



# *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 6

September 2015

## ANTIQUE COLLECTING TODAY and FLORIDA SOUVENIRS

is the title of the Monday, September 21 program of the Boynton Beach Historical Society meeting to be presented by journalist and antiques collector Scott Simmons at the Boynton Beach City Library. He will introduce us to some of his favorite Florida collectibles including a souvenir tablecloth, plates from the old Whitehall Hotel and more.



Scott Simmons



One of his displays at an Antique Show



Kestner doll he found at West Palm  
Palm Beach Antiques Festival

(Photographs reproduced from his website [www.scottsimmonsantiques.com](http://www.scottsimmonsantiques.com))

Scott Simmons' love of history led him to follow his mother through antiques shops and shows for four decades. Today he remains an incurable collector, and over the course of those forty years he has visited antiques and vintage shops from Key West to Oregon, from Maine to Southern California, and made a stop or two at antiques shops and markets in Europe. In addition to having a 29-year career in journalism at newspapers that include *The Palm Beach Post*, *The Coastal Star* and *Florida Weekly*, Scott has dealt in antiques, specializing in American Elegant glassware, since the early 1990s, and has written about antiques and collecting since 1998.

He now is staff writer at *Florida Weekly*, where he covers the arts and other topics, and in the "Accent" section of *The Palm Beach Post* where his "Look What We Found" column has appeared since 1998.

**WHAT:** Antiques Collecting Today and Florida Souvenirs  
A Presentation by Scott Simmons

**WHEN:** Monday, September 21, 6:30 pm

**WHERE:** Boynton Beach City Library  
208 S. Seacrest Boulevard

ALL PROGRAMS OF THE BOYNTON BEACH HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
ARE FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC. PLEASE JOIN US!

**BOYNTON BEACH HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS--2015-16**

**OFFICERS [Elected Annually]**

President	Randall Gill
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President, Programs	Anne Rimler
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice President, Membership	Voncile Marshall Smith
Recording Secretary	Diana Dennis
Corresponding Secretary	Anne Watts
Treasurer	Frances Tuite McKeral

**[Non-Elected]**

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

**DIRECTORS [3-Year Staggered Terms]**

2016	Tim Bednarz
2016	Judith Merkel Howard
2017	Steven Anton
2017	Barbara Ready
2018	Sheila Rousseau Taylor
2018	Diane Gerino

**TRUSTEES [3-Year Staggered Terms]**

2016	Virginia Farace
2016	Susan Merkel Shaffer
2017	Ginger Pedersen
2017	Sally Hood
2018	Janet DeVries
2018	Audrey Gerger

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](http://www.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**

Lenore Benson Raborn Boonstra  
Randall Gill  
Alexander "Sandy" Simon  
Dorian Beck Trauger  
Charlotte Tatum Weaver  
Curtis and Nain Weaver

**CORPORATE MEMBERS – 2015**

Boynton Woman's Club  
Donald Day/Delray Awning, Inc  
Scobee-Combs-Bowden Funeral Home and Crematory  
George and Christine Weaver Ternenyi

---

**FLORIDA FACTS**

Florida has a number of official emblems. Among these are Florida's official bird—common mocking bird; official flower—orange blossom; official reptile—alligator; official tree—Sabal Palm; official animal—Florida panther.

**WEEKEND HISTORY STROLL SERIES**

Saturday, September 26, 2015 10:00 a.m. (90 minutes)  
Schoolhouse Children's Museum and Learning Center  
129 East Ocean Avenue

Join the Historical Society and friends for a guided tour of the 1913 Boynton School. Learn about the history of the historic building listed in the National Register of Historic Places, the buildings of architect William Maughlin, Jr., and the history of Boynton Beach.

Meet on the porch of the Museum. Admission is free for this special tour, but a donation of \$5.00 or more per person to the Museum is encouraged.

Here is one thing you will see at the Children's Museum.



When children enter the Schoolhouse Children's Museum, Hannibal Dillingham Pierce greets them from a window in the lighthouse near the door. This animatronics figure represents one of the first settlers in this area. He served as an assistant keeper at the Jupiter lighthouse before moving farther south to the sparsely settled area around Lake Worth (the lake, that is). Looking up at him in this picture is Harvey E. Oyer, III, his great-great-grandson who grew up in Boynton Beach. [Photo from the "Boynton Forum" May 20, 2015.]



## IN MEMORIAM

The Historian is sorry to report that this summer we lost four of our members, all long time Boynton Beach residents.  
**JONES, RUTH J.—**



Ruth Jones (lower center) with her cousins, George and Christine Weaver Ternenyi, grand nieces Susan Merkel Shaffer and Judith Merkel Howard and daughters Emilie and Michele in 2011.

Newer residents may be familiar with the name of the building that sits on the corner of SE Fourth Street and Ocean Avenue referred to in recent years as The Ruth Jones Cottage. Ruth and her children had lived in the little house at 201 NE First Street. Ruth moved to Leisureville in 2008. In 2011 the City bought the house and moved it to its present location where it became a restaurant.. Ruth was a cousin to Erna Weaver and an aunt to the children of Mott and Lois Jones Partin. She passed away on August 27, 2015 at age 91.



**The Ruth Jones cottage, built in 1940 by Otley Scott, shown following reconstruction after it was moved to Ocean Avenue.**

[Photo courtesy Voncile Smith]

Ruth Jones was born in Michigan, but moved to Florida in 1942. She married Thomas Mason Jones in 1946 and had five children. She was widowed when her children were young and faced supporting them on her own. She worked for a number of years at the original location for Bud's Chicken and later sold Avon products. We send our best wishes to her children, Thomas Mason Jones, Janice Heine (Joe), Emilie Little, Michele Jones, and daughter-in-law Susan Jones, her grandchildren and great-grand children. Her son Keith Jones preceded her in death.

**MONAHAN, RICHARD** – In September, 2012, Richard Monahan presented a program, “A History of Postal Service in Boynton Beach,” to the members and guests of the Boynton Beach Historical Society. He had served as the City's Postmaster from 1962 to 1987. He came to Boynton Beach in 1958 and participated in numerous community activities.



**Richard Monahan with his amateur shortwave radio.**

He began work with the post office in 1959 as a letter carrier. In 1962 he became Postmaster. He was a U.S. Army veteran, a charter member of the Boynton Jaycees, Boynton Kiwanis Club President in 1969, and a member of the Boynton Civil Service Appeal Board from 1970 to 1972. More recently in 2008 he became responsible in a communications disaster for supplying radio communication for Bethesda Hospital through the Amateur Radio Emergency Service. Richard had one child, a daughter Susan, when he was married to Julie Weems Monahan. He died in early summer of this year.

The Society sends condolences to his family members.

**SENIOR, CHARLES** – Charles grew up in Boynton Beach and, along with his sister Helen and brother Fred, attended Boynton schools. He graduated from the 1927 Boynton High School. In recent years he had lived in Mobile, Alabama, and he died on Sunday, August 25, 2015, in Mobile.

His father, Charles Senior, Sr. had moved to Boynton in the 1920s and for many years was associated with Florida Power & Light. The junior Charles was 87 at the time of his passing. He was preceded in death by his sister Helen who died two years ago at age 88. He is survived by his younger brother, Fred of Fort Lauderdale and his two daughters Laura and Amy. All three Seniors—Charles, Helen and Fred—have held long term memberships in the Boynton Beach Historical Society.



## IN MEMORIAM (continued from page 3)

**WEEMS, Dr. MARION** – Nathaniel Marion Weems, Jr. grew up in a family devoted to medical service. His father, Nathaniel Marion Weems, Sr., was Boynton's first doctor who began his practice here in 1925. His mother, Truly Fain Weems, had studied Nursing, as did three of his sisters, Anne Weems Michael, Julie Weems Monahan and Margaret (Meg) Weems. One of his brothers, Dudley Marion Weems is also a doctor of medicine.

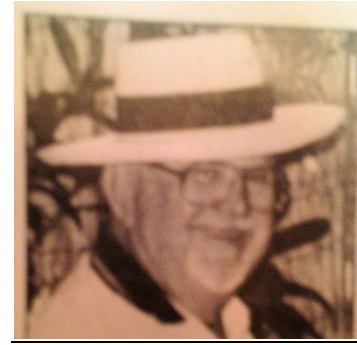


**Nat and Truly Weems' children. Back row: Marion and Alice Nain, Front row: Julie, Anne and Fain.**

**Not pictured are Marion's siblings, Dudley and Meg, born to Marion's stepmother Margaret years after this photo was taken.**

Marion first worked as a family practice physician when he joined his father's office in 1957 where he eventually took over the practice and worked until 1990. He served on the Bethesda Hospital Board of Directors for over 40 years, resigning in 2012.

Marion lived a long, rich life for which he had a passion for travel, water skiing and sailing, and for growing orchids. He was preceded in death by Cecile, his loving wife of 62 years, and by his sister Julie Weems Monahan. He died August 14, 2015 at age 88. The members of the Boynton Beach Historical Society send condolences and best wishes to all the family members.



Marion Weems

## BOYNTON WOMAN'S CLUB RESTORATION

In 2013, the members of the Boynton Woman's Club recognized that they must begin a drive for funds to restore portions of their historic building. The 1925 Addison Mizner designed structure is 90 years old and in need of some major repairs. The Club began a drive for donations in hopes of raising matching funds to qualify for grants. In 2014, the Boynton Beach Historical Society contributed \$1,000 to their drive. The City of Boynton Beach Community Development Agency voted to give them \$50,000 and with the \$10,000 they had raised in donations, they used these sums to apply for a matching grant for \$120,000 from the State of Florida's Division of Historical Resources.

Boynton Woman's Club members and co-chairs of the Club's Historic Preservation Committee, Pat Waldron and Barbara Wineberg, assisted by the City's Historic Preservation Planner, Warren Adams, prepared and submitted the application. They were awarded the grant which should fund repair and restoration of the windows and doors. Over the next several years the Club hopes to replace the air conditioning unit, repaint the building inside and out, and install a new elevator. This building is one of the few in Boynton Beach that is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



Boynton Woman's Club ca. 1950

## RAY WEEKS, TURNS 90 A BOYNTON LITTLE LEAGUE INSTITUTION,

The family of Raymond Edward Weeks had a special birthday party for him in late August to celebrate his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. Ray's parents moved to Boynton (before it became Boynton Beach) from Lake Wales in the early 1930s. Ray and his brothers and sisters attended school in Boynton, first the 1913 schoolhouse and later the 1927 high school.



**Ray with two of his great-grandchildren, 3 year old Maddex Raymond Weeks and 4 year old Brynn Elise Muehlhauser.**

[Photos courtesy Marci Weeks Muehlhauser]

During his years at Boynton High School in the early 1940s, he was active in the competitive sports programs the little high school offered—baseball and basketball—and Ray lettered in both. But he also began a lifelong love affair with baseball which eventually led to his becoming a Little League coach and in 1982 becoming president of the Boynton Beach Little League which he served for seven seasons.

When he was 18, he was drafted into the U.S. Army. While completing his basic training at Camp Fannin outside Tyler, Texas, he met his future wife Margie Flatt. The couple was married for 19 years until Margie died in 1965.

In 1945 during World War II, he and his platoon were crossing a river in Germany in a small wooden boat when the Germans began firing. When their boat overturned, Ray had to wade through waist-high freezing water to reach shore where he sought cover in an abandoned German pillbox. In the morning when the troops moved, Ray was injured when he stepped on a land mine. He suffered frost bite and nearly lost the lower part of his left leg.

The Army sent him to England to recover. When the war ended, he continued in service and was assigned to stand guard at the hotel where American officials were housed during the Nuremberg Trials. During that same year he was asked to serve as an honor guard at the funeral for General George Patton at the Hamm Cemetery in Luxembourg.

Altogether Ray served three tours in Europe and one in Korea as a DMZ Intelligence Sergeant. During his career he earned a bronze star, numerous letters of appreciation and the Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster to the Army Commendation Medal. In 1963 he was assigned to Palm Beach County to continue Project Big, now known as the Army Validation Programs, look for AWOL soldiers and supervise the Military Police.

He retired in 1971, but his extensive military career had taken him to Germany, Switzerland, France, England, Belgium, Luxembourg, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Panama Canal Region, Korea, Japan, and numerous parts of the United States.

Ray's granddaughter, Marci Weeks Muehlhauser who lives in Boca Raton, reports that he is in good health, still drives to visit his sister Ovedia Weeks Stevens and to take her on trips to North Florida and to visit his 87 year old brother Jim Weeks in

Tennessee. And, of course, he still goes to watch his great-grandkids play Little League.

Fellow coach and friend Bradley L. Brant commented, "Ray ran the Little League the same way he runs his life, following the motto, "Be honest, play fair and always do the right thing."

We are proud to report that Ray and both his siblings, Ovedia and Jim, have been long-time members of the Boynton Beach Historical Society.

---

## UPDATE ON 1927 SCHOOLHOUSE

In early August three members of the City Commission, Mayor Jerry Taylor, Vice Mayor Casello and Commissioner Mack McCray voted to demolish the 1927 schoolhouse. Commissioners David Merker and Mike Fitzpatrick voted to save it. This vote came before any input from members of the audience was permitted. Only after the vote were people allowed to comment.

The reactions within the next few days were gratifying. A petition drive on the internet yielded over 800 signatures in less than three days. A protest was organized for the following Saturday that was attended by over 70 sign-waving participants (including the two supporting Commissioners). Area television stations and newspapers issued editorials in support of saving the school. Committees were organized to look into ways to deter demolition. A fund drive was begun.

By the following week, the City Commission added discussion of the matter to their next meeting agenda.

Rick Gonzales, a West Palm Beach restoration architect who is past president of the Florida Trust for Historic Restoration and a professional who has been involved in numerous restoration projects in the area, met with the Commissioners for a four hours the day before the next Commission meeting. At the meeting the next day the Commission permitted Gonzales to make a presentation, and he agreed that he would have a plan in place, with funding, by January, 2016, to save the building. The Commissioners voted unanimously to delay any action on the building until they have heard Gonzales' proposal in January. They did not rescind the previous action to demolish, however.

Since then the Commission has sought funding for demolition through the CRA should Rick's plan not come to fruition. Vivian Brooks, Executive Director of the CRA, commented that the money could be used for some of the repairs, rather than razing the building, if things change in the future.

In the meantime, the lawsuit brought by the developer whose proposal the City accepted and then cancelled several years ago continues. A sign from the Saturday protest is shown below.



[Photo courtesy Steve Anton]



**BOYNTON BEACH HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

Member's Name \_\_\_\_\_

2nd Member's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

THE SOCIETY IS A 501 © 3 Organization so dues are TAX DEDUCTIBLE!

TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP: (Check one)	INDIVIDUAL	(\$25.00) _____
	FAMILY	(\$35.00) _____
	PATRON	(\$50.00) _____
	CORPORATE	(\$100.00) _____
	STUDENT	(\$10.00) _____
	LIFE	(\$500.00) One time Payment only.

The membership; year is from January 1 to December 31 of each year.  
Dues are not pro rated.

Complete this form and mail it with a check for the appropriate amount to  
Boynton Beach Historical Society, POB 12, Boynton Beach FL 33424-4012,  
You may pay by PayPal at [www.boyntonhistory.org](http://www.boyntonhistory.org)

*The Historian*

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



All ages joined our Save Boynton's History effort!  
[Photo courtesy Steve Anton]