

## **BIOGRAPHY OF R. E "PETE" DAMON COMMISSIONER 1931-1932 AND 1935-1953**

On July 17, 2007 Sawfish Bay Park opened at the SE foot of the Alternate A1A Bridge. At the ribbon cutting ceremony the bridge was dedicated as the  
**R. E. "Pete" Damon Memorial Bridge.**

It is very fitting that this bridge is named for Mr. Damon, as he was the bridge tender for the Alternate A1A Bridge for twenty years! Although this bridge was only officially named after Mr. Damon in 2005, it has been called the "Damon Bridge" locally for many years. But Mr. Damon was more than just the bridge tender. When Jupiter was a small village, citizens wore *many hats!*

In an article in "The Loxahatchee Lament", (Vol. 1, © 1978 The Stuart News Company, © 1978 Cary Publications, Inc., All Rights Reserved,) **Mrs. Addie Damon Valentini** (who attended the bridge dedication) recalled stories of her father, R. E. "Pete" Damon. Pete Damon and his father, J.C. Damon, had a **sawmill** in the "country" west of Old Dixie and supplied lumber for homebuilding in Jupiter and West Palm Beach. In 1924, Mr. Damon became the **Postmaster** at the post office located near the Bowers store On Eganfuskee Street.

In 1931, students went to school by bus rather than by boat, because the school house was in the area of Old Town Hall Park. Mr. Damon became one of the school **bus drivers**.

According to the Town minutes, in April of 1931, Mr. Damon was elected a **Town Commissioner**. He was still the Postmaster at that time. He served as a Commissioner until June 1932, when he resigned to become **Town Clerk, Tax Assessor and Tax Collector**, at a salary of \$75.00 per month.

In April 1935, Mr. Damon once again ran for the Town Commission, and he served as a Commissioner until **1953!** Although this long time service to the Town makes Pete the *third-longest serving Commissioner/Councilor*, he was maybe best known for being the **bridge tender**.

Pete and his wife lived in the house which was right by the bridge. His daughter recalled memories of the house at the bridge dedication in July of 2007, and said it was a very nice house. It is interesting to note that by 1959, Jupiter was really growing, because in the minutes dated May 19, 1959 it was noted: "Mr. Daily spoke of the hazardous situation at the end of A1A Bridge where the Damon garage is located, with the Damon cars having to be backed out onto the Highway. This matter was referred to Mr. Flanagan with the suggestion that he talk with the Bridge Department."

Mr. R. E. "Pete" Damon passed away in 1961, but the Alternate A1A Bridge will always bear the name of this man who was so important to Jupiter's history.