SEPTEMBER MEETING AT OLD SCHOOL—A 90th BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION!

The September meeting of the Boynton Beach Historical Society is scheduled for Monday, September 8, 2003, 6:30, at the 1913 Schoolhouse Children's Museum on Ocean Avenue to mark exactly 90 years since the school opened its doors to students on September 8, 1913. Arleen dennison, Executive Director of the Children's Museum, will speak about the progress of the Museum and plans for its future.

The Museum has become a popular destination for parents and grandparents to visit with young children. Those members and friends of the Historical Society who have not visited the building recently can expect some pleasant surprises. Arleen and her staff have worked wonders. The Museum has won numerous awards including one designating it the best museum for children in South Florida.

In the early 1990s several long time members of the Historical Society, including Teresa Padgett, Marie Shepard, Harvey Oyer, Stanley Weaver, Betty Thomas, and others, began a drive to save and rehabilitate the old building which the school board had deeded to the City of Boynton Beach. Because of the need to raise substantial funds for this undertaking, a spin-off group called the Cultural Center, Inc. was established. The City Librarian, Virginia Farace, was designated to represent the City for the oversight of this project and ultimately for the Museum. The Board of Directors for the Cultural Center is comprised of community leaders, many of whom are members of the Boynton Beach Historical Society. The President of the Historical Society sits as an ex-officio member of this board.

The Public is invited to attend this meeting. All meetings of the Boynton Beach Historical Society are open to the public.

EAST BOYNTON LITTLE LEAGUE HONORED BY SOCIETY

The Board of Directors of the Boynton Beach Historical Society has ordered 4x8 brick pavers to honor each player and coach of the East Boynton Little League Team, 2003 National World Series Champions, and a 12x12 brick paver, all to be placed on the Schoolhouse Children's Museum Path of History. The three coaches and the 11 players will each receive a certificate informing them of their honor at a special program held by the City of Boynton Beach to recognize their achievement. The Society plans to have a special ceremony for the team to dedicate the pavers after they are in place.

1913 Schoolhouse ca. 1980

[Photo courtesy Roberta Sender, Travel Lifestyles Writer, 1773 Harborside Circle, Wellington, FL 33414]
NOTES ON SOUTH FLORIDA

Ohio, to be in my Florida, Now that spring is there With flower shows and orchid shows And garden tours to spare! How can they say There is no spring, That change of season Does not bring A burst of color To that fair land, Where buds are opening As it by command? And where flowers last longer Than ones I now know Which are quite lovely But quickly command.

— Margaret Garrett Harris
March 1, 2001

STORM OF '28 COMMEMORATION EVENTS
SEPTEMBER, 2003

(Several organizations within Palm Beach County, including several historical societies, have planned events to alert people of the danger of hurricanes and to honor those thousands who died in one of America's most terrible disasters.)

September 2-30
Storm of '28 Photography Exhibits
Two FREE exhibits featuring photographs of the 1928 hurricane devastation throughout Palm Beach County, one is scheduled for the Palm Beach Courthouse Picnic, 205 Dixie Hwy, WPB; the other, Palm Beach County Government Center Way, 301 N. Olive Ave., WPB. Exhibits can be viewed during business hours. [Presented by the Historical Society of Palm Beach County. Contact 561-832-4144 for more information.]

Tuesday, September 2
Ribbons of Remembrance Ceremony—Belle Glade
A yellow remembrance banner reading “This Building Survived the Storm of ’28” will be placed around the historic Belle Glade House, 501 S. Street, Belle Glade, where it will remain through September, 11:00 a.m. [Presented by the Storm of ’28 Memorial Park Coalition. Contact 561-957-6028 for more information.]

Wednesday, September 3
Ribbons of Remembrance Ceremony—West Palm Beach
Yellow remembrance banners reading “This Building Survived the Storm of ’28” will be placed around the historic West Palm Beach County buildings and remain throughout September. On September 3, the Mayor of WPB and Courthouse Commission officials will mark the event by raising the first yellow banner into the Courthouse Building, 319 Clematis Street, downtown WPB. Ceremony begins at 9:00 a.m. [Presented by Historic Society of Palm Beach County and the Storm of ’28 Memorial Park Coalition. Contact 561-832-4144 for more information.]

Thursday, September 4
Robert Mykle, author of Killer Canoe—The Deadly Hurricane of 1928
Lecture and book signing at the Boca Raton Town Hall, 21 N. Federal Hwy, Boca Raton, 12:00-1:00. Admission $5.00. Boca Raton Historical Society members free. [Presented by the Boca Raton Historical Society. Contact 561-393-6876 for more information.]

Saturday, September 6
Commemorative Breakfast and Gospel Festival
Breakfast commemorating the anniversary of the 1928 hurricane at the Wooden Spoon Fish Restaurant, 4125 Northwood Road, WPB, 9:00 a.m. The sermon with Jesus Gospel Festival will be held at the mass grave on 20th Street and Tamarind Ave., downtown WPB. 1:00 p.m. [Presented by the Storm of ’28 Memorial Park Coalition. Contact 561-832-4146 for more information.]

Monday, September 10
Elliot Kleinberg, author of Black Cloud: The Great Florida Storm of 1928
Lecture and book signing at Bethesda by the Sea Church, 141 S. County Road, Palm Beach, 7:00 p.m. FREE Admission. [Presented by the Historical Society of Palm Beach County. 561-832-4146 for more information.]

Tuesday, September 16
Dr. William Gray, with introduction by Dr. Max Mayfield of the National Hurricane Center
Lecture and book signing at the West Palm Beach Marriott, 620 Clematis Street, Palm Beach. 11:30 a.m. Admission by invitation. Economic Forum and Historical Society of Palm Beach County members $10 per person, $20 per family by phone. [Presented by the Economic Forum. Exhibits and remarks by the Historical Society of Palm Beach County. Contact 561-622-9225 for more information.]

Thursday, September 18
Robert Mykle, author of Killer Canoe—The Deadly Hurricane of 1928
Lecture and book signing at Jupiter Community Center, 210 Military Trail, Jupiter, 6:00 p.m. FREE Admission. Presented by Loxahatchee River Historical Society. Contact 561-745-0630 for more information.]

Saturday, September 20
Re-enactment of the 1928 Buried Procession
Re-enactment of the burial procession that carried 674 hurricane victims from the vanguard Okeechobee 800 to mass graves in downtown WPB. Fireworks will be used to honor each victim. Prizes/bags will be given at Port Mayaca Memorial House in Martin County at 9:00 a.m. (without parking) Continues to the Belle Glade Library for a prayer service at 10:30 a.m. and concludes with a Ceremony at the mass graves on 20th Street and Tamarind Ave., in WPB from 12:30-13:30 p.m. [Presented by the Storm of ’28 Memorial Park Coalition. Contact 561-832-4146 for more information.]

Sunday, September 21
Jupiter Lighthouse Memorial Service
Memorial service at the Jupiter Lighthouse, 656 N. Us Hwy #1. Event begins at 5:00 p.m. Admission FREE. [Presented by the Loxahatchee River Historical Society. Contact 561-747-6659 for more information.]
Telephone Company Equipment Building, Ca. 1936

Telephone Company Equipment Building, Ca. 1936

TELEPHONE MEMORIES
Jim Warneck

The first dial telephone service came to Boynton Beach shortly after World War 2, replacing Operators, the "Hello Girls."

The small building, still standing at the alley south of Ocean Boulevard on the west side of the Dolphin Restaurant parking lot, housed all of the complicated equipment. (See picture below.)

I came to Boynton in 1956, transferring from the Wisconsin Telephone Company in Milwaukee. I was the only technician in that small office at the time. Can you imagine eight party lines? Perhaps your ring might be two long and a short; and, of course, most folks listened in at times.

There were two cables along the railroad tracks, one going to Miami and the other to West Palm Beach, and each had 200 pairs of wires. If more than 200 people were talking to Miami, for instance, no one else could get a line. The office had a capacity of 1000 telephone lines for the whole city and the telephone numbers were only four digits instead of today's seven. When the office started to run out of phone numbers, a special trailer was installed behind the small building to add more service.

When it rained and a trouble developed in the trailer, I had to get out an umbrella and run between the two buildings. By 1962 the antiquated equipment could no longer serve the growing city of Boynton Beach, and a new office was constructed on fourth street just south of Ocean Avenue. It was placed in service in 1963.

MEMORIES OF SOUTH FLORIDA
Rachel Meredith Myers

[Editor's note: Rachel Meredith Myers was in 1955 at the age of 104. This is a memoir of her family coming to Florida. The Meredith family has ties to other Boynton families including Adams, Woodbright, and Lunford.]

Rachel is the daughter of Martha Ann Amanda Rogers, who had married her father, Levi Sutton Meredith, in Illinois. Rachel's brother George Meredith lived in the same county.

Rachel's sister Etta married Samuel Pinkney Adams in Conway, South Carolina. They came to Florida in 1963. Among their children are Helen Elizabeth Adams (Neesheimer); Homer Quincy; Dwight; and Samuel P. Adams Jr., who married Adele M. Lunford.

The general merchandise store Rachel and Roy Myers operated for 21 years until 1940 was in the building on Ocean Avenue just west of the railroad tracks now owned by Harvey Oyer.

The year of 1911, my mother had a very bad sick spell. The doctor said it was her lungs and advised us to take her to the high altitude of Colorado, of a warm climate, where she could live out in the open air, both high and dry. He suggested southern Florida. Her illness could not stand the cold damp winter months and for us to plan to make the change before another winter in Illinois.

George, the older brother had another tragedy to bear. He lost his wife and son in childbirth. He closed up his home and came back to live with us. We missed his wife, but was glad to welcome him back home.

In the spring of 1912, we made plans for Mother and me to go to Florida in September. The two brothers were to live in our home and they would pay our expenses living in Florida. It was easier for me to be the one to go, as I had no family obligations except Mother. Our summer was delightful. I was sorry when I had to resign my position in the Fall. By the first of September, we were all packed and had the house in order to turn over to the two men in our family.

Mother went to her doctor for her last check up before she left. He said she had improved through the winter months. He asked her how any was going and she said she was rather settled and of course the answer was no. He asked if we were going alone and I told him we were. He said it was a good idea to have a friend that could watch over the mental shock on the property on Lake Worth shore line. It was a small orange and grapefruit grove. He had a caretaker looking after it for him, but he did not live on the property. He said to get our tickets to Hydro, Florida and the caretaker would meet us there. Mother furnished by an annual pass, given to my brother J.B. as an employee of the Illinois Central Railroad Company as a bonus. The Florida East Coast Railroad honored her pass on the Florida Central Railroad Company with tickets to Hydro, Florida to broaden his scope of technology.

On our last trip, July first, 1912, we said goodbye. We corresponded for the next four years.

On September twelfth, 1912, Mother and I left on our return to Florida, arriving at our destination in Hydro, P.M. We were met by the caretaker of our doctor's friend. He had two lanterns to help light our way. We were identified, as we were the only passengers to get off of the train.

On Monday morning, the caretaker showed me the red and away about half of a block. He handed me one of the lanterns and he stopped in front of us and said for us to follow him. The highway was a white rock road, just seven feet wide. We walked about two miles, when we came to a lane leading through an orange and grapefruit grove to the lane where...
our shack was located. The smell of the fruit and the lake water was quite mesmerizing. The gentlemen unloaded the door and helped us with our luggage. He left one of the lanterns and said good night. He was a very nice fellow and we were so glad he lived close by.

The little shack was well built. There were two rooms, one a kitchen and the other a sleeping room. The windows and doors were in place and the door was sturdy with a good lock. The kitchen had very little equipment, an oil cooking stove, a rough but tall table and a bench on each side. Made of rough unfinished lumber. The legs were Australian pine branches, pins in proportionate weights; one skiller, one small pan for boiling water, two tin cups used for plates, and two tin cups. The bedroom had two windows, two double bunk beds, made of some pine tree limbs and poles for their support. The best of the bunks were poles last across the framework. The mattresses were made of burlap bags filled with pole needles; the pillows made of the same material and a wood floor well built and tight.

We were both tired and hungry, after traveling for three days. Mother had packed a lunch of fruit and sandwiches. They were getting a little state, but still edible. We took the lantern to bed for a bump for water as it was just outside kitchen door.

After we were satisfied with food and drink, we decided to retire. We got out back, bed, we slept with our clothes on. Next morning we felt quite rested. It was just daylight. We looked outside the windows and realized we were sitting in the middle of an garden and grapefruit grove. It was beautiful. The fruit was so heavy on the trees that the limbs were breaking. Some of the later bearing trees had blossomed and fruit. The fragrance was coming through our open window and it softened the rugged interior of the house.

We walked to the lake in a narrow path, then out on the small dock. The scenery was gorgeous, the blue water of the lake, with just a ripple in the surface was a little picture. On the other side was a high ridge which made a perfect background.

The canners were over to see if we were alright. He rowed his boat over from the adjoining area. He asked if we would like to see the ocean. We were delighted. When we reached the other side of the lake another dock was built just for row boats. We climbed the ridge we had reached and sat down. There was a steep deep with white caps rolling in. It was amazing how far we could see. If we had not been on the dock and did not feel the wind coming, feeling breezy, we probably everywhere we would have stopped. We asked the canner for some directions to find a grocery store. He told us to walk out to the Federal Hwy. turn south and follow the railroad all the way to the little town called Boynton. About a mile and a half away.

We asked the canner if we could stop and rest before starting. The little town was easily found. It had a grocery store, a post office and a few stores. Two or more were closed. The business was nothing in the line of baked goods, no fresh vegetables or meats. We took some can-roe games, corned beef, coffee, small cans of milk to last a few days. We also had to have bread. Mother picked a package of self-sifting flour, pancakes was the answer.

Our first concern was to find a land to set our tent on. We inquired around and almost everyone told us they did not have land in Boynton in small lots, just acreage, but they told us that a new town site was up at Lake Worth. The town was named after the lake. We had heard of it before and saw it one hundred dollars. They were fifty feet wide and one hundred feet long. It sounded like just what we were looking for. The canner said, "if we could find a road, there was none available, the young man said it was just seven miles, a very short walk.

We returned to our lake front home, fixed our lunch and decided to meet for the afternoon; two miles west before breakfast was enough exercise for one day. We spent the day inside, but in the evening, we tried sitting outside. The breeze from the lake was lovely and cool. We had not been out very long how, when we discovered mosquitoes. Mother knew that a small bottle would drive them away. We had a small bottle of "Lampire" and Yankee Deet. That was the answer to enjoyment of the great outdoors.

We had a light meal of bread, cheese and fruit. We listened to the mist and watched the lake water and walking the lake water, Lake Worth. We wanted to find a building lot. We arrived at noon. We had stopped about every hour to rest. Mother was feeling fine, no congestion or coughing since we started our trip to the hilly country.

We found a large lumber camp, where a number of men were working. We stopped at a small office in the building to get information about getting lumber were allowed. We discovered the real estate agent and bought the lot. We picked out a lot on "O" street, two blocks from the lake and ordered the lumber to fit our tent size. Labor was available and as soon as we could get our things delivered, they started to work.

While we were waiting, the lumber company was serving dinner to the workmen. We asked if we could also be served and they seated us at a table. The food was served around meat, beet, corn on the cob, black-eyed peas, stewed tomatoes and kommer, all for two and ten cents each. This was the best meal we had ever had since we left our home in southern Illinois.

We did not return to the little lake front house. When we left, we took our small amount of belongings with us. We told the canner, we would not be back and thanked him for being so helpful. We found a room for the night in Lake Worth, just across the street from the lumber yard. The room was on the second floor, over a grocery store, the only business building in the area and we were very comfortable, real beds and access to a baño room on the ground floor. Water was furnished by a pump.

By noon the next day we moved to our tent, unpacked our tent and started living again. The tent was small, one with a solid floor, a three feet wall built from the floor, screen on all sides of the building up to the wall plate; a screen door and window and a platform on the doorway with one step down to the lawn. Along the lot, they left the tree stumps. The carpenters used them for a foundation to anchor the tent floor, a very firm and dependable awning.

Our next step was to replenish our larder. While Mother was shopping, I walked across to the lumber yard and found the realtor in his office. I asked him if he knew of anyone that might have a position for me. He said, "Yes, I have been looking for someone to stay with my eighty-one-year-old mother, through the day." The next day I met Mrs. Johnson, the realtor's mother. My job mostly, was to entertain her. She took a long nap each day and while she was asleep, I would run out to the tent to check on mother.

I took my usual trip to check on Mother while Mrs. Jones was sleeping. She was warming. She said the rattlesnakes had infested our property. They were found warming, the streets, had killed ten or twelve around our tent that morning, and the area was infested with them.

The engineers said they had put them in their habitat, and they had scattered. Fifty or more were killed on the site. Mother and I thought it would be a good idea if we could leave a room in someone's home, until the snake had scattered.

I had been writing my monthly faw of how we loved Florida and now beautiful it was and how much Mother's health had improved.

My two brothers that we left as barnmice, had closed up our home and moved in with a sister living close by. The older brother decided to come to town and find a job as a brickmason, lone and her husband, Tom, with whom George was living had decided they too would come to town to find a job. They arrived the last week in November, Tom, lone and their three little boys, Ray, TEN and Lee. They took over the tent and I found a room for "George. The snake scare was over and they found living in the tent delightful.

George and Tom began to look for land and were told that the best buy was in Boynton. They found two five acre tracts, one south of the town and one on the Federal Hwy. On George's land was a small one room house and the tent was set up on Tom's property. They had met two men on the house and Lot, and the three little boys and took over the tent. In a short time, houses were put on both pieces of land. Cotton groves were built and the property became a paradise. As the trees grew larger, to maturity, the land was set out in small growing tomatoes which were shipped to the northern markets. In addition to the tomatoes, they raised a variety of vegetables for their own use. Mother wanted to try cultivating tomatoes. She went to Illinois and had plants expressed down and they grew beautifully. She brought the first strawberries into South Florida. She next had an idea that tomatoes would work. She had a pen of Plymouth Rock chickens familiarized to us and they too did well. By the next year, she was furnishing fresh eggs to her regular customers.

The little village of Boynton, where we first stopped to buy groceries to be on the way, was not very picturesque but another grocery store. I was fortunate enough to get a job as clerk. After working in the store awhile, I met a couple that had a sister in Busges in Miami and now that my brother George goes with Mother, I was free to go on my own.

The position was cashier in a bakery and confectionery. It was just made for me. I was given room and board and two dollars a day.
day. They had a dormitory for their employees and served meals in the dining room adjoining the main building. I worked at that job all through the summer and late fall.

I applied for a position with Burdine department store. My salary increased to fifteen dollars a week and commissions. I was making an average of between forty-five and fifty dollars a week and also bought all of my clothes on wholesale prices. That gave me extra money to spend for Mother for her and other needs for her little business enterprise.

Georgia and Joe and I worked in the pineapple business, raising and marketing them. Tom was the producer and George the Salamony, then sold his five acres of land and bought interest in a pineapple company.

My position at Burdine was wonderful. I worked up to assistant to Meddon Dornan who was in charge of the ready to wear department. She was a lovely person and nice to work with. I found a reputable boarding house after I left was a car lot for people to rent. A number of my associates were renting there and we had some very nice times, going boarding on Biscayne Bay, attending dances, picnics and parties. I received a letter from Roy, telling me he had left Kingsville, Texas and was working at the Augusta (Georgia) and that he was planning a trip to Miami. Florida and that he was planning to go to the beach. I went to him one time and we had some very nice times, going boarding on Biscayne Bay, attending dances, picnics and parties.

I had just returned from meeting the train and had just reached the second floor when I looked around and saw Roy come through the front door. I heard him ask a clerk in the men's furnishings, Miss Merriwether was there. The clerk directed him up the stairs. I saw them going up the stairs and then Roy met him on the landing. They shook hands and walked back up the stairs. I introduced him to Meddon Dornan and the other sales persons on the floor. We then stopped at the office. Meddon Dornan came over to where we were standing and said something and then Roy met him on the landing. We shook hands and walked back up the stairs. I went to have lunch and made plans for the visit. We went to his boarding house, sat in the parlor and talked until time for dinner. He said he would go back to his hotel and see me later and that we would go out for dinner. Our dinner lasted about two hours. We walked back and made plans to go to the beach next day. He told me to take a bathing suit and he would rent one. We met Mr. Treadwell at the beach. There were two beach houses, but only one was open. We rented two lockers to change into our suits. Roy stopped in the manager's office and asked if he could order lunch for two, then we went on the beach. We did some swimming and then Roy went for his first swim in the ocean. I did not know how to swim, but relaxed on the beach. We two were the only persons on this beach both for miles in either direction. Note: This was Miami Beach, on a September afternoon, 1915. The sun was hot and the breeze was delightful. We went back to our lockers and dressed for lunch. We were the only persons in the dining room. The last ferry boat went to Miami at five o'clock, so we were careful not to miss it. It was a lovely outing.

Next day, we did some sightseeing and I had my boarding house attendant prepare a plate of Roy at dinner. After dinner we went for a walk on Biscayne Bay front. It was a glorious moonlight evening and the tide was beautiful. The following morning Roy left by boat for Savannah Georgia and then to Augusta.

I made a trip to Key West to see my family. I left early Sunday morning and met a train connection. I talked to Roy about your visit as soon as I could get mother alone. I told her that Roy and I were planning to go myself, sometime after Christmas. I asked her what suggestions she could give me as plans for a wedding. She said that our house was so small and that we were not in the position to entertain. She would like for me to meet Roy in Jacksonville and be married by a Justice. The plan suited me and I told her when we had set a date, I would let her know.

Roy accepted the wedding plans and our date was set for February 22, 1916. Roy had returned to Centralia and went back to work in the same machine shop where he served his apprenticeship.

Roy and I returned to Jacksonville after three years to become permanent Florida residents. Having lived in the south for so many years, we could not stand the terribly cold winters of the north. In Jacksonville, Roy had a severe illness in 1921 and was hospitalized for three months. After his recovery, he was not strong enough to continue waiting at the store; so we sold our holdings of real estate and moved back to Key West. My brother George built up an apartment and store building. We had a family of three children, two lovely daughters and one son.

We were in business, Myers and Company, General Merchandise [in Boynton] for twenty one years. In 1942, we liquidated our stock and closed the store.

After the second World War, we both retired and moved to Orlando.

(Because Rachel's paper contains so much of historic Interest about life in Southeast Florida early last century, I have included almost the whole work. The spelling, grammar, and punctuation are essentially the same as in Rachel's document. Your editor has made a few minor changes to reduce the length.)

DO YOU HAVE MEMORIES TO SHARE?

Much of the material in this newsletter was contributed by members of the Boynton Beach Historical Society. If you have photographs, clippings, or stories you would be willing to share, we would appreciate your contributions. If you too, have personal histories of family or friends, or perhaps some personally recalled anecdotes of school or community life, please contact the editor at P.O. Box 12, Boynton Beach, FL 33425-0012, telephone 734-5563, or email small13@juno.com.

COPYES OF OUR CENTURY STILL AVAILABLE

If you have not yet ordered one, we still have copies of The Palm Beach Post OUR CENTURY available. If you donate $15.00 or more to our reserve fund, you will receive a copy of this lovely hardback book filled with color and black and white photographs of people and events for the past 100 years in Palm Beach County. A special feature is stories and photographs of 100 people who have changed the way we live. You can also obtain a copy by dropping by Harvey Oyer's office at 511 East Ocran Avenue and leaving your donation for the Boynton Beach Historical Society with Harvey, and he will give you the book (or several if you wish them for gifts or family members).

If you live out of town, we will mail you a copy for an additional $6.00 for shipping and handling.

IN MEMORIAM

We are saddened to learn of the passing of several of our members during the past year that we have not previously acknowledged.

Dorothy B. (Mrs. Robert B.) Clarke
Wilbur Hacile
Joseph L. Lee
Teresia Padjetic

Our sympathy and best wishes to their families.
Special Thanks to Dan and Sean Fenton, Investment Representatives, EDWARD JONES, 901 N. Congress Av., Boynton Beach 33426 for helping defray the cost for mailing of this Newsletter.

If you are not currently a member and would like to join, please complete the form below and return it 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.

BOYNTON BEACH HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM
WORKING TOGETHER TO PRESERVE BOYNTON BEACH’S HERITAGE

NAME ________________________________

STREET ____________________________ CITY __________ STATE ZIP

TELEPHONE ___________ FAX ___________ E-MAIL ___________

TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP

INDIVIDUAL ($25.00) ___________ FAMILY ($35.00) ___________

PATRON ($50.00) ___________ CORPORATE ($100.00) ___________
