

**Transcript of an Oral History Interview in the collection of the
BREVARD COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION
308 Forrest Ave., Cocoa, FL 32922**

Interviewer: Alfred H Trafford considers himself as local as you can get. When asked about how his family became a part of Florida, he told me that ...

Al Trafford: The story goes that he was used to a more active life in Providence, so he moved to Salt Lake, which is west of Titusville [00:00:30] to get to where the action was. Interesting thing about my great-uncle's move to Florida in 1865, he settled in Sanford, was involved in the business life of Sanford. Today, if you'd buy property in downtown Sanford, it'll be described according to Edward Trafford's map of Sanford. [00:01:00] He surveyed all the way down the state of Florida. He named Lake Alfred for my grandfather. He named Lake Jessie for grandmother, and he named Lake Trafford down in Lake County for himself. He was one of the early pioneers of Central Florida.

Interviewer: He's a native Floridian born in the city of Cocoa on October 19th, 1914. Mr. Trafford holds fond memories of his childhood.

Al Trafford: [00:01:30] As kids growing up in a climate like this where you could be outdoors on the river, we fished, we sailed, we built rafts, we camped, we did the things that maybe kids can't do today like we used to be able to. We had more freedom. It was a small area, population wise. There was no [00:02:00] crime really. The kids could go anywhere and then be safe. You know, they didn't let us drive automobiles on the roads 'til we were 12 in those days. And we hunted, we fished, we had great support from family. My grandparents, and my uncles, they took us fishing, they took us hunting, [00:02:30] they took us frogging, they took us to the beach. It was just a great life for kids, and I look back on it with great pleasure.

Interviewer: Mr. Trafford received his education from the University of Florida.

Al Trafford: Well, I went to the University of Florida and I took business administration. I specialized in fields that would help [00:03:00] me in the real estate business. Specializing in real estate and economics, basically. Great life, I enjoyed it. I knew I was going in the business, and I knew what I wanted to get out of college.

I got involved into things that most students got involved in. Intramurals, did a little boxing, did a [00:03:30] little work on the school annual. Basically, my activity, I belonged to a Fraternity, Kappa Sigma. Matter of fact, a former laureate Dave Nisbet was also a member.

Interviewer: Mr. Trafford returned to Brevard County from the University of Florida in 1938. [00:04:00] That same year he met his wife Margot.

Al Trafford: One of the biggest celebrations of the year in this area was each February we held the Indian River Orange Jubilee. And it was a week celebration. Everyone participated. We had parades, we had fish fries, we had plays, we had all kind [00:04:30] of ... we had boat races, and it was climaxed with the Jubilee Ball. And

the king and queen, which had been elected through the purchase of tickets, were the reigning monarchs of the ball, so to speak. It was held in the Indian River Hotel. She was a visitor from Chicago, [00:05:00] a winter visitor, and I met her there. And I thought, "That's the best thing I ever saw."

Interviewer: Two years later they married. Soon afterwards, they had a daughter also named Margot who's a Rollins College graduate and now resides in Belleville, Ontario Canada with her husband and daughter. Having studied business in college, he had an opportunity to pursue a career in numerous fields. When asked why he chose real estate, he simply stated ...

Al Trafford: [00:05:30] I never thought of going in any other business. I grew up in it.

Interviewer: After his college graduation, he began his commitment to the community that gave him so much as a child.

Al Trafford: Well, you know, when you're local, you come back home from school and you're eager and you're enthusiastic and you're willing, you had lots of jobs. And I had [00:06:00] jobs ... committee work, and fund campaigns for Red Cross and the church and the hospital and just about every cause you can think of. I was local treasurer of the Children's Home Society. I joined the Rotary Club, I joined the Chamber of Commerce.

Interviewer: As a matter of fact, [00:06:30] Mr. Trafford was awarded the Chamber of Commerce Distinguished Service Award in January of 1991. Mr. Trafford is a very dedicated man. He says this about his time.

Al Trafford: I had more meetings at night than I had nights.

Interviewer: His list of commitments is rather long. President of Trafford Company, Brevard County Board of Realtors, North Central Brevard Board of Realtors, Director of First Federal of Orlando, Director [00:07:00] of Barnett Bank of Cocoa, Director of the Florida Chamber of Commerce, Cocoa Beach Chamber of Commerce, past Director of Committee 100, Director of the Underwriters of National Insurance Company, Cocoa Planning and Zoning Board, and former Commodore of the Eau Gallie Yacht Club.

In his spare time at his tropical paradise home on South Merritt Island, he enjoys horticulture and subtropical plantings. We had Mr. Trafford [00:07:30] explain how his paradise came about.

Al Trafford: Two of the former laureates, Dave Nisbet and Joe Wickham of the county commission ... Our mosquito control program had become so effective that they eliminated about 90% of the mosquitoes in South Merritt Island all throughout the area. So after that occurred, we bought 10 acres and a home [00:08:00] on South Merritt Island, you know, extending from river to river, and we lived there since then. 35, 36, 37 years.

Interviewer: Here, on his 10 acres, peacocks freely roam and ducks linger on the pond. The land is abundant with palm trees and citrus groves. Mr. Trafford says that ...

Al Trafford: To this day, I think I'd rather be home on [00:08:30] those grounds than anywhere else.

Interviewer: When asked how he wanted to be remembered, he simply stated ...

Al Trafford: Well, I think as a responsible person that lived here and left something a little better behind than he found, and maybe touched the lives of some people favorably.