

MANATEE HISTORY MATTERS

Life of Duette pioneers: 19th to 21st century

■ **Manatee County Agricultural Museum features John Jackson Keen, a Manatee County Century Pioneer Farm Family sponsored by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.**

HISTORY MATTERS



BY DIANE INGRAM
Special to the Herald

The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services began the Century Pioneer Family Farm Program in 1985. Honoring families who have maintained at least 100 years of continuous family farm ownership, the program acknowledges the benefits that family farms and ranches provide to the state.

The department believes pioneers are to be recognized as the original stewards of the land for preserving environmental resources and helping foster the state's agricultural industry, which pro-

vides an important economic base for Florida to this very day. These families receive a certificate as well as a sign that can be posted on the property denoting its significance.

Manatee County Agricultural Museum features John Jackson Keen, a Manatee County Century Pioneer Farm Family. In the 1860s, Jake Keen married Sarah, part-Seminole Indian, and settled at Bunker Hill in Duette. At 90 cents an acre, they were able to purchase 81 acres of property. In 1882, Jake and Sarah's son, Jacob Gaskins Keen, moved to a piece of property on current-day Keentown

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