



By History Web Committee

Salhaven-A Retirement Haven founded in the 1950's



Jupiter area residents familiar with the history of the Jupiter Medical Center know that when the Salhaven retirement village closed in 1971, part of its property became today's Jonathan's Landing, and Salhaven's outpatient clinic and convalescence pavilion were the start of today's medical center. But the Salhaven community and its development in the mid-1950 is an interesting story, and we have just received some wonderful pictures showing the groundbreaking and early stages of this early "planned community."

SOME OF THE FOLLOWING MATERIAL WAS TAKEN FROM A TIME MAGAZINE ARTICLE DATED MONDAY, DECEMBER 17, 1956. THE ARTICLE CAN BE FOUND ON-LINE AT WWW.TIME.COM.

Salhaven was named for Sal B. Hoffman, the president of the Upholsters International Union. Why? Because Mr. Hoffman and the union leadership used \$2,500,000 of the union's welfare-fund to build the 634-acre community in Jupiter. The community was designed to house 500 union members and their families, and predicted to cost \$5,000,000 upon completion. The plans were to build 240 cottages that would be air-conditioned and completely furnished. There would also be 10 apartment lodges.

Residents were going to be retirees living on union pensions and social security. So rent would be \$50.00 for a one-bedroom cottage, with an additional \$12.00 per month for each additional bedroom. The apartments? They would rent for \$35.00 per month.

These retirees would have free medical care in the 32-bed convalescent hospital. In their leisure time, they could swim in one of 15 planned pools, and there would be a workshop where residents could make the furniture for the cottages and apartments.

Harry G. Jones was born February 3, 1900 in Kentucky. He was a Union Representative for the Upholsterer's International Union, and in 1954 he was in charge of the land development for the retirement village in Jupiter. Unfortunately, Mr. Jones passed away unexpectedly in Jupiter on



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February 7, 1955 and did not get to see the official opening of Salhaven in 1956. However, he was understandably proud of this innovative planned community and his accomplishments on what he called "The Project," and kept a pictorial record of the beginnings of Salhaven.

Mr. Jones' son John also worked on the Salhaven project, and John's daughter, Barbara Peterson of Indiana, was kind to send us copies of some of these pictures to display on our history website.

These pictures were passed down in her family, and we can't thank her enough for allowing us to share them! Mr. and Mrs. Harry G. Jones purchased two lots in Jupiter's Pine Gardens, so they intended to have roots in this area, and Mr. Jones' widow visited Jupiter each winter. Mr. Jones also worked on developing the land for the Jupiter Volunteer Fire Department, headed up at that time by Ralph Crooks (owner of Ralph's Bar on Center Street.)

Ecology wasn't a buzz word in the 1950's, but Mr. Jones and the folks developing Salhaven must have cared about the environment, because a large tree was preserved by moving it to the entrance of Salhaven. We have several pictures of this huge tree being moved!

The picture above was taken at the groundbreaking ceremony for Salhaven. There was more than one groundbreaking, because another ceremony was held at the site of the large tree after it was moved.

Salhaven's official opening was in December of 1956. According to the Time magazine article, a band played and an American Legion color guard attended the flag-raising event held in the newly paved "Betsy Ross Plaza." (Betsy Ross took over her first husband's upholstery shop in Philadelphia when he was killed in 1776, so the Union considered her an upholsterer as well as a seamstress.)

Although Mr. Jones had passed away, he was not forgotten at Salhaven. Reportedly one of the main streets going into the development was "Harry G. Jones Blvd." Today, Betsy Ross Plaza and Harry G. Jones Blvd. do not exist as street names in the Jupiter area.

When the Salhaven project failed in 1971, the land was sold to Burning Foot, Ltd. – part of the land became the medical center, and the rest of the land was sold to the Alcoa Company, which developed Jonathan's Landing. The original Salhaven residences no longer exist where they were built, although some of them were moved to the West Jupiter area.



Rada (1-3-18): Salhaven Village house by Rufus Nims, (8824-2, Courtesy of the Historical Museum of Southern Florida

Some pictures of the residences are still in existence. According to History Miami, the famous Florida architect Rufus Nims designed houses in Salhaven Village. He was one of three leaders



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of a Miami version of the “modern is regional” movement, and he experimented with building materials and construction technologies in his modern tropical houses. Nims is best known for the design of the Howard Johnson restaurants in the 1950’s.

So although “Salhaven” is gone, it tells an interesting story regarding new ideas about Florida retirement in the 1950’s, has links leading to famous architects, an international union, and even Colonial history, as well as local links to Jupiter pioneers and our local hospital.

[VIEW PICTURES](#) OF SALHAVEN IN ITS EARLY DEVELOPMENT STAGES, INCLUDING **MOVING THE “BIG TREE.”**

