and fall of the tides in the canal

## Cross Bayou Canal

From *Pinellas Farms, Florida* paper Dec. 1909:

"The most fertile lands in the world remote from transportation facilities would be worthless; convenience of transportation is one strong point in favor of Pinellas Farms. The Atlantic Coast Line Railway runs for four miles directly through the center of the tract. Cross Bayou station is on the property. Lellman station is about a mile south of it, while Pinella Park, the new town site, is located midway between and a station will be established there this winter. Very few of these farms will be over two miles from a railroad station, while the great majority will be within a mile. The A.C.L. run through Pullman cars from New York City to St. Petersburg passing through Pinellas Farms."

Letter received from *St. Petersburg Times* ACTION, Aug. 23, 1989

"The Cross Bayou Canal was dug between early February 1916 and December 1917, as far as we can determine. The enclosed old clips may be of help."

St. Petersburg is located on an island.

Writing some stories about the Cross Bayou Canal recently we suddenly realized that South Pinellas is cut in two by the canal.

Cross Bayou Canal was built in 1916 by proceeds of a \$150,000 bond issue financed by a mid-Pinellas section called the Lake Largo-Cross Bayou Drainage District.

Purpose of the channel was to alleviate flooding conditions in the section. It worked so well that Lake Largo was drained dry. Today its bottom is occupied by farm lands. The Lake Largo part of the Canal's name was dropped long ago.

The cost of the canal back in '16 was considered a powerful lot of money and there were groans from the taxed, and promises from some politicians at times, about getting some kind of relief.

Finally around 1940 the district was taken over by the county. The bonds have been paid off.

Cross Bayou waterway starts at the upper tip of Cross Bayou in the upper reaches of Boca Ciega Bay. It is 11 miles long. It runs northeasterly across the county ending near Trout Hole Lodge on the shores of Old Tampa Bay, and not too far from the St. Petersburg-Clearwater International Airport, which it skirts on the way to the bay.

During World War II the canal was widened by the government at its Tampa Bay end to accommodate hydroplanes that might land there. Dredges opened it to a width of 200 feet and deepened the water so seaplanes could come in.

Along its shores on the Tampa Bay end are some fishing docks that crabbers use in going to the bay for crab fishing.

The canal was originally about 20 feet wide and deep enough to carry a steady flow of water which rose and fell with the tides. There is an approximate two-foot rise and fall of the tides in the canal.

Today the water in the Boca Ciega end of the canal is often higher, sooner than the water at the Tampa Bay end, though you would think that the water level at the Tampa end should be pushed upward first by the tides. This is blamed on clogged channels that do not readily carry water through the canal.

Rube Allyn, book publisher, went through the canal in 1957 in a light draft outboard, towing three boats behind it, just to show it could be done. He started in Boca Ciega Bay and returned by circling the southern tip of Pinellas back to the starting point.

There were some real beautiful spots along the waterway, he reported. In fact the Pinellas County Park Board after reading Rube's glowing account of the trip, considered making some parks along its route. But nothing came of that.

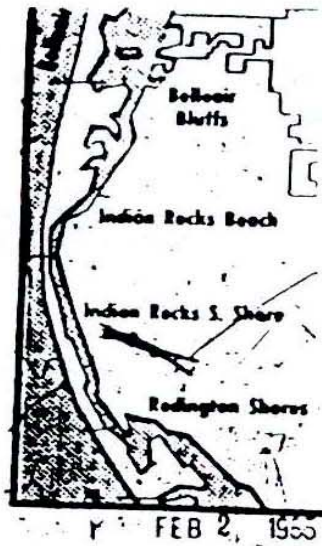
Walter P. Fuller and sons Butch and Robert, have gone through Cross Bayou in small boats. Parts of the waterway are still very pretty, they report.

This gives added importance to Pinellas plans of developing splendid marinas at Fort DeSoto County Park on Mullet Key and opening up the Old Cross Bayou Canal. Both of these moves will have a direct monetary return to the community.

Florida's West Coast has lagged behind the East Coast in developing small boat facilities. Thus, although West Coast waters are far superior for small boating, we haven't gotten our share of this business.

— The sooner we can offer equal or better marinas, the quicker we'll start getting more of the new amphibious tourists who are now numbered in the millions. And this is also a powerful argument to really put the heat on the completion of the Intercoastal Waterway on the West Coast. That would add another string to our bow.<sup>3</sup>

Cross Bayou Canal is a lazy man-made drainage street about 10 miles long. It runs northeast across Pinellas County from the head of a Boca Ciega Bay bayou by that name to a point on Old Tampa Bay located on the northern edge of (Part of map shows)<sup>4</sup>



<sup>3</sup> St. Petersburg Times, Sept. 21, 1964

<sup>4</sup> St. Petersburg Times, Feb. 2, 1965

Letter from Andy Leonard to Matt Savage - Dated: Jan. 13, 1915

"The new canal drainage system is a sure go, and will soon begin"

BRIDGES OVER 4-MILE BAYOU, PINELLAS COUNTY, FLA.

Letter From W. B. LaDue, Major, Corps. of Engineers to Mr. F.A. Davis,  
President Florida Association, 1914 Cherry St., Philadelphia, Pa.

Dear Sir: - Referring to the matter of the bridges of Pinellas County, and of the Tampa & Gulf Coast Railroad, over the 4-Mile Bayou; in regard to which correspondence was had with you last Spring, and a public hearing was held at St. Petersburg, on March 27, 1914, I beg to advise you that these bridges have been completed, the County bridge having a fixed opening 26 feet wide and 10.5 feet high at mean low water, and the railroad bridge an opening 24 feet wide with 11 feet clear head room at mean low water

These dimensions are in substantial correspondence with the general consensus of opinion as to the needs of the case at the public hearing in St. Petersburg last March

I shall be glad to know if, in your opinion, the dimensions of the openings left in the bridges as constructed meet the requirements of the present situation; also if any navigation has developed on the Bayou or if there is any immediate prospect of the development of any that cannot be accommodated by the bridges as built

Very respectfully,  
W. B. LADUE,  
Major, Corps of Engineers \*

Letter from Florida Association to Mr. W. B. Ladue, District Engineer Officer,  
U.S. Eng. Office, Jacksonville, Fla. - Dated: Nov. 24, 1914

Dear Sir: - Replying to yours of November 19th, advising of the completion of the bridges of Pinellas County and of the Tampa & Gulf Coast R.R. over the 4-Mile Bayou, and of the width of opening and height of same at mean low water, I desire to thank you for the information given. In my opinion

<sup>\*</sup> Pinellas Park News, Feb. 1915

<sup>\*</sup> Pinellas Park News, Feb. 1915

the dimensions of the openings left in the bridges as constructed meets the requirements of the present situation.

The Florida Association is at the present time constructing four miles of railway west and southwest from Pinellas Park Station. This road is to be extended in the near future westward along the Boulevard to the Bayou, when is proposed, with the sanction of the Government, to deepen the channel to the Government channel through Boca Ciega Bay.

It may be of interest for you to know that a drainage district, under the new State laws of Florida, comprising some 12,000 acres, mostly of lands contained in the Florida Association's holdings, and of which Pinellas Park is the center, has been established, and that it is proposed, in connection with the same, to dredge a channel through Cross Bayou as far as the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad bridge, near Cross Bayou Station, this channel to be about 100 feet wide and 3 feet in depth at low tide.

Beyond the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad bridge it is to be extended to the north-east through the lands of the Pinellas Park Drainage District, and thence through the Largo Drainage District to a connection with Old Tampa Bay, the width beyond the bridge to be from 50 to 60 feet, and a uniform depth of 3 feet at low water to be maintained; also a channel is to be dredged up through ditch shown on plans as No. 5, from Long Bayou to the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad bridge at Pinellas Park, with a uniform depth of 3 feet at low water, thus giving Pinellas Park and all the surrounding section the advantages of inland water transportation.

The plan further embraces the opening up and so far as necessary the dredging of a similar channel through Joe's Creek for about two miles, and thence the following of an old channel eastward to 4-Mile Bayou, into which it will open a short distance above the bridges referred to in your communication.

The cost of this work will be very considerable, as some of these channels will require an excavation of probably 15 to 18 feet from the top, due to the high rolling nature of the land, for the system of ditches constructed by the Florida Association was only designed to drain out the little ponds or depressions scattered over the tract of land, as there are no swamp lands in this section.

The completion of these channels will give about 15 miles of inland navigable waters, which, as the country is settling very rapidly, and bids fair to have in the near future a dense population, will necessarily send a large amount of coastwise traffic through the openings in the bridges referred to.



Thanking you for the kindly interest you have taken in the matter, and the protection that you have provided for the Florida Association and its hundreds of settlers, we remain,

Very truly yours,  
FLORIDA ASSOCIATION<sup>7</sup>

#### FACTS ABOUT PINELLAS PARK from *Pinellas Park Enterprise* 3/11/1915

The Pinellas Park drainage supervisors are arranging to start work within the next thirty days on a perfect system of drainage, which will include Pinellas Park and the outlying districts. This district comprises 14,000 acres, and will eventually mean a canal cut through Long Bayou from Boca Ciega to Tampa Bay.

There will be numerous short canals which will be navigable for small boats, running in from the main canal, which will bring Pinellas Park close to navigation. All the requirements of the law have been complied with, and the bonds are now in the hands of a lithographer for completion.

The issue will be \$100,000 in denominations of \$100, \$500 and \$1,000 bearing 6 per cent interest, payable semi-annually, in January and July.<sup>8</sup>

#### TO START DIGGING DRAINAGE CANAL WITHIN 30 DAYS

Bonds Being Printed and Sale Arranged For Securities  
Pinellas Park People Get Busy and Work will Be Going On All During The Summer - Big Monthly Pay-roll

Within thirty days, according to P. J. McDevitt, work will commence on the immense drainage canal which is to be cut in connection with the Pinellas Park drainage district, bonds for which are now being printed. A sale for the bonds already has been arranged and as soon as the certificates come from the printer they will be signed by the proper authorities and converted into cash.

One dredge has been purchased for the drainage work and two other machines have been bought and will be delivered within 30 days. By this time it is expected the bonds will have been disposed of and there will be plenty of money in the drainage district treasury to commence operations on.

The drainage canal which is to be cut through the Pinellas Park district will be five miles long, 100 feet wide and three feet below low tide. It will drain

<sup>7</sup> *Pinellas Park News*, Feb. 1915

<sup>8</sup> *Pinellas Park Enterprise*, March 11, 1915

14,000 acres.

The early beginning of these operations will make Pinellas Park the scene of activity during the summer months as the payroll for the drainage work, which will be carried on with Pinellas Park as the base of operations will amount to between \$2,000 and \$3,000 a month.<sup>9</sup>

**PEOPLE AWARD BIG CONTRACT  
Will Cut Canal From Tampa to Boca Ciega Bay at Once  
Engineering Project To Cost Approximately \$100,000  
and Open Large Body of Land For Occupancy**

Following the recent favorable Supreme Court decision, the Pinellas Par Drainage, yesterday closed a contract with the Florida Drainage and Construction Company of Mulberry, for the construction of canal and drainage systems in that thriving and growing new community and work on the project will be commenced within fifteen days, if possible, according to members of the contracting firm.

The contract will amount to approximately \$100,000 and when completed will afford the residents of Pinellas Park many advantages and conveniences not at this time enjoyed.

One of the biggest items in the contract is the construction of a canal 100 feet wide, from Tampa Bay to Boca Ciega Bay, four feet below the low tide line, making navigation of small boats possible. In addition there will be several lateral canals and many drains, which will take care of the surface water in an ideal manner.

#### To Open Roadways

Roadways will be opened every half mile in all directions of the compass to the width of thirty feet, with a drain on one side, thus making all sections available and open up for residential purposes a very excellent and well situated body of land. The village is growing rapidly and with the completion of the new engineering project, it is believed the population will increase by leaps and bounds.

Members of the commission in charge of the drainage district are D.D. Stine, president, J.R. Shoecraft, treasurer and P.J. McDevitt the secretary.

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<sup>9</sup> *St Petersburg Daily Times*, March 13, 1915  
Rev. 12/19/95

Entitled to Praise

The people of Pinellas Park are to be congratulated on the manner in which they have carried this project through successfully. When the prosier to it and the courts were resorted to and the decision, making possible the letting of the contract was made on May 5, since which time those back of the proposition have been busy with the work before them

The contracting company was represented at the letting by J.W. Campbell, A.R. Hull and A.H. DeVane, all of Mullberry. Mr. Campbell indicated that his company will immediately take steps to get machinery and equipment on the ground and that it would be only a matter of about two weeks before actual work will be commenced.<sup>10</sup>

#### PINELLAS PARK BONDS PLACED

##### R. L. West Negotiates Sale Which Will Provide the Funds

The Pinellas Park Drainage proposition is an assured fact and rich lands of that section, now too wet for cultivation, are to be entirely reclaimed. Money necessary for this task is forthcoming as arrangements were made yesterday, whereby the bonds are to be disposed of. R. L. West of this city arranged to take the bonds for a prominent bonding house.

The original plan had been to sell them in Philadelphia, By the present plan the bonds will be taken in large sums and the money will come in large lumps directly into the hands of the men who are to undertake the drainage proposition.

The sale of the bonds follows the recent decision validating all such bonds. It is of vast importance to Pinellas Park and means that that enterprising section will advance even more rapidly in value and prominence.<sup>11</sup>

#### Drainage Bids Low

Bids for the Lake Largo-Cross Bayou ditches have been submitted to the commissioners of that district and the contract was awarded to Edgar Chapman, whose bid was \$50,059.32. The bids varied from \$90,325 to the bid made by Mr. Chapman.

The actual work on the project will be commenced in about 30 days, according to the contractor. The project is one of the largest that has ever been

<sup>10</sup> *St. Petersburg Daily Times, May 20, 1915*

<sup>11</sup> *St. Petersburg Daily Times, June 2, 1915*

undertaken in this section and will reclaim much land that is at the present time useless for farming or other purposes.

The contract awarded to Mr. Chapman does not include the 100 foot canal and by the time the work is completed it will cost close to \$100,000. The successful bid was away under the estimate of cost.<sup>12</sup>

## Pinellas Park Canal System Will Convert 13,000 Acres of Useless Swamp Land Into Rich Fields of Fertility

(From either St. Petersburg Times or Independent)  
1916 or 1917

Approximately 13,000 acres of land in the heart of Pinellas county will be converted from a useless expanse of undeveloped land into a flourishing area fertility within the next year, or when the comprehensive system of drainage canals under consideration by the Pinellas Park Drainage district has been completed.

Beginning work last February an "A" dipper dredge has eaten its way back and forth across the peninsula cutting deep channels connecting with tide water on both sides of the county. The work is nearly half completed at this time and the work is going steadily along. Lateral canals by the score are being excavated, connecting with the main canal, until the Pinellas Park country is beginning to partake of the appearance of a veritable Holland.

Under the recently enacted Florida drainage act, a group of enterprising men from the north, quick to grasp the possibilities agriculturally of this otherwise valuable land, formed one of the first drainage districts in the state. The project then was largely an experiment and as a consequence was observed with much interest from all sections where similar conditions obtained.

The drainage district was incorporated according to law and a \$100,000 bond issue floated, the first of the kind in the state to carry on the work as the only expeditious way of getting quick and satisfactory results. The problem of draining an individual tract of land was manifestly so difficult and costly that the proposition to unite forces under the drainage law came as a welcome answer to the land owners around Pinellas Park.

<sup>12</sup> St. Petersburg Independent, March 7, 1916  
Rev. 12/20/95

Enthusiastic support was given the project from the start and in a remarkably short time the affairs of the corporation were in such shape that the money from the bonds was available for the work. When the big dredge was put into operation last winter to reclaim this land it attracted many students of the drainage problem and after watching the good results they were convinced that the drainage system was bound to be a success.

#### History of District

Pinellas Park Drainage District was organized during the early part of 1914 and was incorporated on the 6th day of June 1914, in the Circuit Court of the Sixth Judicial District of the State of Florida.

The first land owners meeting was held at the court house at Clearwater, Florida June 27th 1914. There as represented in person and proxy over 10,000 acres of land out of a possible 13,000 acres. At this meeting three supervisors were elected P. J. McDevitt being elected for a three year term, D. D. Stine being elected for a two year term, and James R. Shoecraft for a one year term.

These supervisors took their oath of office and held their first regular meeting at which meeting D. D. Stine was elected President, James R. Shoecraft elected Treasurer, and P. J. McDevitt was elected Secretary Cook & Dishman were appointed attorneys for the District. C. M. Dechant was appointed Chief Engineer. The Treasurer and the Chief Engineer are under bond and are bonded by the American Surety Co. of New York.

Land owners meeting is held annually on the 27th day of June each year, at which time one supervisor is elected for a three year term.

Chief Engineer Dechant and his assistants prepared the Plan of Reclamation, which was very carefully and thoroughly gone over and adopted by the Board of Supervisors, September 3rd 1914. Application was made to the Circuit Court on September 30, 1914 for the appointment of three disinterested commissioners to assess benefits and damages to the land within the District.

The Court appointed M. P. Miller, E. C. Reed, and Frank E. Estes. After taking their oath of office and organizing according to law, these commissioners made a very careful examination of all the land within the District. They were accompanied by the Secretary of the district who was required to make up their report. With this report completed it turned out to be a book containing 183 pages.

Each and every tract of land was ? benefits or damages, according what benefit or damages they received. A copy of this report was filed with the Clerk of the Circuit Court, at Clearwater.

#### Financing the Project

The question of financing this project consumed considerable time. The first thing to overcome was the question of whether the Act was constitutional or not. A test case was made by one of the tax payers of the district, and was taken to the ? Court which

13, 1915. Bids were advertised for doing the work, and the best bid received was from the Florida Drainage & Const. Co., and the contract was let to them May 24, 1915. The bonds were sold to Gunter & Sawyers, of Jacksonville, June 2, 1915. This deal was made through R. L. West, of St. Petersburg, who represents Gunter & Sawyers in this county. While these bonds were sold in June, 1915, the District did not actually receive the money until December 28, 1915.

As this was the first Drainage District under Chapter 6458, Laws of Florida, to sell drainage bonds, there were a great many questions raised, and all these questions had to be passed on by F. Wm. Kraft, of Chicago, who is recognized as one of the leading attorneys to pass on bond issues. What Mr. Kraft didn't ask for in reference to this District, isn't worth mentioning, and the matter wasn't finally settled until P. J. McDevitt, Secretary of the District, made a special trip to Chicago.

#### Actual Work

Work was commenced clearing the rights of way, July 1915. The bonds were validated by the Circuit Court at Bradentown, October 22, 1915. The Plan of Reclamation was approved by Isham Randolph, drainage expert, of Chicago November 11th. 1915.

A floating steel dredge was put to work by the contractors in February 1916. This dredge was erected about one-half mile northeast of Pinellas Park among the tall timber, and dug its way out, making a junction near the county road, and digging in a northeasterly direction for about two miles, then turning around and digging southwest into Cross Bayou, south in the Bayou to the mouth of Joe's Creek, going up this creek in a southeast direction to the mouth of canal No. 1, coming up this ditch in a northeasterly direction to Pinellas Park Boulevard just west of 22nd. St.

This will be tide water to 12th. avenue, and afford Pinellas Park water transportation from Tampa and other points when the system is completed.

This is about the location the dredge at the present time and its itinerary will be as follows: back out of No. 1 canal into Joe's Creek, continue up Joe's Creek to the mouth of No. 2 canal, which is about one-half mile south of Pinellas Park. Up this canal close to the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad, then back into Joe's Creek and complete the work in this Creek up to the eastern line of the District.

Then back to a line between section 5 and 6 and south and east, crossing the Seminole road back nearly to the center of section 8, the lands of the Tyrone Pinellas Company.

Then back to Cross Bayou to the main channel from Seminole bridge northeast to the Lake Largo Cross Bayou District, at which time the dredge will be put to work for the Lake Largo-Cross Bayou District, and continue this canal into Old Tampa Bay. <sup>13</sup>

Letter to P.J. McDevitt, Secty. from C.M. Dechant, Chief Engineer, June 13, 1916

Dear Sir: - In presenting this letter I am partly quoting one written February 1915, in reply to some inquiries: "I beg leave to say, as Chief Engineer of the Pinellas Park Drainage District, which was duly organized during 1914, under Florida state law Chapter 6458, year 1913, covering all the lands originally owned by the Florida Association, and some adjoining:

I have taken levels all over the District and after making a study of this whole problem I find the land ranges from 10 feet above low tide along the shores, to a matter of 40 feet above low tide in the interior high points, with a good average elevation and splendid drainage levels, and with five well balanced outlets of natural drainage creeks and considerable work done on main channels by the Florida Association before the District was organized.

The Plan of Reclamation as worked out, adopted and filed in the County records, shows that every depression or so-called little pond, in the District, can be and eventually will be drained. Beside draining every pond the plan covers the digging of road ditches one-half mile on section and half section then east, and west, north and south, throughout the District.

At the same time forming half the roads with the material so excavated, leading these road ditches into the nearest main ditch, than gathering the surface

<sup>13</sup> *St. Petersburg Daily Times*, June 1916 (?)

water quickly from flat portions where there are no ponds and forming roads reaching all parts of the region.

In some cases where elevation demands, tide water canals were designed which will be three feet or more deeper than low tide, and be available for motor boats to reach the properties close in to the center of population, it has been conceded that this plan with the references and record system, which the Secretary has worked out, is as a whole the most complete and comprehensive system in the state.

It was thoroughly gone over and approved by the ? ? Isham Randolph, for the bonding people. We estimate to be able to complete the work 20 months after starting same."

As to the progress of the work: the grubbing of roads was started June 1915, and is practically completed, with 57 miles covered. The road ditches and the lateral ditches have been combined, when practical, thus saving expense and putting the ditches where they least interfere with working farm land.

The dredging work was started in February this year. (1916) and up to June 1st one-third of this work has been done, as also one-third of the road and lateral ditches, if the work continues at the same ratio the work will be completed in twelve months instead of twenty as the limit set before starting.

The amount of earth removed up to June 1st. was 160,863 cub. yds. We hope and expect the imminent rainy season to demonstrate in the section about completed, the great improvement that will accrue to the whole District when all the work is finished: already the pessimists and knockers have been silenced by the steady systematic results accomplished by the Supervisors and contractors, with probably some credit to the engineering department.

The popularity of the boating channels being dug is assured by the number of motor and other boats already being installed and doing business, even before the longer channels and outlets are started. It ought not to take a great stretch of imagination to picture in the near future, motor boats and tenders loaded down with melons and truck of all kinds going blithely through these channels to the market ports near by.

Just here a suggestion to the county park board might not be amiss: that they utilize the material thrown up from the Bayou shore boulevards. There is one feature contemplated in the present drainage system that is probably in the long run the best of all, which includes the maintenance; so that the work done



now will not be lost, but continued in proper working conditions indefinitely at comparatively low cost, assuring the owners of property drainage at all times.

Very respectfully yours,  
C.M. DECHANT,  
Chief Engineer<sup>4</sup>

Letter from Florida Drainage & Construction Company, June 26, 1916  
Pinellas Park Drainage District, Pinellas Park, Fla.

Gentlemen: - As requested by your Secretary in reference to climate, healthfulness, <sup>?</sup>, etc., it gives me pleasure to <sup>?</sup> that you have one of the most healthful <sup>?</sup> - <sup>?</sup> <sup>?</sup>

I have been ditching since the early part of last February. Our outfit consists of a floating dredge of the American Steel Dredge Co. pattern, with a yard and one-half bucket. This machine runs day and night; it is handled by two crews, has its own electric light plant and everything complete.

A houseboat is provided for the accommodation of the crews, distance behind the dredge. This boat is fitted with sleeping quarters on the second floor, with kitchen and dining room on the first floor. The cook always has the meals ready, when meal time arrives.

We have so far completed several miles of the larger ditches and tide water canals. I believe that I am safe in saying that your ditching system will be sufficient to quickly carry off the heaviest kind of rain. In addition to the size laid out by the engineer it has quite often been necessary for me to make them both wider and deeper in order to get my dredge through. Into these large ditches and tide water canals are emptied the smaller ditches, or laterals; and into the latter is emptied the road ditches which makes a perfect network of water carrying ditches through the entire tract.

In doing this work we had a good opportunity to observe the various kind of subsoils, and I believe that you have the best kind of soils for citrus fruit and vegetables. We have dug through thousands of feet of shell deposit about two or three feet below the surface.

We also have struck various kinds of clay, especially a tough blue clay. A great deal of yellow subsoil, and marl. These are all from three to five feet below the surface of the ground and while most people believe that Florida is all sand,

<sup>4</sup> *St. Petersburg Daily Times, June 13, 1916*

because they see it on the surface, if they will only look along these ditches and see the various kind of soils that are turned up, they would honestly change their minds

I believe your county and your territory between St. Petersburg and Clearwater, is fast growing into value. With perfect drainage and plenty of good roads and the finest climate in the United States, you are bound to get the people.

Yours truly,  
Florida Drainage & Construction Company  
J. W. Campbell, Pres.<sup>15</sup>

#### TRUSTEES ACCEPT \$62,000 WORTH OF DRAINAGE WORK

#### Little of Lake Largo-Cross Bayou Canal Still Unfinished

When the trustees of the Lake Largo-Cross Bayou Drainage district held their regular meeting at Largo yesterday, Edgar Thompson, of Plant City, having completed his contract for \$62,000 worth of work was released from his bond and the work was accepted.

Thompson's contract covered the major portion of the drainage work in this big district. The only remaining portion of the drainage work in this big district. The only remaining portion is that of the Cross Bayou canal, the contract for which is in the hands of John W. Campbell of Pinellas Park. The west three quarters of a mile of this canal has been completed and the remainder will likely be finished by the latter part of November.

Attorney Freeman P. Lane and F. R. Francke, of St. Petersburg, both members of the board of trustees, went up from here to attend the meeting. George B. Hills, southern representative of Isham Randolph & Co., the noted Chicago firm who were consulting engineers for the Panama canal work, was present in his official capacity as engineer for the district. After the meeting Mr. Hills came to St. Petersburg and left here last night for Jacksonville.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> *St. Petersburg Daily Times*, June 1916 (?)

<sup>16</sup> *St. Petersburg Times*, Sept. 11, 1917

## INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM MCINTIRE FAMILY

WALKING DREDGE -Raft for wood to fuel steam shovel and cooking. A crew and cook lived on board.

Mrs. Frank G. McIntire was an occasional substitute on dredge. The cook had to have a helper bring her firewood.

During the dredging of the Cross Bayou Canal between Tampa Bay and Cross Bayou, 24 flat cars of pre-historic bones were taken out of this canal and then taken to the Smithsonian Institute.<sup>17</sup>

## PINELLAS PARK, BEGAN AS A FARM COMMUNITY

Margaret (Stine), who later became a teacher and principal of Pinellas schools, has bad memories of her family's early days here. The soil was too sandy and infertile for sugar cane. Unusually heavy summer rains in 1915 and 1916 turned Pinellas Park into a swamp. No one wanted to buy land. Davis formed the Pinellas Park Drainage District in an emergency effort to save the venture, but the work was still uncompleted when he died of a heart attack on Jan. 22, 1917.

Hastily put together, the Pinellas Park Drainage District directed by Shoecraft and McDevitt, joined with the Lake Largo District directed by William McMullen. The lowland was drained by dredging Cross Bayou Canal from Boca Ciega to Old Tampa Bay.

To finance the work, liens were placed on all property within the drainage district. Rather than pay the high taxes, landholders simply relinquished their land to the two districts. Land became so worthless that the districts sold some for as little as 41¢ an acre.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> *McIntire Family*, 1987 (?)

<sup>18</sup> *Florida's Pinellas Peninsula* by June Hurley Young, C - 1984 (Pg. 108)