



# WILTON MANORS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## HISTORICAL NOTES

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### WILTON MANORS - IN SHORT

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Wilton Manors, “The Island City,” is located on the high ground of the Florida Eastern Coastal Ridge between the North and South Forks of the Middle River in Broward County, Wilton Manors. It was home to Seminoles, and Tequestas before them.

William C. Collier arrived in the early 1890’s. The Seminoles took to calling the area Colohatchee (Collier’s by the River), and a small settlement grew with the completion of a road to Miami and then the arrival of the Florida East Coast Railway in 1896.

In 1925, Edward J. Willingham, a wealthy Georgian entrepreneur who had arrived in the Fort Lauderdale area a couple years before, laid out an ambitious Wilton Manors plat as an upscale community for the soon to arrive wealthy entrepreneurs taking advantage of the imminent economic boom. The boom turned to bust in 1926, Willingham returned to Georgia, leaving a couple houses, the curving Wilton Drive, and the magnificent Francis Abreu designed entrance gates at Five Points.

In 1937, George Richardson built the third golf course the county, a portion of which is now the flagship of Wilton Manors’ superb parks system. In the 1940’s, an extraordinary group of volunteers emerged and Wilton Manors took off. It was incorporated as a Village in 1947, to counter threats of annexation by both Oakland Park and Fort Lauderdale. It was incorporated as a City in 1953.

It continues to flourish because of the active participation of residents, including an influx of newcomers, committed to making their Island City an extraordinary place to live. (WMHS)

(Provided to the Florida League of Cities website by the Historical Society.)

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