

Preben Johansen Parkway “Johansen Park” Historical Background

Preben Johansen Parkway was named after Preben Johansen in 1983 for his dedication and outstanding service rendered to the City of Atlantic Beach. Preben Johansen was first named an Atlantic Beach City Commissioner in 1957, a title he held until 1963 and again from 1967 to 1971 before serving as a Jacksonville City Council member for the following eight years. He would serve as an Atlantic Beach Commissioner again from 1981 until his untimely death in September 1982. In a 1982 Resolution by the City Commission, Mr. Johansen is commended for his faithful service and his dedication, diligence, perseverance, and personal sacrifice to further the interests of the community. Many members of the community also remember Preben Johansen as the spirited owner of the former Atlantic Beach landmark, Le Chateau Restaurant. After purchasing Le Chateau in 1959, Preben and his wife, Nina Johansen, successfully ran the restaurant attracting notable customers including Liberace, Barry Goldwater, and various others until Preben’s death in 1982.

In the 1950's and 1960's, prior to being named Johansen Park, this area was donated by the Selva Marina Realty Company to the City of Atlantic Beach to be used for “park and beautification purposes.” The southern part of the park was donated as part of the Selva Marina Unit 2 subdivision in 1957 followed by the northern parts of the park as part of Selva Marina Unit 7 in 1969 and Unit 8 in 1972. In the 1990's, a plan to create a stormwater pond in Johansen Park was considered but was shut down following strong opposition in the community to remove trees and disturb the Park’s natural state.