



# 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.

2015 Number 1

January 2015

## The HISTORY OF OCEAN RIDGE

Janet DeVries and Ginger Pedersen will present this program at the January meeting of the Boynton Beach Historical Society. They will discuss the time when the current City of Boynton Beach and the Town of Ocean Ridge were both part of the Town of Boynton. What factors led to the division of these two municipalities? What was the Town of Boynton Beach, and when did the City of Boynton Beach emerge? Besides a common ZIP code, what else do they share? The answers to these questions and other information will be covered in this presentation.



Janet DeVries



Ginger Pedersen

**WHAT: The HISTORY of OCEAN RIDGE**  
A Presentation by Janet DeVries and Ginger Pedersen

**WHEN: Monday, January 19, 2015, 6:30 p.m.**

**WHERE: Boynton Woman's Club**  
1010 South Federal Highway

**OPEN FREE to the PUBLIC**

### FUTURE PROGRAMS SCHEDULED

**February 16, 2015, Monday**

**Teddy Roosevelt** A Presentation by Tom Peeling  
Boynton Woman's Club, 6:30 p.m.

**March 16, 2015, Monday**

**The Photography and Music of Stan Sheets**  
A Presentation by David and Larry Sheets  
Boynton Beach City Library, 6:30 p.m.

**April 20, 2015, Monday**

**Sweet Pineapples** A Presentation by Dr. Martha Meeks Light  
Boynton Beach City Library, 6:30 p.m.

**May 3, 2015, Sunday**

**Annual Covered-Dish Supper**  
Boynton Woman's Club, 5:30 p.m.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS--2014-15

### OFFICERS [Elected Annually]

|  |                       |
|--|-----------------------|
| President                                  | Janet DeVries         |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President, Programs   | Ginger Pedersen       |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice President, Membership | Voncile Smith         |
| Recording Secretary                        | Diana Dennis          |
| Corresponding Secretary                    | Anne Watts            |
| Treasurer                                  | Frances Tuite McKeral |

|                                  |                 |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Editor, <i>The Historian</i>     | Voncile Smith   |
| Archivist/Facebook/Webmaster     | Janet DeVries   |
| Facebook Administrator/Webmaster | Ginger Pedersen |

### DIRECTORS [3-Year Staggered Terms]

|      |                        |
|------|------------------------|
| 2015 | Sheila Rousseau Taylor |
| 2015 | Linda Stabile          |
| 2016 | Tim Bednarz            |
| 2016 | Judith Merkel Howard   |
| 2017 | Steven Anton           |
| 2017 | Barbara Ready          |

### TRUSTEES [3-Year Staggered Terms]

|      |                         |
|------|-------------------------|
| 2015 | Christian Oyer Macoviak |
| 2015 | Audrey Gerger           |
| 2016 | Virginia Farace         |
| 2016 | Susan Merkel Shaffer    |
| 2017 | Randall Gill            |

Our website is [www.boyntonhistory.org](http://www.boyntonhistory.org). The e-mail address is [boyntonhistory@gmail.com](mailto:boyntonhistory@gmail.com)

Please mail inquiries or information to our local address P.O. Box 12, Boynton Beach, FL 33425. Voncile can be reached at 561-734-5653. Boynton Beach Historical Society number is 561-327-4690.

You can also find us on Facebook and Twitter:

[www.facebook.com/historicboyntonbeach](http://www.facebook.com/historicboyntonbeach)

[www.twitter.com/@boyntonhistory](https://twitter.com/@boyntonhistory)

*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. Copies from past years are posted on the website.

### LIFE MEMBERS

Randall Gill  
Alexander "Sandy" Simon  
Dorian Beck Trauger  
Curtis and Nain Weaver

### **DUES ARE DUE**

This is another reminder that membership in the Boynton Beach Historical Society is based on a calendar year from January 1 to December 31. Members who paid their dues prior to November 1, 2014 were listed in the November *Historian*. The following are membership payments received between November and January 1. A membership form and the dues amounts are included on the cover to this *Historian*. Unless you are a new member, you do not need to send in a form unless your address changed. Simply address your check to The Boynton Beach Historical Society and mail it to POB 12, Boynton Beach FL 33425.

### LIFE MEMBERSHIPS:

Randall Gill  
Alexander "Sandy" Simon  
Dorian Beck Trauger (New)  
Curtis and Alice Nain Weaver

### CORPORATE:

Donald Day/Delray Awning, Inc.

### PATRON:

Michael and Linda Callaway  
Heather Frazer  
Fred W. Love  
John N. and Rannie Melear  
Wayne F. and Eva Brooks Netzer  
Ginger Pedersen  
Delma W. and Billie Jo Swilley

### FAMILY:

Don and Jeanne Combs  
Joann B. Hackle and Delma and Irma  
Barbara G. and Wyman H. Scott, Jr.

### INDIVIDUAL:

Patricia Atwater  
Gillian David  
Janet DeVries  
Barbara DuBois  
Martin Feeny  
Nancy Hogan  
William G. James  
David C. Kennedy  
Gladys Knuth  
Suzanne Kruse  
Mildred Hackle Lofley  
Sandra McGregor  
Jeff Morgan  
Rosalie Alvaroe Morrissey  
Ralph E. Myers  
Marianne Nitzsche  
Richard Philpott  
Sandra L. Pike  
Nancy Rosa  
Mary Lou Muster Ryder  
Joanne Miner Shoemaker  
Ernest Simon  
Randy K. Weeks  
Raymond E. Weeks  
Dorothy Whittaker  
Michael Wilson (New)

### STUDENT:

Julianne Amaya (New)

## TWO NEW MEMBERSHIP CLASSIFICATIONS

By a unanimous vote at a meeting last fall the Board of Directors created two new membership classifications—Life Membership and Student Membership.

When the Society was new in the late 1960s, the original Bylaws provided for Life Memberships and several members subscribed. When the new Bylaws were created in the early 1990s, membership classifications were left to the discretion of the Board of Directors. The current Board has attempted to honor those earlier Life Memberships when we know of them. That is why Sandy Simon and Curtis and Nain Weaver are so listed. With the reestablishment of the category, we are proud to acknowledge two new Life Members, Randy Gill who was enrolled last year, and now Dorian Beck Trauger who has just become one. Thank you both for your continuing support of the Boynton Beach Historical Society and for becoming part of this rather elite classification.

The other membership category, Student Membership, is totally new. The Board feels that it is important for the Society to encourage student interest in history, especially that concerning our area. We hope others will follow the example set by Julianne Amaya, our very first student member, and join our organization.

## IN MEMORIAM

**Eleanor Murray Sala**—Grandaughter of H. B. Murray, the first Mayor of the Town of Boynton, passed away in late November. She was predeceased by her parents, Bessie and Glenn Murray. She was their youngest child and only girl after her mother had given birth to five boys. Her youngest brother, Lloyd Murray, was mentioned in the November 2014 issue of *The Historian* as a casualty of World War II when he was only 16 years old. Of the four other brothers, only Gerald, who is a member of the Boynton Beach Historical Society, survives.



Eleanor in 2006 at Harvey Oyer's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday party

Eleanor grew up in Boynton and was among the last graduates in 1949 of the old Boynton High School housed in the 1927 schoolhouse. She attended Florida State University for two years then transferred to the University of Florida where she majored in pharmacy. While attending UF she met and married Juan Sala from Lima, Peru. They moved to Lima where they reared two daughters, Rosemary

and Teresa. When Rosemary reached college age, they moved to New Jersey and later back to Florida. They lived on Key Biscayne, and Eleanor practiced pharmacy for a number of years before retiring.

Eleanor had maintained her membership consistently in the Boynton Beach Historical Society. We will miss her support.

We extend our sympathy and best wishes to Juan and to their children and grandson Andrew.



Boynton High School ca. 1949. Eleanor is in light colored dress right of center

**KATHERINE FOY THOMPSON**—passed away October 23, 2014. She was 93. She had grown up on the Foy Dairy, just west of what is now I-95. She was predeceased by her husband, Leonard Thompson, who was a World War II veteran. Her father had moved here from Jacksonville; and in addition to the dairy, he had operated a dragline.

She and Leonard were long time members of the Boynton Beach Historical Society, and after his death she continued to support the Society. They were originally the only residents on Thompson Road in Boynton Beach which was named in their honor.

The Society appreciates their many years of support and sends our condolences to the surviving family members.

## SOME SHARED COMMENTS

Sometimes our members include little notes with their dues or in other correspondence. Below are a couple of these that we enjoyed so much, we share them with you:

"When I count my blessings, there you are and Dear Old Boynton Beach too! I feel very blessed that I grew up in Boynton Beach. I miss it and my dear old time friends! Sincerely, Gladys Knuth." [Hiram, Georgia]

"Hi, Love receiving *The Historian* as I grew up in Boynton Beach. In Nov. issue (In Memory of Harold Lloyd Murray), he was a classmate of mine. His cousin Nancy Murray and I graduated Class of 1945.

"I recognize lots of old family names mentioned in the issues. Thanks for doing a great job! Have a great New Year. Mildred Hackle Lofley (Retired to No. Ga. Mountain 1979)"

[Blairsville, Georgia]

## Señor Boynton? Hotel Owner had Hispanic roots

By Ginger Pedersen

[Editor's Note: Since some of you do not have use of the internet we occasionally reprint blogs from our website [www.boyntonhistory.org](http://www.boyntonhistory.org) for your enjoyment. Ginger posted this in September, 2014]

In celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month, a recent discovery about Major Nathan S. Boynton, for whom the City of Boynton Beach was named, can be brought to light.

Recently I was helping a friend with some research on her family history, and I thought it might be interesting to see if I could find some more information on Major Boynton who founded and owned the Boynton Hotel on the beach.

I first found Major Boynton on the 1860 census living near Cincinnati, Ohio. He was 23 and listed his profession as "Physician." I had read he intended to study medicine after working in the grocery business ("mercantile") for a few years. As the Civil War broke out, he returned to Michigan and enlisted in the cavalry. He rose in rank to Major, and mustered out in 1865, relocating to Marine City, Michigan. In the meantime, he married and started a family. On the 1870 census, he is listed as being an "editor" with wife Annie in the household along with children Charles, Annie, George and Frances.



Major Nathan S. Boynton (center, seated) and his family.

He had purchased the local newspaper and served as editor. I did not find an 1880 census record for the family, and the 1890 census is pretty much gone, lost in a fire.

It was the 1900 census that presented some interesting information. Census forms changed over the years; one of the changes was the requirement to list the place of birth of the parents of each of the persons in the census. And in Major Boynton's line on the census, place of birth for this mother was listed as **Spain**.

I knew that Major Boynton's wife was from Germany, but I had never heard that his mother was born in Spain. A bit of looking found a biography of Major Boynton and it listed his mother as **Frances Rendt Boynton**, daughter of "Old Captain Lewis Rendt." In looking at Captain Rendt, his actual name was **Johann Ludwig Rendt**, and he was born in 1773 in Germany. He was a Hessian soldier who had served in the British army.

The British would "lease" entire battalions of Hessian soldiers to join their side in various conflicts; Captain Rendt had fought for the British in the war of 1812 against the United States. As part of his payment, he was granted land in the province of Ontario, very near the Michigan border.

He married **Joaquina Josephina Sophia Arliano** from Cadiz, Spain and together they had eight children, born in Spain, Malta, and Canada. Among them was **Frances Margaret Rendt**, Major Boynton's mother. She married **Granville F. Boynton** in Port Huron, Michigan. Granville died in 1845, and Frances remarried, to **Jonathan Graves**. They had two sons together, who were half brothers to Major Boynton.

In today's terms, that would make Major Boynton "Hispanic," although such a categorization was unknown at the time. Major Boynton's father was of English heritage, so Major Boynton certainly illustrates the melting pot of America as people of all lands sought its shores. You just never know what the census may reveal.

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### MAJOR NATHAN BOYNTON

Author Unknown

[Editor's Note: One source for a number of stories about Boynton history is the Boynton Woman's Club cookbook, *Boynton's Favorite Fixin's*, 1986. This selection is taken from pages 123-124.]

On a Sunday afternoon in the fall of 1894, a couple of Yankees boarded Captain Fred Voss's sailboat, "Victor," for a trip south of the body of water called Lake Worth. Several lakes were being joined into the Intracoastal Waterway, and boats then could ply the route to a point south of today's Delray Beach. Lillie Pierce Voss, the captain's wife and first Caucasian born between Jupiter and Biscayne Bay was along for the ride and remembered it well, even in 1965 when she recorded memories of the day spent with Major Nathan Smith Boynton and his friend, Colonel William Linton. A year or two earlier, both men had stayed at the Palm Beach Coconut Hotel, and maybe that's where they decided to return and establish towns nearby. Boynton decided to buy 500 acres, including a mile of ocean beach just north of Linton's purchase.

The Major was 57 then, and already had packed a lot into his years. Born in Port Huron, Michigan, in 1837, he was 22 when he wed Annie Fields/Fidelei, and 25 when he enlisted in the Union Army, Company C, Eighth Michigan Cavalry. After the war, he went to Marine City, south of Port Huron where he became Postmaster, Deputy Assessor of Internal Revenue, Village Clerk, and President. Government seemed to appeal to him, for in 1868 he was elected to the State Legislature and, after returning to his hometown as editor and publisher of *The Port Huron Press*, he served two terms as Mayor: 1874-1876 and 1894-1896.

Then Boynton became one of the earliest "snow bird" residents of south Florida, dividing his time between Port Huron and the town he founded: Boynton. Like snow birds of later years, a search for winter sun may have brought him to the area after ill-health caused his retirement in 1883 at 46. Possibly, local climate renewed his health, as records state he enjoyed farming

[continued on page 5, MAJOR]

[MAJOR, continued from page 4]

celery and other foods for the tables of his Boynton Beach Hotel. With 50 rooms and several cottages on the beach ridge where Ocean Avenue met the Atlantic, the hotel was built in 1897 and quickly became a tourist mecca. The year it opened, a plat for part of the town was made by Fred Dewey, Model Land Company agent, and his wife, "Birdie" Spilman Dewey – later a charter member of the Boynton Woman's Club.

Boynton died quietly in Port Huron in the summer of 1911. Hailed as "father" of the Order of the Knights of Maccabees, an organization he'd wanted to bring to Boynton, too, he also was remembered for inventing the Boynton Fire Escape, Boynton Hook and Ladder Truck, and fire-fighting systems. But he's probably best remembered in Florida, where his sole memorial stands. It's not the hotel—that was razed in 1925 to make way for a bigger and better one that hurricanes and the Great Depression cancelled. It's the Boynton Woman's Club building, started via a donation of \$35,000 from the Major's four (of six) remaining heirs in 1925.



Woman's Club under construction late 1920s

### MY, HOW THINGS CHANGE!

By Voncile Smith

The Boynton Beach Historical Society pays post office box rent annually on Box 12, Boynton Beach FL 33436. Below is a cropped section from the billing envelope. The rates are shown as \$100 annually for a small box, or \$50 for six months.

Annual  
 Semiannual  
 not paid  
 make  
 his envelope. \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Amount  
 returns  
 e will be  
 Box #12 33425  
 BOYNTON BEACH HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
 6 Months: \$50.00 12 Months: \$100.00  
 Due Date: 01/31/2015

## Fee Due

Now look at the receipt for payment Harvey Oyer received on September 3, 1961, shown below:

Always show your P.O. Box Number in your return address  
 SEE REGULATIONS ON REVERSE ORIGINAL 168  
 RECEIVED FROM (Name of patron) RENT FOR (Box No.)  
 Harvey E Oyer 145  
 FOR PERIOD ENDING (Date) AMOUNT RECEIVED  
 Sept 3 1961 \$ 1.20  
 PAYMENT RECEIVED BY (Initials of Postmaster or Accepting Clerk) DATING STAMP  
 EP JUN 29 1961  
 POD FORM 1538 BOX RENT RECEIPT  
 SEP. 1959

[Receipt courtesy Susan E. Oyer]

While the \$1.20 was for rent for only 3 months, the amount for six months would be \$2.40, and annually, \$4.80.

All things considered, incomes were not so great in 1961 either. My first teaching contract in Duval County (Jacksonville) for the school year 1960-61 was for \$3,300. Take home pay was about \$2,700. That did not include any health insurance or Social Security. Teachers in Florida were not included in the Social Security program at that time, and had to rely on the Florida Teachers Retirement system. In the 1970s all teachers became eligible along with other state employees to enroll in the Florida Retirement System (FRS) and contracts also required Social Security enrollment, Life and health insurance enrollment became available separately as options under state or county group insurance plans.

### ANOTHER EXAMPLE

SNOW AUTO REPAIR 155482  
 421 N.E. 7th Ave.  
 Boynton Beach, Fla. 33425  
 732-3429

Customer's Order No. DATE 3-21-1974  
 SOLD TO Mr. Oyer  
 ADDRESS chrysler  
 SALESMAN TERMS  
 CASH CHARGE C. O. D. PAID OUT RETD. ADSE. RECD. ON ACCT.

| QUAN. | DESCRIPTION   | PRICE | AMOUNT |
|-------|---------------|-------|--------|
|       | spark plug    | 1.35  |        |
|       | " " extension | .75   |        |
|       | Labor         | 1.00  |        |
|       |               |       | 3.10   |
|       | Tax           | .13   |        |
|       |               |       | 3.23   |

Paid  
 Oyster  
 ALL Claims and Returned Goods MUST Be Accompanied By This Bill  
 SIGNATURE

A receipt for spark plug (some of you may not know what they are) and extension and labor for installation in 1974 at Snow Auto Repairs.

