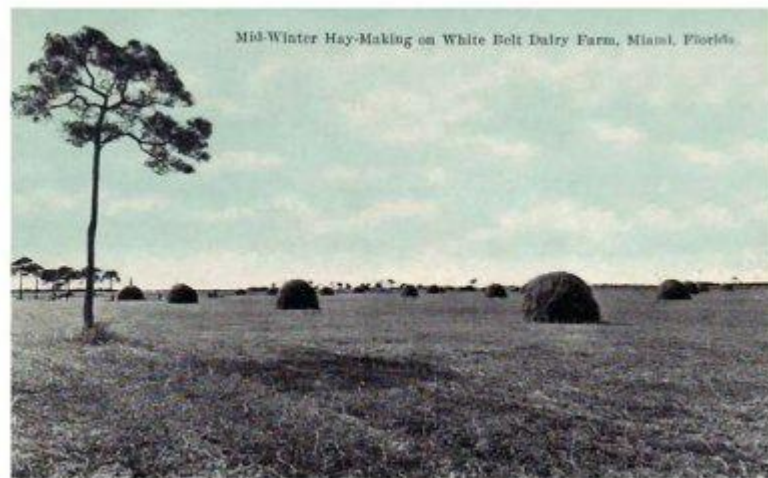


Volunteer Work at John G. and Susan H. Dupuis Jr. Management Area

John Dupuis arrived by train in Lemon City just five miles North of Miami October 29, 1898 with a couple of medical books and a suitcase. He found his way to the Connelly Hotel where the night manager, awakened by his dog, rented him a room. John Gordon Dupuis would over the next 57 years practice medicine, establish a pharmacy, a high school, become a charter member of the Dade County Medical Association and develop the White Belt Dairy Farm. The 21875 acre ranch, named after Dupuis' herd of Dutch White Belt cattle. Named after the country of origin they were long lived and black with a wide belt of white across their back and around their body. They produced a high quality and large volume of milk grazing and with little grain. P.T. Barnum imported White Belts as well...yes that is the same Barnum as in Ringling Brothers, Barnum and Bailey Circus. The cows appeared in the circus and were later moved to Barnum's farm.



Hay at Dupuis C. 1920

It was the doctor's wife Susan that ran the White Belt Dairy Farm though and later his son John Jr. ran the dairy until he retired in 1975. The farm remained active until 1985 according to Florida Department of Agricultural records.

The farm was donated to the Nature Conservancy in 1985 by the Dupuis family and in 1987 the South Florida Water Management District purchased the property. The S.F.W.M.D. was created in 1949 to restore South Florida's water resources, ecosystems and to establish a system of flood protection. Lastly the District was charged with organizing the public use of the large tracts of land under their management (now over a million acres in 16 counties). The Equestrian camp is utilized by campers from all over the U.S.A and it is a top destination for riding and camping with horses. The original barn is still serviceable and still in use. Initially the S.F.W.M.D plan would not allow horses in Dupuis but they relented under pressure from equestrian groups on the condition that the barn be repaired, paddocks built and trails cleared and marked. The equestrian camp was established with the work of volunteers and though it is now an established institution volunteering ensures the survival of the camp. The budget allotted is very tight for much of the maintenance and the help of volunteers is much appreciated by S.F.W.M.D management. Users of District properties still meet to discuss land availability and progress toward environmental goals. Recently The Florida Horsemen's Club built new manure bins, installed trail markers and cleaned up the camp post storms.

