

Thank you for coming today to share in the rededication of the Fatio and Barnett bench and plaque. I am Betty Gilleland, a direct descendant of Francis Philip Fatio. I would like to begin by expressing our appreciation to Lorrie Kyle of Rollins College who made this event possible. The bench had disappeared but she was a good detective because she found it. It had been damaged and was in a warehouse. She also met the challenge of finding a stonemason to repair the coquina bench and chose this lovely location, which we later discovered was its original location.

I have been asked to share how my family is related to the Fatio family, Francis Philip Fatio Sr. was born in Switzerland near Geneva. He served in the military for the Swiss Guards. After living in Italy and England, he moved to the British Province of Florida where he obtained a large land grant in St. Augustine. He bought a house by the Bay and later built three plantations on the St. John's River where he commenced the cultivation of indigo and orange groves and the raising of sheep. He renamed the area New Switzerland. During the American Revolution, he joined the English Military. The Indians burned his plantation down 3 times, so he rebuilt in Fernandina.

Mr. Fatio was a scholar and master of several languages - French, Italian, English, German, and Spanish. In his later days, he undertook the study of Hebrew so that he could read the Scriptures. He brought with him an extensive library. He was convinced that Florida had a future if its natural resources were properly developed and conserved.

Lina L'Engle Barnett followed in her great great grandfather's footsteps. She lived in Jacksonville and had many interests-- cultural, civic, and philanthropic. She was a very active member of the Colonial Dames. She had a special interest in the conservation of the forests as a protector of the soil and stressed the importance of replanting. This plaque is given in recognition of their pioneer work in forest conservation in Florida.

At the dedication in 1935, Maurice Fatio was the main speaker. He was a well-known architect in Palm Beach and designed many of the impressive mansions there. His daughter Alexandra, resided in Switzerland, but spent the summers in Palm Beach. My husband I visited her in both places many times.

My relationship with the Fatio family is through Susan Fatio L'Engle, Francis Philip Fatio's daughter who is my great great grandmother. All of her children were alive when she died in 1895 at the age of 89. I found some comments about her made by a family member. "Susan L'Engle, the venerable and distinguished lady, whose ancestors for a century have been prominent in

Florida, has carried the glow and the sparkle of youth far into the frosts of age and at 77 years, her splendid faculties are unimpaired, her wit is keen, her comprehension quick and vigorous and her fund of anecdotal reminiscences the richest and raciest in Florida. She is the center of an admiring group." I would like to have inherited some of her genes with the exception of having 10 children!

The caption on this bronze plaque reads "Francis Philip Fatio, first advocate of conservation of Florida's forests and Lina L'Engle Barnett, a Colonial Dame who kept alive the doctrine of conservation in Florida and the ideals of her distinguished ancestor."