



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.

November 2021

James Melton Museum & Autorama

By John J O'Leary IV

Monday, November 22, 2021 @ 7-8pm EST via Zoom

If your email is on file with us, check your inbox for the invitation. If not, send a request to join to BBHSPrograms@gmail.com by 3pm on the day of the event and we will send you an invite.

James Melton was an accomplished tenor, appearing on radio, television, in movies, and with the New York Metropolitan Opera. In the 1950's he was the star of the musical variety show on NBC sponsored by Ford Motor Company. And James Melton loved cars. Melton put his collection on display in Hypoluxo at the **James Melton Autorama**, a museum featuring nearly 100 antique automobiles in period sets, as well as a collection of toys, a giant cyclorama, and the **Bernard Thomas** "America the Beautiful" mural, illustrating great moments in American history.

John J O'Leary IV has a unique connection to the James Melton Museum & Autorama. O'Leary's wife's grandfather (Gus Reuter of Reuter's Coach Works) restored all the cars in Melton's famous collection. He has spent the past decade organizing never-before-seen items such as letters, unpublished images of Melton's cars, and other items that Melton gave to Reuter's, like awards and signed photos. His goal is to visually re-create both the **Melton Museum** (1948-1953) and the James Melton Autorama (1953-1961) from old photos and other items from people who visited the Autorama decades ago.

John O'Leary IV. As an adjunct faculty member at the University of Hartford and Post University (Conn.), John O'Leary has taught a wide variety of courses in Business, Economics, Strategy, and International Business at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. He has worked on a variety of projects around the globe in cities like Prague, Singapore, Bangkok, and Dubai for companies such as Pratt & Whitney, OTIS elevator and Prague Studios.



All Programs of the Boynton Beach Historical Society are FREE and OPEN to the Public
Boynton Beach Historical Society The Historian November 2021



Boynton Beach Historical Society

Since 1968

2021-2022 Board of Directors

OFFICERS Elected Annually

President – M Randall Gill

1st Vice President, Programs - Barbara Ready

2nd Vice President, Membership - Sheila Rousseau Taylor

Secretary – Alex Rousseau

Treasurer – Anne Rimler

TRUSTEES 3-Year Term

2022 - Virginia Farace

2022 - Ben Lowe

2023 – Steve Anton

2023 – Heidi Bell

2024 - Donna Artes

2024 – Chadda Shelly

Non-Elected

Editor, *The Historian* - Anne Rimler

Archivist/Facebook/Webmaster – Janet Naughton

Facebook Admin/Webmaster – Ginger Pedersen

Boynton Beach Historical Society

PO Box 12, Boynton Beach, FL 33425

We are on the web www.boyntonhistory.org, and on Facebook [@HistoricBoyntonBeach](https://www.facebook.com/HistoricBoyntonBeach) and on Twitter [@BoyntonHistory](https://twitter.com/BoyntonHistory).

Questions or comments: **Programs** bbhsprograms@gmail.com

Membership bbhsmembership@gmail.com.

The Historian

The Historian, the newsletter of the Boynton Beach Historical Society, is usually sent six times a year, October through April (except December), to dues-paid members (one per paid membership). Previous issues are posted to our website. Issues were not published Apr '20 to Oct '21 due to COVID-19. The first line on your **mailing label** has your **dues expiration date** – are yours current? If not, please mail the membership form with your dues or pay online at www.boyntonhistory.org. Dues paid at/after the last meeting of the season will be credited towards the following season.

Society Bylaws

Our Bylaws were amended at the April 26, 2021, Annual Meeting. They are here: <http://www.boyntonhistory.org/membership/>.

2021-2022 Season Mondays @7pm Via Zoom

Nov 22 James Melton Autorama, **J O'Leary IV**

Jan 15* **Highwaymen Art Show/Sale**, Arts & Cultural Ctr

Feb 28 Augusta Savage: Sculptor/Civil Rights, **J Naughton**

Mar 28 Stay Tuned for Program Info

Apr 25 Annual Meeting, Excellence Award & More

*Highwaymen Art Show/Sale is Sat Jan 15 @11am-3pm

Boynton Beach Arts & Cultural Center E Ocean Av

Zoom Program Meetings are Recorded

Find us on YouTube at "**BBHS Programs**"

Like and Subscribe!



The following represents our Membership Roll to date & Dues received from 4/1/2021 to 11/5/2021

Thank You to our Life Members

Candy & Doug **Brueggemann** Alexander "Sandy" **Simon**

Scott & Camilla **Smith Richardson**

Robert and Jeanne **Gaylor**

Voncile Marshall **Smith**

George & Christine Weaver **Ternenyi**

M Randall **Gill**

Robert & Christian **Oyer Macoviak**

William & Gaye **Weaver**

Melear Bros., Cliff & Rick **Melear**

Marion Weaver **Wester**

Wayne & Eva Brooks Knuth **Netzler**

Bill & Elsie **Winchester**

EasyPay Tire Stores Inc, Doug & Ruth **Besecker**

Thank You to our Corporate Members

Boynton Memorial Chapel, Stormet C Norem

Dan & Regina Day, Delray Awning

Scobee-Combs-Bowden Funeral Home & Crematory

Daniel & Lisa Ames Suiter

Thank You to our Patrons

Ron & Sarah Thomas Bollenbacher

Michael & Linda Martin Callaway

George & Gayle Kranz Greider

Ward & Martha Parker

Billie Jo Swilley

Mary Burns & Tom Warnke

Suzie Winchester

Membership Renewals

Thank You!

Tim Bednarz

Ellen Brown Curtin

Donald Edge

Robert & Virginia Foot

Bill & Maggie Huff

Robert McClory

Rosalie Morrissey

Clifford & Ana Rosemary Rifkin

Anne Watts

Dr Gay Voss & Kathleen Woolrich

Terri & Sheldon Voss

A Special Welcome to our BOGO Recipients*

Rick Breze

Bill (Bud) & Jackie Brown

Ralph Krugler

*** BOGO Special Offer: Become a New Member or Renew your Membership and get a FREE 1-year membership for a friend! Restrictions apply. See form for details.**

Gift Memberships, Memberships Given in Honor, or Given in Memory Are Available

Complete the Membership Form and mail with your check or pay online securely using PayPal at www.boyntonhistory.org.

Volunteer Opportunities

Are you a fan of Boynton Beach? Invest in its future by upholding its past and volunteer with the Society! The Boynton Beach Historical Society is run entirely by its volunteer members. Let us know if you would like to join us and make history happen!



Boynton Beach Historical Society

PO Box 12 Boynton Beach FL 33425

boyntonhistory@gmail.com

www.boyntonhistory.org

Greetings BBHS Members & Friends!

We hope this email finds you well and looking forward to the Holiday Season!

The Society's Board of Directors is happy to announce we held very productive Board meetings via Zoom throughout the 2021 Season thanks to creative & knowledgeable Board members! Most exciting were our three highly successful virtual programs which took the place of our once in-person programs.

Although we miss seeing many of our regular attendees at our programs, a bonus was the many out-of-area members who could attend virtually for the first time! We had members in California, North Carolina & Georgia sign up for programs. When we can resume in-person programs, we hope to also provide a virtual option.

I am pleased to announce the success of our 2021 special BUY ONE:GIVE ONE Membership offer. We will offer this again for 2022. When you become a member or renew your membership, you can give a free one-year membership to a friend! Reminder: recipients must be first-time members and the Student membership level is not eligible for BOGOs. Thank you to those members who have already renewed. If you wish to take advantage of our BOGO offer, fill out the form and mail to us.

Looking for the perfect holiday gift? Gift memberships, gifts in honor or in memory are also available.

The membership year for the Boynton Beach Historical Society is based on a calendar year, January 1 to December 31; dues are not pro-rated. For your convenience, a membership form and self-addressed envelope is included, or you may pay online securely using PayPal at <http://www.boyntonhistory.org/membership/>

Questions? Comments? My email is BBHSMembership@gmail.com.

We hope to hear from you soon & stay well.

Thank You!

Sheila

Sheila Rousseau Taylor
2nd Vice President Membership



The Historian

MEMBERSHIP SPECIAL - BUY ONE:GIVE ONE. **BOGO**.

We are incredibly pleased to make this SPECIAL offer for the second time! When you become a member or renew your membership, you can give a FREE one-year membership for one friend, family member or other interested party! BUY ONE:GIVE ONE*. BOGO*. TWO memberships for the SAME PRICE!

Please provide the recipient's name, mailing address, email, and phone, and they will also receive "The Historian," via email, in addition to important Society notifications.

Have you already sent in your dues for 2022? Thank you! Please designate your BOGO recipient by sending an email to bbhsmembership@gmail.com with the info requested for your BOGO recipient. We'll do the rest.

****The BOGO recipient must be a NEW member to the Society.
*Student membership level is not eligible to gift the BOGO special.***

Boynton Beach Historical Society Membership Form

BUY ONE:GIVE ONE

My Name _____

Select one – this is a:

___ New Membership. ___ Membership Renewal.

Street _____

Select Membership Type:

City _____

___ Individual \$25

___ Family \$35

State / Zip _____

___ Patron \$50

___ Corporate \$100

Email _____

___ Student* \$10 (please provide valid Student ID)

___ Life (one-time payment) \$500

Phone # _____

I would like to Give a One-Year Membership to (BOGO Recipient's Information)*:

Name _____

Street _____

City _____

State / Zip _____

Email _____

Phone # _____

**The BOGO recipient must be a NEW member to the Society. Student membership level is not eligible to give BOGO specials.*

Complete and mail with payment: Boynton Beach Historical Society PO Box 12 Boynton Beach FL 33425-0012. Or pay online using PayPal at www.boyntonhistory.org/membership/ and send BOGO Recipient Information by email to bbhsmembership@gmail.com.

The Society is a 501(c)(3) Organization; dues are tax deductible.

Membership year runs Jan 1 to Dec 31. Dues are not pro-rated. Expiration date is shown on first line of your mailing label.



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Hand's Art Supply and Bookstore Closes after 87 Years

Randall Gill

For the past 87 years Hand's, an historic treasure, has been a lighthouse for people looking for Florida history books and Florida collectibles. At this store, founded in 1934, you could still find pink flamingos for your yard, a rubber alligator for a child's Christmas stocking, seashells and Haitian art made from steel oil drums. Owner **David Cook** said it was our area's "General Store." Cook, Past President of the Delray Beach Historical Society, always had a remarkable inventory of local Florida History books. You could always find books by local authors **Ginger Pedersen, Janet Naughton, Harvey Oyer III, and Randall Gill**. Hand's had a loyal following, but with the pandemic and competition from on-line shopping, Cook felt it was time to retire and move on. He will continue to support the Delray Beach Historical Society and has volunteered to help revamp their bookstore in future. Photos Courtesy R Gill



Window display at Hand's



Society President Randall Gill and Hand's Owner David Cook

An Invitation from The Boynton Woman's Club ~ Thursday, Nov 18, 2022 @11:30am



Boynton Woman's Club



The **Boynton Woman's Club** has extended an invitation to the Historical Society to attend a free tour of the **Palm Beach Habilitation Center** facility. **Danielle Hanson**, the Director of Development, will provide an overview of the Center's mission. The Center is located at 4522 S Congress Ave, Palm Springs 33461 and has a large campus that serves disabled adults. Prior to the presentation, luncheon will be served at 11:30am. Your luncheon selections (choice of hot or cold entrée, dessert, and beverage) need to be pre-ordered by Nov 15. Payment for the meal is due the day of the event. If you plan to attend the 11:30am luncheon and 12:30pm tour, please email BWC1909@gmail.com prior to Mon, Nov 15, for menu choices, to arrange payment and to reserve a seat.



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Archivist's Corner by Georgen Charnes, Library Archivist, Boynton Beach City Library

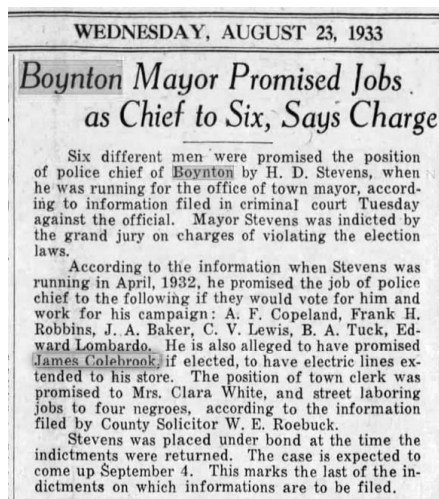
<https://www.boynton-beach.org/city-library> (561) 742-6390 100 E Ocean Ave, Boynton Beach, FL 33435 charnesg@bbfl.us

In search of a photo of Mayor Henry Darius Stevens We have photographs of all the former mayors (of varying quality) except one: **Henry Darius Stevens** (1879-1952), a local businessman who served as mayor between 1932 and 1937. H.D. Stevens was quite a character, apparently. **Dr. John Rousseau** (1920-1995) reported that he and a few Ocean Avenue store owners would play pranks on each other constantly. When Stevens left to travel by car to New York at 4 A.M. one morning, he pushed the red fire alarm button and then just drove on out of town while the siren went off. **Bill Brant** (1925-1982), in another oral history, relates that Stevens was always talking politics and trying to get people to arm wrestle when they came in the store. Out of towners who double parked on Ocean Avenue would find old pipes tied to the back of their cars, making a racket when they drove off. He caused a huge uproar when he hired someone to steal the turkey that Townsend Club meant to raffle off. **Ozzie Lunsford** (1909-2003) also told of the turkey theft and mentioned that once high school kids stole all the watermelons from Stevens' store and moved them to **V.G. Weaver's** store. Listen to these oral histories here: <https://www.boynton-beach.org/library/archives>.

Elected mayor in 1932, Stevens was arrested in August 1933 by the Palm Beach County Sheriff for promising jobs to those who voted for him, including offering the job of police chief to six different people, but he was acquitted in October when only a few were willing to testify. It didn't seem to affect most people's perception of him, because he ran unopposed in 1935 and won a second 3-year term as mayor. However, he suddenly resigned at the February 1937 town commission meeting and moved to Lake Worth. He ran for Mayor again in 1941 but was unsuccessful.

He became a municipal judge for Boynton Beach. Apparently, his salary was determined by the amount of fees levied, and he and the police chief, "**Boots**" **Carver**, were accused of rigging a speed trap on U.S. 1 with the placement of a school bus in a less than visible place, which allowed the police to write the many offenders tickets. Stevens quit before he was fired in February 1948, the charge for the dismissal being "meddling in politics," since he remained very vocal and critical of city commissioners. H.D. Stevens died on May 9, 1952, after a long illness.

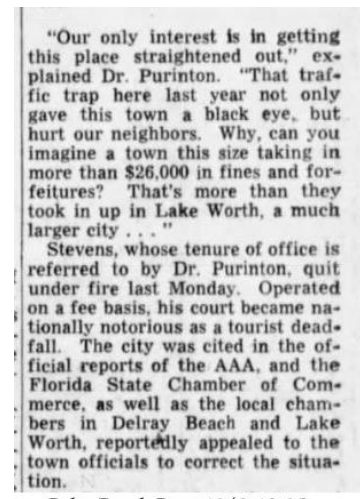
After living so many years in Boynton Beach and Lake Worth, there must be a photograph of H. D. Stevens somewhere. I've checked numerous local sources and internet sites, all with no luck. If you know a relative or have other resources, please contact me. I'm ever hopeful that I'll find one someday.



Palm Beach Post, 1933-08-23



Palm Beach Post, 1925-04-03



Palm Beach Post, 1948-12-05