



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.

2012 Number 3

March 2012

THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF COASTAL PALM BEACH COUNTY: SUN, SURF and QUESTIONS

is the title of the talk by Palm Beach County Archaeologist Christian Davenport scheduled for Monday, March 12, 2012 at the Boynton Beach City Library.



Christian Davenport

Christian Davenport received his BA from Franklin Pierce College in New Hampshire where he specialized in the identification of human and animal remains from archaeological sites. After graduation he worked on archaeological investigations throughout the Mid-Atlantic states. Later he continued graduate studies at the University of Tennessee, and while in school and afterward worked for the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) to identify delineated and protect thousands of historic sites within TVA's property. He

came to work for Palm Beach County in 2005. Since joining the county, he has been the lead archaeologist that recorded 33 new archaeological sites in Lake Okeechobee during the 2007-2009 drought. In 2010 he lead excavations on a portion of buried sand mound in DuBois Park. In 2011 excavations in the park shifted to the top of the shell mound. Currently he is researching the large prehistoric Native American mound complexes around the Everglades.

He has taken part in archaeological investigations stretching from Maine to Oaxaca Mexico and as far west as Memphis, Tennessee. He has taught at the University of Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University, and at present teaches as an adjunct at Florida Atlantic University.

WHAT: THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF COASTAL PALM BEACH COUNTY, a talk by Archaeologist Christian Davenport

WHEN: Monday, March 12, 6:30 p.m.

WHERE: BOYNTON BEACH CITY LIBRARY Program Room

**BOYNTON BEACH HISTORICAL SOCIETY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS—2011-12**

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The Boynton Beach Historical Society's website is www.boyntonbeachhistoricalsociety.org. Our e-mail address is 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.

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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.

2012 MEMBERSHIPS

The following have paid membership dues for 2012 since the last issue of *The Historian*. Your membership status is shown in the upper right-hand corner of your mailing label on the front of *The Historian*. A special thank you to all who have sent in dues thus far.

PATRON MEMBERSHIP:

Earl B. and Lenore Benson Raborn Boonstra
Fred W. Love

FAMILY MEMBERSHIP:

L. Don and Jeanne Combs
Harry D. and Edris D. Hatch
Topyy and Georgie Raulerson

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP:

Jim Edward
Wendy Franklin
Elizabeth M. LaBella
Wilese Jones Langford
Sandra McGregor

Frances Tuite McKeral
William P. Suiter
Gloria Partin Turner

Welcome new member William P. Suiter, one of the Rousseau cousins.

FEBRUARY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

The Boynton Beach Historical Society Board of Directors met February 27, 2012. The following items were approved: Increasing an endowment to the Friends of the Library honoring the memory of Assistant City Manager Wilfred Hawkins by \$300. (With the low interest rates that endowments are currently earning, the previous amount endowed generated a return insufficient to pay the cost of a book for the Library's collections.) The Board also approved funds to help defray expenses for Janet DeVries to attend the annual meeting of the Society of Florida Archivists. (The Library stores the holdings of the Historical Society and provides meeting space for both our program meetings and the meetings of the Board of Directors. Janet DeVries, who is a Library employee, archives our materials and is serving as our First Vice-President responsible for programs.)

The Board also discussed the May meeting which in the past has been a covered-dish dinner scheduled for a Sunday afternoon in May. We have tentatively scheduled this event for Sunday, May 6 to avoid conflicts with either Mother's Day or Memorial Day weekends. More information will be forthcoming about this event.

Barbara Ready, who in addition to being a Director for the Historical Society sits as an alternate on the City's Historic Preservation Board, reported that the Preservation Board is designating its first historical home [see story on page 3]. She indicated also that a group is set to soon tour the 1927 Boynton High School building to consider needs for restoration.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Bylaws of the Society require that we hold elections in April at our Annual Meeting. All officers are elected each year and two members as Directors and two members as Trustees each of whom serve for 3-year staggered terms. If we have any additional vacancies for either Directors or Trustees, someone should be elected to complete those terms. The Bylaws direct the President of the Society to appoint a Nominating Committee in February. Board members who are serving this year include Virginia Farace, Chair; Diana Dennis; and Christian Oyer Macoviak. If you are willing to be considered for any of these offices, please contact Virginia at 965-9426 or FARACE_V@popmail.firn.edu and she will explain duties and time commitments.

FIRST HOME SET FOR HISTORIC DESIGNATION

The January 2012 *Historian* carried an invitation from Boynton Beach Historical Society member Audrey Gerger to visit her home on N.W 1st Avenue to see the house and enjoy her holiday decorations. Several members took advantage of this opportunity.

This is the beautiful pink, mission-style duplex that the City of Boynton Beach Historical Preservation Board is preparing to designate as its first historic home to launch its historic-preservation program and begin protecting Boynton's past.



Audrey Gerger's House at 331 NW 1st Avenue

The preservation program established by the City in 2010 is voluntary, and designation requires approval by the City Commission. The age of a building is not sufficient for designation. Its site must be architecturally significant and/or associated with an historical figure.

Audrey reports that in 1996 a former owner of the house, Margaret Garnett Harris visited and told her some things about the home's historic past. Margaret was the daughter of Andrew Garnett, pioneer citrus grower in the Hypoluxo area and one of the Barefoot Mailmen on walked along the beach on foot carrying the mail from Palm Beach to Miami in the late 1880s. Margaret's husband was Clyde Harris, a botanist who was principal of the 1927 Boynton High School and the 1913 elementary school which is now on the National Register of Historic Places.

Warren Adams, the City's Historic Preservation Planner who meets with the Historic Preservation Board, has commented on the unique layout of the building. The house is a duplex which houses the original staircases, Dade County pine floors, and fireplaces. Warren describes the mirror-image living spaces unlike any existing anywhere else in the City.

To help promote the preservation program, the City offers up to a ten-year tax incentive for improvements to a property.

Unfortunately the preservation program cannot prevent demolition of a building, but new rules require that the destruction of any potentially historic building must be brought to the Board's attention even though the Board has no actual power to stop it.

The Historian has in the past reported about the tearing down of a number of potentially historic structures. At least now, with the advent of Historic Preservation Board review, some owners may recognize the cultural and economic values of historic preservation.

MORE HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD ACTIVITIES

According to Warren Adams, the City Historic Preservation Board conducted a Ground Penetrating Radar survey of the Barton Memorial Park Cemetery (formerly known as Cherry Hills Cemetery) at the corner of NW 5th Street and NW 12th Avenue.

In the 1950s and 1960s when I-95 was being planned there is mention at City Commission meetings that bodies would have to be moved. However, in the 1970s when I-95 was built there is no record of any bodies being relocated and newspaper reports state that due to neighborhood pressure, I-95 was re-aligned. However, in the late 1990s the story of bodies being moved appears again.

Warren indicates he was investigating the site and the Florida Atlantic University Geophysics Department offered to carry out the survey free of charge. There are only 20 headstones in the cemetery, but Warren has a list of 60 burials. He has contacted the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) for clarification about whether I-95 was actually re-routed, and he hopes that the survey will also help in determining 60 burials. He will let us know what the radar survey reveals when he has the results.



Barton Memorial Park Cemetery

WORLD WAR II PRISONERS IN FLORIDA

Some of the more sensational stories about how Florida was affected during World War II center on reports of German U-Boats torpedoing ships off our beaches in 1942. Fran McKeral describes how her mother, Mabel Rousseau Tuite, actually heard and saw one such ship sinking off the coast of Boynton Beach. In his book *Operation Drumbeat*, Michael Gannon describes in detail how hundreds of ships were sunk from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico while the U.S. Navy remained ineffective in stopping it. Almost all this activity occurred in 1942. After that the allied forces were better organized, and the attacks declined.

A story which received much less coverage at the time concerns the number of German prisoners who were interred in our country after their capture. By 1945, 340,407 German POWs were incarcerated in 490 camps across the 48 states. (Alaska and Hawaii were not admitted to statehood until the 1950s.) Over eleven thousand of those men were housed in Florida.

German prisoners began arriving in Florida soon after the United States entered the war in December, 1941. The first were from the U-Boats sunk off the Atlantic coast in 1942; then those captured in North Africa in 1943 from German General Erwin Rommel's Afrika Korps; and later from the French and Italian campaigns in 1944 and 1945.

Florida had two war-time base camps. One was at Camp Blanding, near Starke; the other at Camp Gordon Johnson, near Clarabelle. Each of these base camps had side camps located throughout the state. Also there were some side camps of out-of-state base camps. One, for example, was a peanut-harvesting side camp of Fort Benning, GA., that was set up in Marianna. Prisoners in Florida were citrus pickers and packers, fruit and vegetable canners, sugarcane harvesters, potato diggers, pulpwood cutters, and custodial workers at undermanned U.S. military bases. In Miami Beach some were put to work cleaning streets.

When some were assigned to clean up after a hurricane had hit Central Florida, one woman in Bartow, Lena Gertrude Woodward, whose house had collapsed reported, "My husband called the commander [of the Winter Haven POW camp] that night, and he sent down 75 men. Nice young men, they were with Rommel's forces. I think it was 75 cents a day, or 50 cents a day, something like that [that the POWs earned]. So they helped clean up the mess. But they were nice boys . . . we had about 75 or 80 for about three or four weeks. They had never seen turkeys, and I had about 100 turkeys; and they had never seen goldfish, and some of the tree had fallen on the goldfish pond. They all got down there [next to the water], they were so excited. They were such nice young men."



POWs Picking Citrus in Florida

The prisoners' daily routine began at 5:30 a.m. They wore navy blue shirts and pants marked in white with the letters "PW." After dressing they went to a mess hall for an American style breakfast prepared by fellow Germans. After breakfast, they shaved and washed using soap, razors, shaving cream and toothpaste purchased with the ten cents a day that the prisoners received from the U.S. Government [a prisoner could make up to eighty cents a day working]. From 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Saturday, each prisoner performed some type of manual labor unless he was an officer or non-commissioned officer. At noon the prisoners were given lunch sent from the POW camp.

By 5:00 p.m. they were returned to camp to shower, change clothes and have dinner. Then until 10:00 p.m., they could play soccer or ping pong; attend classes in English, math or American history; see an American movie, or relax at the POW-run camp store where one could purchase writing tools, paper, selected American newspapers and magazines, soda, tobacco, and up to 2 bottles of beer a day. Proceeds from the store were used by the prisoners to purchase sports equipment or musical instruments for free-time activity.

After their release and repatriation in 1946, some former POWs sought to return to America through the provisions of the Displaced Persons Act of 1948 which required a potential immigrant to obtain a job and a sponsor. Given the condition of Europe, and especially Germany, in the immediate aftermath of the war, it is unsurprising that many sought to move elsewhere.

[westorangetimes.com/articles/;Polk-fl.net/staff/teachers/tah/document/; See also *Hitler's Soldiers in the Sunshine State*, Robert D. Billinger, Jr.]

WE CAN ONLY INCLUDE WHAT YOU GIVE US!

From time to time people who have lived in Florida for a while or who have families that have been residents of Boynton in years past say to us, "Why haven't you included anything about my family in *The Historian*?" or "I checked with Janet [DeVries] and there's nothing in the Library about my parents and they lived in Boynton for 25 years." Well, if we have no information on them, it is because you or no one in your family has provided us with anything. We can only write about or preserve what we have, and we are dependent upon you for letters, pictures, documents or other information that we can share.

The following letter which came to the Society with the Raulerson's 2012 membership dues, exemplifies what we encourage from everyone. Last fall we included an article about one of our members whom we had recently lost, Evelyn Brant Raulerson. This is a follow-up note written by a member of the family, Georgie Raulerson:

"Dear Voncile,

"Thank you for the nice obituary for Evelyn Brant Raulerson in *The Historian*. As you know, she and her husband Gifford, as well as her parents, the Frank Brants were 'founding members of the Boynton Beach Historical Society.' Though many of the family members are deceased, the remaining relatives include many Brants, Stewarts, Haleys, Eastons, Woods, Wrights, Raulersons, and married members of all of the above adding more names.

"When I married my husband, Toppo, I had to be most careful what I said to anyone in town!

"When Evelyn died this past summer, I literally found a treasure of old pictures. I have a box of things and old pictures for the Historical Society which I hope to get to you soon. Right now we are scanning many of the pictures to share with all the relatives! Luckily no one care to have the actual pictures—so you'll get the appropriate ones."

"Georgie Raulerson"

We who work to archive Boynton's past appreciate so much the kind of response Georgie Raulerson has provided. We look forward to seeing and sharing some of the pictures and recollections Evelyn Brant left behind. Often, as Georgie has suggested, we learn information about additional families because it comes from identifying relationships among families and from information about friendships within a family that may tell us more about past times in Boynton than we would otherwise know.

Please help us to share your family's contributions to Boynton's history too. Let us have your old photos or other records.

THE HARPER-MAYBERRY FAMILY

Anne Taylor Mayberry Neumann recently gave the Boynton Beach Historical Society the following copy of a report card issued to her Aunt Estella Harper when she was a ninth grade student in Boynton in 1904. Boynton and most of the remainder of Palm Beach County was in Dade County until 1909, so the Boynton school was a member of the Dade County school system.

Dade County, Florida.
 School at *Boynton*
 Record of *Estella Harper*
 Grade *9* Sec. *A* Term *1* Year *1904*

95 to 100 is Excellent
80 to 95 is Good
65 to 80 is Fair
50 to 65 is Poor

	1ST MO.	2ND MO.	3RD MO.	4TH MO.	AV.	EX.	GEN'L AV.
TIMES TARDY							
" " UNEXCUSED							
DAYS ABSENT							
" " UNEXCUSED							
ATTENDANCE	91	100	100	100			97.7
DEPORTMENT	80	99	97	98			93.5
READING							
WRITING	93	91					
SPELLING <i>Analysis</i>	92	96	98	97			95.3
NUMBERS	90	94	98	98			93
LANGUAGE <i>Rhetoric</i>	85	77	80	90			87.5
CHARACTER	91	93	95	97			94
NATURE STUDY							
GEOGRAPHY	93	90	92	93			92
DRAWING							
HISTORY							
PHYSIOLOGY							
AVERAGE	89.5	92.5	94.5	96.5			93.5
RANK IN CLASS	7	2	2	2			2

Hollie J. Perry Teacher.
 PROMOTED TO GRADE _____ SECTION _____
 Principal.

Anne Mayberry, her brother David Harper Mayberry and their sister Kathleen Oliver Mayberry were all born in Boynton and attended Boynton Schools graduating from the 1927 Boynton High School. Both their parents were natives of Florida. Their father Zoll Oliver Mayberry was born in Gainesville, and their mother Elizabeth Alberta Harper was born in LeMonte, Florida. They were married at the City Hall in Pahokee in 1924. Their oldest child David was born in Boynton in 1926. Both parents lived in Boynton for the remainder of their lives.

Although Estella Harper, Mrs. Mayberry's sister, was born in North Carolina, she moved with the family to Florida in the early 1890s and went to school in Boynton.

Apparently in 1904 the school year was of about 8 months duration. This card is for the first term and was sent home every month to be signed on the reverse side by a parent. Estella's father Franklin Pierce Harper signed it each time.

The subjects are a bit different, too. Analysis probably referred to analysis of literature, Rhetoric to writing effectively, and it appears one took Algebra and Arithmetic both. Geography is also included which we should perhaps return to emphasizing today.

**BOYNTON BEACH HISTORICAL SOCIETY
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM**

Member's Name _____
2nd Member's Name _____
Street _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Telephone _____ Cell _____
E-mail _____

TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP:

INDIVIDUAL (\$25.00) _____ FAMILY (\$35.00) _____

PATRON (\$50.00) _____ CORPORATE (\$100 or more) _____

Complete this form and mail it with a check for the appropriate amount to Boynton Beach Historical Society, P. O. Box 12, Boynton Beach, FL 33425-0012.

THE HISTORIAN
P.O. Box 12
Boynton Beach, FL 33425-0012

We are proud to serve Boynton Beach, Ocean Ridge, Manalapan, Gulf Stream, Lantana, Hypoluxo, Briny Breezes and all areas West of Boynton Beach to U.S. Hwy 441, and on occasion, greater Palm Beach County.



School bus picks up students at Briny Breezes in 1942 to take them to Boynton school on Ocean Avenue