



The Historian

The Newsletter of the Boynton Beach Historical Society

Serving Boynton Beach, Ocean Ridge, Manalapan, Gulf Stream, Briny Breezes, Lantana, Hypoluxo, the Village of Golf and all areas of West Boynton, in addition to supporting the preservation of the history of Palm Beach County and the State of Florida as a whole.

2010 Number 5

May 2010

ANNUAL DINNER & FHC PROGRAM

are both scheduled for the May program meeting of the Boynton Beach Historical Society. We will meet for our Annual Covered Dish Dinner at the Boynton Woman's Club at 5:15. The Society will provide the main dishes, the beverages, and the plates, cups and cutlery. Members are asked to bring a vegetable dish, or a salad, or a dessert sufficient to serve eight. Dinner will be followed by a presentation by one of the wonderful speakers from the Florida Humanities Council Roads Scholars Programs, Carrie Sue Ayvar.

Carrie Sue Ayvar is a nationally acclaimed bilingual storyteller dedicated to preserving and promoting the art of storytelling. Believing that stories are one of the best means of explaining and passing on the beliefs, traditions and history that individuals or communities wish to keep alive, Ayvar tries to connect people, languages and cultures through her stories. Her program is titled "Stories of Florida – Con Sabor!" which means with a Latino flavor. She is a 3rd generation storyteller from Pittsburgh who spent her teenage years in Mexico.

The Roads Scholars program was made possible through a special *Landmarks of American History* grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities and by private contributions.

The Boynton Beach Historical Society is privileged to be able to offer one of these programs this year since funding has been drastically reduced. We need as large an audience as possible, so please consider bringing your friends and family members.

If you are unable to bring a dish, you may pay \$5.00 for each person at the door to cover the cost of your meal. Or you can come at 6:00 and enjoy the speaker and fellowship, but please plan to come.

ALL PROGRAMS OF THE BOYNTON BEACH HISTORICAL SOCIETY ARE OPEN FREE TO THE PUBLIC!



CARRIE SUE AYVAR

WHAT:

**COVERED DISH DINNER
&
FHC PROGRAM** entitled
"Stories of Florida, Con
Sabor" presented by
Carrie Sue Ayvar

WHEN:

SUNDAY, MAY 23, 2010

Dinner 5:15 p.m.

Program 6:00 p.m.

WHERE:

**BOYNTON WOMAN'S
CLUB, 1010 South
Federal Hwy.**

**PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS
MEETING IS SCHEDULED
FOR A SUNDAY EVENING.**

**BOYNTON BEACH HISTORICAL SOCIETY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS—2010-11**

OFFICERS [Elected Annually]

President	Voncile Smith
1 st Vice President, Programs	Janet DeVries
2 nd Vice President, Membership	Bev Cormany
Recording Secretary	Anne Watts
Corresponding Secretary	Diana Dennis
Treasurer	Frances Tuite McKeral

NON ELECTED

Editor <i>The Historian</i>	Voncile Smith
Archivist and Webmaster	Janet DeVries

DIRECTORS [3 year staggered terms]

2011	Steve Anton
2011	Sally Dye
2012	Sheila Rousseau Taylor
2012	Delma Swilley
2013	Tim Bednarz
2013	Gloria Partin Turner

TRUSTEES [3 year staggered terms]

2011	Randall Gill
2011	Harvey Oyer, Jr
2012	Victor Norfus
2012	Dan Rousseau
2013	Brian Edwards
2013	Virginia Farace

The Boynton Beach Historical Society's website is boyntonbeachhistoricalsociety.org You can contact us at our e-mail address boyntonhistory06@yahoo.com or mail inquiries or information to our mailbox at P.O. Box 12, Boynton Beach, FL 33425-0012. Voncile can be reached at 561-734-5653.

The Historian is mailed eight times a year—September, October, November, January, February, March, April and May—to all members. No copies are produced in December, June, July and August.

NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The composition of the new Board of Directors for 2010 – 2011 is listed above. All of us are especially grateful for retiring members Marion Weems who had served tirelessly for many years as a Trustee, Carol Mahoney who had served both as Recording Secretary and as Corresponding Secretary since soon after she joined the staff of the Schoolhouse Children's Museum, and Wendy Franklin who had served as Corresponding Secretary and more recently as a Trustee.

We are grateful to new members Diana Dennis, Brian Edwards, and Anne Watts for volunteering for election and to the other members who agreed to continue in office.

DINNER DONATION

Sheila Rousseau Taylor has made a cash donation to help defray the expense of the Society's cost for the May 23 Dinner. Thank you, Sheila for your help and goodwill.

MEMBERSHIPS

[The following have renewed since April 1, 2010. Previously new or renewing members were listed in earlier editions of *The Historian*.]

CORPORATE

Scobee-Combs-Baldwin Funeral Home

FAMILY

Donald D. and Regina E. Day
Ward C. and Martha P. Parker

INDIVIDUAL

May Foy Burke
Madelene A. Hawkins
Sally Hood
William G. James
Alice Lund
Rita K. Marlin
Dorothy James Turner

ERMA JAMES MEMORIAL GIFT

The Boynton Beach Historical Society has received a cash gift from Bill James to honor his wife, Erma Pickel Obermayr James, who died last month.

Bill writes that he copied the picture and the story on the Pickel Building to send to Erma's children and her brother. We are pleased that we were able to provide this bit of recognition for her family.

We appreciate very much Bill's thinking of us at his time of loss.

LAST HISTORIAN UNTIL SEPTEMBER

After the dinner on May 23, we will have no meetings until September. We will mail the next *Historian* about a week before the September meeting.

In the meantime, if you have pictures, articles, letters or other memorabilia you would be willing to share for scanning or to donate for our archives, we would love to have them. Whatever, you do, don't throw them away or leave them behind when you move. We cannot include information about you or your family and friends if we do not have it. Remember, history began a moment ago, so, even if you were not one of the "early settlers," your story and your life in Florida and Boynton Beach are just as important for the future.

Boynton High School
Commencement Sermon Program
Sunday May 29, 1938, eight o'clock

Prelude played by Miss Anita Mitchell

Candlelight Processional of the Senior Class
Music- Priest's March from "Athalia"
Note- the auditorium will be darkened
for the Processional.

Invocation Rev. Selby
The audience is invited to remain standing
until the Invocation is offered.

Opening Song Love Divine
The audience join in singing, please.

Love Divine

Love divine, all loves excelling, Joy of Heav'n, to earth come
down! Fix in us Thy humble dwelling; All Thy faithful mercies
crown. Jesus, Thou art all compassion, Pure, unbounded love
Thou art; Visit us with Thy salvation; Enter ev'ry trembling
heart.
Breathe, O breathe Thy loving Spirit into ev'ry troubled breast!
Let us all in Thee inherit, Let us find that second rest. Take
away our bent to sinning, Alpha and Omega be; End of faith, as
its beginning, Set our hearts at liberty.
Finish then Thy new creation; Pure and spotless let us be; Let us
see Thy great salvation, Perfectly restored in Thee; Changed from
glory into glory, Till in Heav'n we take our place, Till we cast
our crowns before Thee, Lost in wonder, love and praise.

Scripture I Cor. 13 chapter; I John 4: 7,9,16,21
Rev. Selby

Evening Prayer Rev. Selby

Xylophone solo Mr. Henry Brubaker of Lake Worth
Accompanied by Miss Mary Suhr, Lake Worth

Commencement Sermon "Faith, Hope, and Love"
Rev. Gilbert Pent

Closing Song A Charge to Keep

A Charge to Keep

A charge to keep I have, A God to glorify; Who gave His Son my
soul to save, And fit it for the Sky.
To serve the present age, My calling to fulfill; O may it all
my pow'rs engage, To do my master's will!
Arm me with jealous care, As in Thy sight to live, And O, Thy
servant, Lord, Prepare, A strict account to give!

Benediction Rev. Gilbert Pent

We wish to express appreciation to the Boynton Churches in having a union
service this evening.

Senior Class Roll:

Helen Loretta Myers	Wilise Jones
Eleanor Marie Shepard	Mary Rebecca Partin
Martha Clare Holden	Mildred Schwebel
Helen C. Powell	Harriet Lowrens
Lester Brant	Howard Lamb
Loreno Cunningham	Anna Margaret James
Grace Olive Partin	

The Commencement Sermon Text Let us go on, unto perfection
Hebrews 6:1

The preachers undoubtedly represented the Methodist and Baptist churches since those were the only two white churches in Boynton at that time. They also represented only a Christian viewpoint with both Jesus and "the Son" mentioned in the songs. Mildred Schwebel who was Jewish is listed on the Senior Class Roll. Many Historical Society members will recognize familiar names among the graduates, some of whom are current members of the Society—Marie Shepard and Wilise Jones [Langford].

Baccalaureate services followed the format of the typical Protestant church service—religious music, an invocation, hymns, a sermon, and a benediction. Attendance by all graduating seniors was required and their parents were expected to be present also.

In Boynton, since many townspeople were members of one of the two churches, friends and neighbors of the class members probably attended. Usually such services were conducted in the high school auditorium. This one would have been in the gymnasium on the second floor of the 1927 Boynton High School building. Folding chairs would have been set up on the gym floor in front of the stage, and the senior class entered in a procession to climb the stairs to the stage to sit with the faculty and school administration.

Boynton High School Commencement Sermon Program, May 29, 1938

At one time the usual practice of most American high schools, including public ones, was to hold a special religious service during the commencement or graduation week called the high school graduation "baccalaureate." The title on the program above is perhaps more descriptive, since some people may not have equated the term "baccalaureate" with a graduation sermon. Note that this particular program was called a "union service." Since this graduation occurred some years before school integration, only an all white class and the two white preachers in town, Rev. Selby and Rev. Gilbert Pent, were involved.

GREEN CAY NATURE CENTER

By Janet DeVries



Janet DeVries

Nestled between modern luxury housing developments on Hagen Ranch Road lies a hidden gem called Green Cay Nature Center. One could easily miss the entrance if not for the small brown road signs and the welcome sign positioned just inside the entrance.

In the ample parking lot, which was almost full, many of the cars bore out of state license plates. Each of the six rows in the lot had a memorable cute name such as Otter Way or Alligator Alley. Beautifully planted trees and bushes along the pathway leading to the center provide a canopy of shade and protection from the mid-day sun.

First stop is the visitor's center. The building itself was constructed in old Florida style, somewhat akin to the Houses of Refuge erected by the government in the 1870s. A well-stocked gift store carries educational books, games, toys and postcards reflecting the flora, fauna, wildlife and history of South Florida.

Green Cay was Palm Beach County farmland until 1999 when a farming family sold it to the county for about 1/3 of its value with the condition it would be made into a wetland. Construction of the project began in 2003 as a cooperative effort between Palm Beach County's Parks and Recreation Department and Water Utilities Department.

The 100+ acres of farmland was cleared and developed into a wetland. Nutrient rich water is pumped from the wastewater treatment plant across Hagen Ranch Road. The plants and soil help filter the water naturally and reintroduces it to the water cycle.

The Winsbergs, who previously owned the land, grew vegetables on their farm in West Boynton Beach for over 40 years. They have always been very community oriented and have supported various civic groups and projects in the area. Besides providing the land for Green Cay Nature Center and Wetlands, Trudy and Ted Winsberg have made significant contributions to the Family Farms exhibit at the Schoolhouse Children's Museum.

Exhibits and displays inside are of the best quality imaginable. One long hallway has a mural of a Seminole camp. As I stood looking at the colorful mural, a motion sensor activated a narrative of the scene. Each of the exhibits was amazing on many levels. In one photographs and computer enhanced drawings showed how the topography of Florida and the southeast coast have changed over the last 12,000 years.

Some of the exhibits are about using water, conserving water, and treating and reclaiming water. Interactive buttons on one panel show how water a household uses enters and leaves the house. Another panel gives hints on how to conserve water, while a third explains the process and merits of reclaimed water.

Large tanks with an assortment of live turtles, frogs and snakes in recreated habitats are to be viewed. Dioramas of an alligator hole, frog terrarium, turtle pond and other wetlands are set up with educational explanations. A small, comfortable theater shows movies such as those made by National Geographic on nature landmarks and changing scenes across the world. The nature center hosts a logbook where visitors can list the birds, reptiles and animals spotted during their nature walk. Recent entries include swamp hen, limpkin, spotted sandpiper, rose spoonbill, painted bunting, flicker, wood stork, screech owl, black and white warbler, otters, painted turtles, alligators, milk snake, raccoon, marsh rabbit and bobcat.

A good number of brochures, maps, booklets and programs are available. Even though I didn't have any children with me, I took a brochure with nature programs and crafts for children, another about themed school field-trip visits, and one on a Junior Naturalist Series. The latter was targeted at 9-14 year olds to actively put youth in touch with nature. Topics include Herpetology, Ornithology, Botany, Entomology, Wetland Biology and Green Cay Survivor.

A Seniors Guide is available. Programs for seniors have cute names such as Incredible Insects and Fun with Fish. At least one scheduled presentation had an historic aspect; it was called Ancient People of South Florida and was presented by Palm Beach County Archeologist Chris Davenport.

Volunteer opportunities are available. Volunteers give guided tours, talk and direct visitors, and teach some of the classes.

Directly behind the nature center is an elevated 1 ½ mile boardwalk which is wide and obstacle free, with handrails for those who need them. It is fully handicap and stroller accessible. Benches are placed along the boardwalk about every ½ block. Pavilions are about ¼ mile apart, and an authentic Seminole chickee hut is situated at the ½ way point.

One can spot hundreds of birds and dozens of turtles. Flocks of birds fly overhead and wade in the water. The signs along the walkway not only identify the species and Latin names of the wildlife, they provide information about their habitat and explain how they fit into the nature cycle. The plants in the wetlands are beautiful and plentiful—live oak, bald cypress, and slash pine. They filter the reclaimed water and give the many birds a place to roost and rest.

The sound of the wind whistling through the pines combined with the call of birds and the croaks of frogs drowned out any thoughts of life's everyday challenges as well as the sounds of the nearby roadway. It was an idyllic scene.

As I neared the end of the trail, I spotted a large alligator on the embankment. A ½ dozen eager tourists snapped photographs of the reptile. My day's trek to Green Cay Nature Center and Wetlands had come to a close.

[Edited to fit on this page.]

THE JAMES FAMILY

On April 26, 2010, Margaret T. Gooch mailed the 2010 dues for her mother, Dorothy James Turner, and wrote a charming letter to the Boynton Beach Historical Society about the James Family. Below is the letter in its entirety. Perhaps some of you old friends will want to contact Dorothy.

Dear Boynton Beach Historical Society:

I am sending my mom's 2010 membership dues—Dorothy James Turner. She enjoys receiving your newsletter as she grew up in Boynton Beach. She is 92 years old and is now residing in an independent living center (with her husband of sixty plus years) in Fountain Hills, Arizona, closer to me, her daughter.

She is the daughter of Godfrey Hunter James and Margaret Elizabeth Moseley. Her siblings are:

- George James – deceased
- Marian James Smith – deceased
- Bill James – living in Boynton Beach
- Bob James – deceased
- Anne James Metcalf – deceased
- Nancy James Jones – deceased
- Art James – living in Florida

Mother is the oldest of the eight children. All the children grew up in Boynton Beach and went to school there. She has a lot of great memories of growing up in Boynton Beach and going to the local school which consisted of elementary grades thru high school. She was actually the valedictorian of her graduating class of eight or so!!!!

She's in great shape mentally. She deals with hearing loss (wears hearing aids) and does real well with them. She also has macular degeneration. So I end up reading her your newsletter.

She can personally be contacted at the following:

Address 16455 Ave. of the Fountains A-28
Fountain Hills, AZ 85268

Phone: 480-837-2128

Very truly yours,
Margaret T. Gooch

[Ed. Note: Anne Margaret James is listed on the Baccalaureate program on p. 3 as a member of the 1938 senior class. Bill James is mentioned on page 2 for his memorial gift honoring Erma James.]

RE DONNA HARMENING

Donna Harmening, one of our members, recently wrote that she has moved to Springfield, Virginia.

She notes that Virginia is beautiful in the springtime with all the lovely flowers blooming, but that after 55 years here, she considers Boynton Beach to be her home.

FROM MRS. JONES' FAMILY ALBUM



Ruth Jones, one of our members, permitted us to scan pages from the album her mother-in-law, Jennie Belle Jones, had owned. Most of the pictures were not identified. This is a lovely family grouping, but we would like to know who they are. Can any of our readers, including members of the Partin and Jones families, recognize any of these people?



Thelma Partin, ca. 1940.

Thelma was a granddaughter of Mrs. Jones. Thelma's mother was Lois Jones Partin.

BOYNTON BEACH HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM, CALENDAR YEAR 2010

Member's Name _____

2nd Member's Name _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____ E-mail _____

TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP:

INDIVIDUAL (\$25.00) _____

FAMILY (\$35.00) _____

PATRON (\$50.00) _____

CORPORATE (\$100 or more) _____

Yes, I would like to serve on the following committee(s) [Circle choices]

Archives/Preservation	Public Relations	Hospitality
Membership	Seeking Sponsors	Fundraising
Minority History	Mailing	Telephone
	Other (Specify) _____	Website _____

Join now for the calendar year 2010. Complete the form below or copy the information and return it or the copy with your check for the type of membership you desire payable to The Boynton Beach Historical Society, P. O. Box 12, Boynton Beach, Florida 33425-0012. New memberships will be effective from now until December 31, 2010. Current members may renew now with 2010 dues effective until December 31, 2010.

Boynton Beach Historical Society
 Post Office Box 12
 Boynton Beach, FL 33425-0012



Boynton High School and Boynton Elementary School, ca. 1935