

THE HISTORIAN

The Newsletter of THE BOYNTON BEACH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Serving Boynton Beach, Ocean Ridge, Manalapan, Gulf Stream, Lantana, Hypoluxo, the Village of Golf, Briny Breezes and all areas of West Boynton to US Hwy 441
Post Office Box 12 Boynton Beach FL 33425-0012

Voncile Smith, President

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Voncile Smith, Editor

NOTED AREA WRITER TO SPEAK JANUARY 17

Author **James D. Snyder**, who has written three books on South Florida history, will be the featured speaker at the January 17, 2005, meeting of the Boynton Beach Historical Society. The meeting is scheduled for 7:00 p.m. at the Boynton Woman's Club, 1010 South Federal Highway.

A lifelong journalist, Mr. Snyder spent over thirty years in Washington, D.C. as a governmental affairs writer, magazine editor and Chairman/CEO of a business periodicals publishing company. His presentation will combine information from his research for the books about South Florida. These are *Life and Death on the Loxahatchee: The Story of Trapper Nelson*; *Five Thousand Years on the Loxhatchee: A Pictorial History of Jupiter-Tequesta, Florida*; and the most recently published, *Black Gold and Silver Sands: A Pictorial History of Palm Beach County Agriculture*.



James D. Snyder

The Historical Society of Palm Beach County published the book on Palm Beach County agriculture with the concern for preserving information on the farms that once covered the major portion of the County. Many people from the Boynton area with farming connections contributed directly to the research, among them several members of the Boynton Beach Historical Society including **Billy DuBois; Harvey E. Oyer, III; Sandy Simon; Roy Simon;** and **C. Stanley Weaver**. Many other names of people prominent in farming in our area are mentioned in the book. Mr. Snyder will have copies of his books available for sale and will personally autograph any purchased. **This presentation is open free to the public at large, and anyone interested is invited to attend.** For more information call Voncile at 734-5653.

The pictures below and to the left are from Snyder's book on agriculture in Palm Beach County. To the left, from page 160, is Jean Louis Merkel, for over 60 years a premier orchid grower in Boynton Beach; below from page 146, are the DuBois Farm partners, ca. 1973.



Jean Louis Merkel and Orchids



From left William, Jr.; Robert; Wayne; and William A. DuBois, Sr.,
at one time the nation's largest pepper farmers

**BOYNTON BEACH HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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**MEMBERS WHO HAVE RENEWED OR
JOINED FOR 2005**

(Information is for dues received through January 5, 2005)

[The membership year for the Boynton Beach Historical Society is from January 1 to December 31 of each year. If your name is not listed below, your membership has expired.]

CORPORATE:

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If you are not already a member, won't you please consider joining? Information about dues, classifications of membership and possible committee volunteering is contained on the enclosed membership flyer.

**SPECIAL EXHIBITION AT
SCHOOLHOUSE CHILDREN'S MUSEUM**

The Children's Museum, 129 E. Ocean Avenue, is hosting a special exhibition January through April, 2005, "Scouting Through Time ." The exhibit features scouting memorabilia on loan from several area collectors. Designed and implemented by **Joe Zaleski**, Eagle Scout candidate, under the mentorship of the Education and Exhibits Department of the Museum, the exhibit features something for all ages, including a knot tying post for those who want to try their skill; a tent for younger visitors to crawl in and out of; and a collection of Scout manuals from 1911 to the present. Scouts will be on duty as exhibit guides on Saturdays and Museum visitors may pick up free copies of unique camping recipes. The Museum is open 10:00a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. Call 561-742-6782 for more information.

LANTANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Lantana Historical Society meets monthly on the second Thursday at 7:30 p.m. in the conference room at the Lantana Police Department. For more information contact **Rosemary Mouring** at 561-588-9546 or e-mail LHSociety@bellsouth.net.

IF IT'S HAPPENED, IT'S HISTORY!

If you have been reading *The Historian*, you probably have some additional knowledge or information about Boynton and vicinity. Even if it is a very simple recollection or little story, it may have special meaning for others. Why not write it down, or simply call Voncile or Harvey Oyer and tell us about it. Photographs, letters, and other memorabilia are also welcome. Share history with us. We cannot collect information about it without your help. P. O. Box 12, Boynton Beach 33425 or call Voncile at 561-734-5653.

One Boynton Recollection: Do you remember those little wax bottles filled with different colors (usually green or red) sweet liquid? They cost \$.01 and Melton and Mary's among others sold them. You bit off the tops, let the nectar flow down your throat, then you could crunch up and chew the wax all day (provided your teacher or your mother did not make you spit it out).



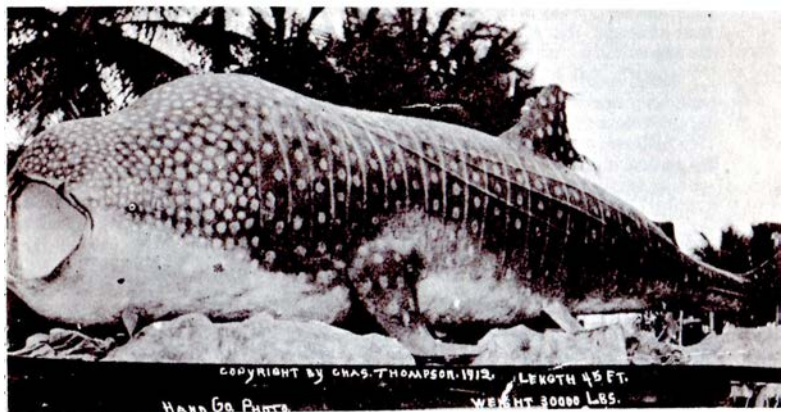
Boynton Inlet Docks – Very Late 1940s

In addition to farming, fishing and tourism have been major contributors to the economy of Boynton Beach. The people in the picture are left to right Doris Kelly, Clorice Keatts, Ray Kelly, Ken Gouge, Lorraine Keatts Gouge and Captain Kenny Lyman.

A FISH (or Fishy) TALE – MAYBE

In the 1970s **Vernon Lamme**, a long time journalist and the associate editor of the *Boynton Beach Star*, published a little paperback entitled *Florida Lore Not Found in History Books*. Although the stories concern happenings all over Florida, one in particular caught your editor’s eye and is called “A Sure Enough Whopper.” It concerns a “fish” presumably caught off the southeast coast of Florida in 1912. According to reports, “It took several days and many hundreds of high powered rifle bullets to subdue.” The picture is supposedly “untouched” and a model of the fish has not been superimposed.

Reports suggest it was shown in Palm Beach on a large barge by a Captain Charles Thompson who took his fish across the nation to show to school children (for a small fee, of course). Eventually it could no longer be preserved. Lamme credits **Fred Benson** of Boynton Beach with finding this photograph in San Francisco. He acknowledges that the weight on the photo, 30,000 lbs., may be “a slight exaggeration” as there were no scales capable of weighing such a large catch. But reportedly it did measure 45 feet in length. Lamme reports that his son Bob could recall the time when he was about three years old and his grandfather Captain Tony Canova introduced him to Captain Thompson who picked him up and placed him in the “yawning mouth of the monster.”



The wording on the photograph reads, “Copyright by Chas. Thompson – 1912 Length 45 ft. Hand Co. Photo Weight 30,000 LBS”
This photo appeared in *Boynton Beach Star* and was reproduced in Lamme’s book

BOYNTON BEACH HISTORICAL SOCIETY
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM
CALENDAR YEAR 2005

Member's Name _____

2nd Member's Name _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____ e-mail _____

TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP: INDIVIDUAL (\$25.00) _____ FAMILY (\$35.00) _____

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

Yes _____, I will be willing to serve on the following committees (Circle choices):

Archives/Preservation Program/Planning Mailings Telephone Hospitality

Membership Public Relations Minority History Seeking Sponsors

Fundraising Other (Specify): _____

The purpose of the Society is to act as a living repository for Boynton Beach's traditions and history, to interpret items of historical and antiquarian significance, and to promote a better understanding of history. We are proud to serve Boynton Beach, Ocean Ridge, Manalapan, Gulfstream, Lantana, Hypoluxo, Briney Breezes, and all area west of Boynton Beach to U.S. Hwy 441, and, on occasion, greater Palm Beach County.

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