



The Historian

The Newsletter of The Boynton Beach Historical Society

Voncile Smith, President

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Voncile Smith, Editor

THE KNUTHS: EARLY LEADERS IN BOYNTON

The name **Knuth** represents far more than a street name in present day Boynton. The Knuths had a dairy in the general area now represented by the street and have been active in business and governmental affairs in the town. They were related to a number of other prominent Boynton families including the Weavers, the Mercers, and the Dames. The October meeting of the Boynton Beach Historical Society will feature a panel presentation on the Knuth family and their contributions. Scheduled as panel presenters are **Brad Knuth, Curtis Weaver, Harvey Oyer, Jr.** and **Gloria Partin Turner**



Marguerite Knuth, 3rd from left, with her two sisters Erma Mercer and Jessie Dame and brother-in-law Ray Dame, early 1930s

**WHAT: Meeting, Monday
October 9, 2006**

**WHERE: Boynton Woman's Club
1010 S. Federal Hwy**

TIME: 6:30 P.M.

All meetings of the Boynton Beach Historical Society are open FREE to the general public.

NEW HAPPENINGS!

The Society now has two website names:

boyntonbeachhistoricalsociety.org or
boyntonbeachhistoricalsociety.com

Janet DeVries and your president have posted for the present only a temporary web page at that address, but the site now does provide contact information. We hope that soon we will have several new pages in place and links to a variety of sources.

To keep the pages fresh with new information we need your help. We cannot feature information about families and friends if we have nothing to work with. We need pictures, letters, clippings, journals, programs,

mementos, brochures, etc. We can scan what you loan us and return your originals to you. These help provide a portrait, not only of individuals, but what life in Boynton was like in years past.

If we have sufficient material, we would like to feature a different family on the website each month.

Other plans for the site include creating a link to a file containing past issues of *The Historian*. Your current editor has the issues since 2002 that she has edited, but we have at best a limited number of issues prior to 2002. We would be most grateful for the loan of any past issues any reader might have. We would appreciate the loan of any other **papers**, too.

**BOYNTON BEACH HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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The Boynton Beach Historical Society's website is boyntonbeachhistoricalsociety.org You can contact us at our e-mail address boyntonhistory@yahoo.com or mail inquiries or information to our mailbox at P.O. Box 12, Boynton Beach, FL 33425-0012.

IN MEMORIAM

JOHN TUIE—This past summer the Society lost another of its long time members, Jack Tuite. We appreciate his many contributions to Boynton Beach and to Palm Beach County, and send our best wishes to his family. Elsewhere in this page is a copy of an autobiographical sketch loaned to us by his daughter Frances Tuite McKeral.

THOMAS E. WOOLBRIGHT, JR.— Thomas Woolbright was a former, long-time member and supporter of the Society. He represented another family prominent in Boynton history. We expect to feature more information on his life and contributions in a later issue. We are grateful to his family for sharing recollections about his life with us.

STEVEN ROGER KNUTH—Steven Knuth, who had moved to North Carolina several years ago was not a member of the Historical Society, but was the last child of Orville and Marguerite Knuth. The Society shares condolences with his children and family members. Please note information about the October program which will share information about the contributions of this family to Boynton Beach history.

JOHN MARTIN TUIE— In his Own Words

[Ed. Note: The following has been edited slightly to fit in space in *The Historian*.]

"Born 1-10-18 Bronx N.Y –married Mabel C. Rousseau 8/5/42

Primary School—

P.S. 72 – Bronx N.Y.

Central Elementary W.P.B. FL 1927-28

St. Ann's Academy N.Y. C. Graduated 1932

High School—

Pelham Memorial High –Pelham Manor N.Y.

Graduated 1936

College—Thomas R. Clarkson Memorial College of Technology 1937

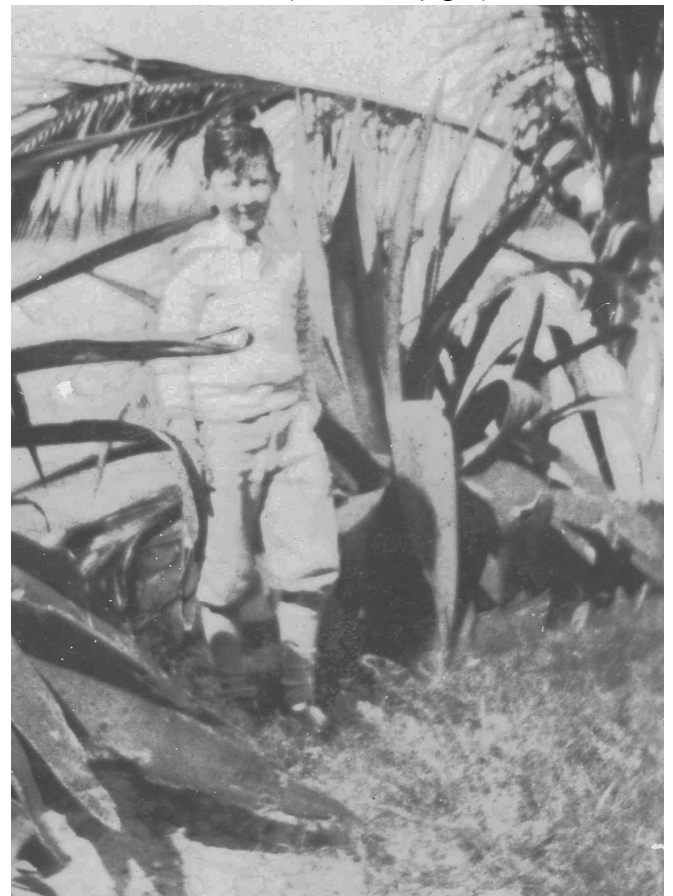
Left due to health of father & mother

"After leaving college – employed by Methodist Book Co. – Printing and Bindery Work. Joined N.Y.S. National Guard, Co. C 165 INF –Yonkers N.Y. – Also enrolled Delahanty's School (Prep for Fire Dept – was member of Aviation Vol.F.D. Clason Point N.Y.)

"August 1938 moved permanently to family home on Pine St. Boynton Beach, FL – after death of father.

"Previously had been a winter resident of Boynton – When I was a seasonal visitor I was classified as a 'Yankee' When I moved here permanently I was classified a 'Damn Yankee' because I came & stayed. When I married my wife, a Boynton native, I became a 'G.D. Yankee.'

(Continued on page 3)



John Tuite at Boynton home on Pine Street 1922

JOHN MARTIN TUIE (Continued from page 2)

"In retrospect - Even though we had moved permanently to Boynton in 1938 - Lack of work due to economy & weather it behooved my mother & myself to return to NYC for short periods of time.

"On Dec 7, 1941, I was on duty at Aviation F.D. when word was received on Pearl Harbor. My name being on roster at the New York State National Guard, I was ordered to report to the Armory P.D.Q. We were released to go home, on Stand-by, after 72 hours.

"As soon as I reached home, my mother & I packed car w/our belongings and headed back to Boynton Beach. On the 16th of Dec. 1941, . . . I took the written test for aviation cadet.

"Between Dec 16 '41 & April 3 '42, I spent 2/3 days a week going to Morrison Field West Palm Beach for additional testing & indoctrination; finally sworn into the U.S. Army Air Corps on April 3rd, 1942. . . . reported for Camp Blanding FL duty June 1 1942 . . . shipped to San Antonio Tex. San Antonio Aviation Cadet Training Center 'Class 42 C.'

"Shortly after arrival at San Antonio, a hurricane hit San Antonio. All cadets were pressed into emergency services.

"From San Antonio went to pilot training at Spartan Air Craft School Tulsa, OK - Sept. '42. . . . ordered to Garden City Army Air Corps Base, Garden City KS.

"Retrospect—During time was awaiting call up to Air Corps, was active in Boynton as Vol. Fire Fighter, Reserve Police Officer, First Air Instructor in Civil Defense Program, Civil Defense Beach Patrol. Assisted rescue operation when ship torpedoed off Boynton Inlet.

"Having had civilian experience as fire fighter & police officer was assigned to M.P. Guard Sq. [at Garden City, KS] Winter time in Kansas was beyond imagination. Our barracks were summer time residences. The 4 men who were billeted around the 'pot-bellied' stove were warm (2 stoves per barracks). The remainder of men froze. Feb '43 got flu—spent 10 days in hosp. followed by furlough home.

"Returning to G.C. was assigned M.P duty on town patrol. . . . I was fortunate enough to be invited on a buffalo hunt. Every year they culled out the oldest buffalo in the herd & killed it, giving the meat to Old Folks Home in Finney Co. KS.

"In July '43 my wife Mabel joined me in G.C. Nov. 29, 1943 our daughter Frances was born. Kansas was in the midst of a 'Gut Bustin' Snow Storm.' The only vehicles moving on the streets were police cars. Mabel & I were transported in police car to Hosp. The state of Kansas paid the Hosp. bill. When it was time to come back from Hosp. Police car again—Mabel had never seen snow before coming to Kansas, 17 [degrees F.] was hard on her. Frances survived 17 pretty well.

"Jan '44 I was placed on overseas ship list. Got furlough to take Mabel & Frances home. Reported to Kearns Overseas Replacement Training Center, Salt Lake City Utah. From Kearns went to Camp Toneman, Stockton CA. From Stoneman boarded the U.S.S Republic . . . to New Guinea . . . then on to Hollandia for invasion—after Hollandia, R & R at Townsville Aust.. Then on to Leyte and Luzon. Dec. '45, enough points to return to States. Boarded Santa Monica.

X-mas in San Fran—Camp Blanding for New Year. Home Jan 6 '46.

"3 hours after arrival in Boynton was employed as full time police officer. Dept. strength: Chief & 1 officer—worked Police Dept 3 months, \$150 per month; Resigned—difference of opinion w/Chief over how police work should be done. Active Vol. Fire Dept. Went to work Fire Dept. at Boca Raton Air Force Base. Worked there until all civilian fire fighters were replaced by military personnel to close base. Nov 23' 46, John Jr. born. Worked short period time Lantana City Hall as bookkeeper.

"Dec '46 went to work Palm Beach Police Dept. Resigned June 30 '56 to start work, 1st full time paid fireman Boynton Beach F.D. July '56—worked 24 hrs. on, 24 hours off. On off duty days work as Deputy Constable, 6th Dist. P.B. Co.

"Jan '59 - City Council appointed me Chief of Fire Dept. requiring me to give up constable job.

"During period was Fire Chief, was Civil Defense Director for City of Boynton. . . . President of P.B. County Fire Chief's Association, President of FL State Fire Chief's Association. Designed and with assistance of paid & volunteer firemen built 3 brush trucks, 4 first aid vehicles, installed emergency power in fire station, established fire inspection program, assisted setting up fire safety program for Bethesda Hosp. & established 1st aid training at fire station and 1st aid swimming classes in summer.

"Retired Mar '64.

"Went to work P.B.Co. Sheriff's Off. July '64. Retired July'82.

"Lost Mabel May'92.

"July '92 QM. V.F.W 5335."

MEA CULPA - AGAIN!

Your editor tries to be careful about correct spelling of names and places and hopes, by virtue of years of grading student papers at FAU, that she is observant enough to avoid most careless errors. However, she has just learned, courtesy of another member, that for years she has misspelled Briny Breezes. Last year she learned that the town is Gulf Stream, not Gulfstream. And to think that she is a Florida native who has lived in this area the better part of her life and failed to note her misconceptions about the correct names for both these portions of our service area! She apologizes to both communities and begs that they do not hold it against a resident of Boynton Beach.

HONORS FOR ART DECO HOME

Linda Stabile's Art Deco home that the Historical Society featured in a program several months ago has recently been placed on the Palm Beach County Historic Registry. It is the first private residence in Palm Beach County to be so designated by the County. The house which sits just off Federal Highway is in a "County pocket" located between Boynton Beach and Delray Beach and is not under the jurisdiction of either city.

Linda Stabile, one of the Society's members, is currently working on a book of pictures of buildings with art deco characteristics that are, or have been, built in the area. Her book should be available in spring of 2007.



James Shelton, one of the Historical Society's current members, has recently sent us a number of pictures. Among them is this photograph of T.A. Ward's store on what is now S.E. Fourth Street, taken in the 1930s. T.A. Ward's daughter, Lou Anna Ward, was James Shelton's mother. At various times, T.A. was a constable, a grocer, and a mail carrier.