



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

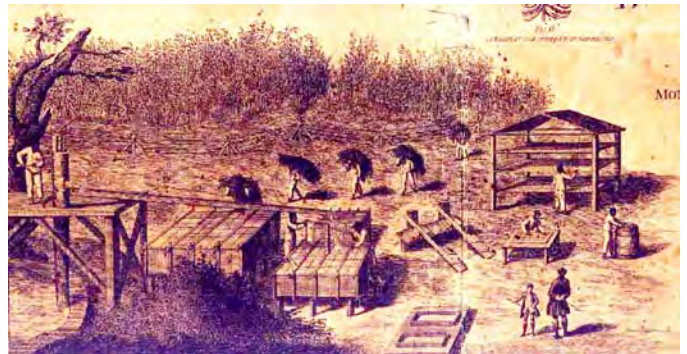
2009 Number 3, March 2009

BRITISH COLONIAL FLORIDA: TWO FORGOTTEN AMERICAN COLONIES

Dr. Voncile Smith, retired Professor from Florida Atlantic University, will discuss Florida during the period immediately prior to and during the American Revolution, 1763 to 1783, when Florida was divided into East Florida and West Florida, two British colonies seldom identified in books on United States history. At that time the northern borders of Florida were poorly defined and often controversial, but they extended far beyond our present State line. The southern and eastern borders were limited by the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean, and the western boundary extended to the Mississippi River.



West Florida and East Florida as they were in 1775. Note that West Florida incorporates parts of what are now Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. East Florida is much like the current state minus most of the panhandle.



Stages of Indigo processing. Indigo was a major cash crop from British plantations along the Trout and St. Johns Rivers in north Florida. This is from an 18th century map from the Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Library, Duke University.

**WHAT: BRITISH COLONIAL FLORIDA
A Discussion by V.M. Smith**

**WHEN: MONDAY, MARCH 16, 2009
6:30 p.m.**

**WHERE: BOYNYON WOMAN'S CLUB
1010 S. Federal Highway**

**ALL PROGRAMS ARE FREE AND OPEN TO
THE PUBLIC!**

**BOYNTON BEACH HISTORICAL SOCIETY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS—2008-09**

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The Boynton Beach Historical Society's website is boyntonbeachhistoricalsociety.org. You can contact us at our e-mail address boyntonhistory06@yahoo.com or mail inquiries or information to our mailbox at P.O. Box 12, Boynton Beach, FL 33425-0012.

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.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

The next Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 6, 6:30 p.m. at the Boynton Woman's Club. Anyone who is a member of the Boynton Beach Historical Society may attend any meeting of the Board and is free to present and discuss items, but only members of the Board may present and vote on motions.

APRIL IS OUR ANNUAL MEETING

The Bylaws of the Society require that we schedule our Annual Meeting in April. We will have a regular program presentation at the meeting on Monday, April 20, but we will have also a short business meeting just before the program. The agenda will include a report from the Nominating Committee, Nominations from the floor, Closing Nominations, and Election of the new officers, directors and trustees. After the elections we will also discuss and vote on the following proposed Bylaws amendments:

(Only those sections under consideration for change are included. Copies of the complete Bylaws will be available at the meeting for those who want them.)

Proposed amendments recommended by the Board of Directors.

[~~strickethrough~~ is a deletion; underline is an insertion/addition]

ARTICLE V: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 5. A Quorum shall consist of ~~a majority~~ 40% of the Board.

ARTICLE VII: COMMITTEES

~~Section 5. Public Relations Committee, chaired by the Corresponding Secretary, shall be appointed by the President promptly after the Annual Meeting. Their duties shall be to prepare and send press releases before regular meetings or special events with date, time, place of such meetings and events, and program, with follow-ups if necessary; to assist any other committees as needed with publicity; and such other duties deemed necessary by the Board of Directors.~~

~~Section 6. Finance Committee shall be appointed by the President promptly after the Annual Meeting. Their duty shall be to arrange and head all drives for money as deemed necessary by the Society; and such other duties deemed necessary by the Board of Directors.~~

Section 7. 5 Budget Committee, chaired by the Treasurer, shall be appointed by the President promptly after the Annual Meeting. Their duties shall be to devise an annual budget; to submit that budget to the Board for approval, to monitor expenditures; and such other duties deemed necessary by the Board of Directors.

Section 8. 6 Such other committees, standing or special, shall be appointed by the President as the Society or the Board of Directors shall from time to time deem necessary to carry on the work of the Society. The President shall be an ex officio member of all committees except the Nominating Committee.

ARTICLE VIII: PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, latest edition*, shall govern the Society in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these Bylaws and any special rules of order the Society may adopt.



A MYSTERY SOLVED

In the November, 2008 *Historian* we included the picture above with the caption “Boynton High School Basketball Team 194?” We could not name all the players.

Ray Weeks has straightened us out. He wrote a letter in February in which he says, “The team was not a school team. It was a young adult travel team that I (Ray Weeks) formed in the late 1940s soon after my return from Europe after WWII. We were first sponsored by the local American Legion Post and then by Boynton State Bank. We were in existence for five or six years and were a pretty successful team, one year earning a berth to play in the State AAU Tournament in Orlando, and in the early 50s soon after I returned to the US Army they added a couple of players and traveled to Jacksonville for a tournament and while there was chosen to play an exhibition game out at the Florida State Prison at Raiford. The picture was taken about 1949 up at the old Palm Beach Central High School gym near where the Kravis Center now sits.”

He identifies the players: Left rear—Tillman Thompson “who I believe died in the 50s in a bush plane crash in Alaska”; 2nd left rear—Lloyd (Tommy) Rhoden; 3rd rear—Ray Weeks; 4th rear—Max Lanier “I believe is still living in Alabama.” Front row left—John Gonsman; 2nd—Arthur Witte “who died in the early 50s from a car accident in Lake Worth”; 3rd front—Buddy Partin “since deceased”; 4th front—James (Gym) Weeks “my younger brother” and 5th front—“Doctor” Marion Weems.

(A few days before Ray’s letter arrived, Tommy Rhoden had described the picture to Editor Smith, with much the same information, but I was not prepared to take notes. Thank you, Ray, and Tommy too, for clarifying who the team was and the names of its members.)

IN MEMORIAM

John D. “Jack” Martin passed away on January 13, 2009. He and his wife Nancy (who predeceased him in January, 2008) were long time members of the Boynton Beach Historical Society. Before retiring, he had been a successful farmer, nurseryman, and grower. Since 1994 he had been involved in banking having served as a Director and Chairman of the Board of Farm Credit Bank of South Florida. He was also an organizing director of both the Palm Beach County Bank and Palm Beach Community Bank. We extend our sympathies to his family.

CELEBRATE 100 YEARS OF PB COUNTY!

We continue to seek relatives or descendants of people who were living in this area in 1909 when Palm Beach County was created from Dade County. If you have their names or know about when they arrived, please share that information with us. If you happen to have some special family stories you can share, we would welcome the information. If you have information, please contact us at our website or call Voncile at 561-734-5653.

HELP US PRESERVE YOUR HISTORY

The materials the Historical Society has to draw upon are primarily those that people have shared with us. In the past month we have received materials to scan from Ruth Jones and from “Miss Gillian” Davis. Curtis Weaver has also sent his high school class book to the Schoolhouse Children’s Museum. Betty Thomas has forwarded some pictures of Paul and Erma Mercer and their daughter Jan. Any pictures, paper, letters, clippings or other materials that you have about this area are most welcome.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR APRIL AND MAY!

The April meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 20, 6:30 p.m. at the Woman’s Club. This will be our Annual Meeting and will include a short business meeting as well as the program.

Sunday, May 17, 5:00 is our annual covered dish dinner, which is also scheduled to be held at the Woman’s Club. This will be a special Centennial meeting. As usual, the Society will furnish the beverages and meat dishes. Members should bring a dessert, salad, or vegetable casserole to serve eight. More on this in the next newsletters.

2009 PAID MEMBERSHIPS

[As of March 1, 2009]

CORPORATE:

Charlotte Oyer
Curtis and Alice Nain Weems Weaver

PATRON:

Tim Bednarz
Lois Oyer Dooley
Lois DuBois
Jim Edward
Bob W. and Jeanne Gayler
Valjean and Joyce DuBois Haley
Evelyn C. Howell
Daniel J. O'Connell
James D. and Claudia M. Shelton
Ernest G. and Norma B. Simon
Voncile Marshall Smith
Daniel R. Suiter
Robert B. and Sheila Rousseau Taylor
George and Christine Weaver Ternenyi
Dorian B. Trauger
N. Marion and Cecile Weems

FAMILY:

Derle and Cecilia Bailey
James and Marjorie L. Bynum
Bill and Nancy Earnhart
M. Randall and Ann B. Gill
Richard V. and Judith Merkel Howard
William G. and Erma O. James
Ruth J. Jones
William and Theresa Marcacci
Frances and Elizabeth McKeral
Jimmie, Jr. and Judy McKeral
Ryan and Danielle Murphy
James B. and Georgie P. Raulerson
Helen, Charles and Fred Senior
Delma W. and Billie J. Swilley
Steve and Gay Voss
Herbert and Betty Magnuson Sobel

INDIVIDUAL:

Steven M. Anton
Marvin T. Benson
Barbara Bonin
Helen Adams Bonomini
Doris W. Braunworth
Callie Rousseau Brown
Beverly Cormany
Mathelene H. Deal
Diana Dennis
Judy Duxbury
Sally Dye
Jack Fallon
Virginia K. Farace
Gloria Gregory
Margaret Guyder
JoAnn Hackle
Phyllis Hammett
Nadine Smith Hartling

David C. Kennedy
Suzanne Kruse
Carol Mahoney
Denise Smith McCulloch
Sandra McGregor
Nancy Hood McNamee
Jeff Morgan
Rosalie A. Morrissey
Rosemary Mouring
Gerald Murray
Marjorie W. Nelson
Lyn Smith Orletsky
Esther M. Orr
Harvey E. Oyer, Jr.
Sandra L. Pike
Camilla Smith Richardson
Nancy Rosa
Margaret H. Rousseau
Mary Lou Muster Ryder
Eleanor Murray Sala
Joanne Shoemaker
Lenny Silverberg
James Marshall and Lynn Smith
Katherine Foy Thompson
Jean Ann Thurber
Anne Watts
Raymond E. Weeks
Marion Weaver Wester

Members whose dues were received after March 1st will be listed in later editions of *The Historian*.

2009 DUES

Because of the illness of the membership chair and a member of her committee, dues notices are being sent later than usual. To save postage, we are mailing this copy of *The Historian* in an envelope with the dues notice to those people who have not yet paid. The enclosed envelope is for your convenience for mailing your dues to us.

The date your dues expire is being listed on the mailing label for everyone including those who are paid through December 31, 2009. Even though the newsletter last month indicated that that information would be on the mailing label, it was inadvertently omitted. If you have not previously been a member, there will be no date.

To save on postage and labor, we do not mail membership cards, but hope we enable you to check on the status of your membership through the information on the mailing label and the list of members we print in *The Historian*. If you have a question, please call or e-mail us.

The Boynton Beach Historical Society is a 501 [c] 3 organization which means your dues are tax-exempt. Your cancelled check (or the facsimile the bank provides) is your receipt.

LITTLE "Miss Gillian"

The charming little girl below is "Miss Gillian" Davis who in later years owned and taught at a dance studio in Boynton Beach. When this picture was made about 1940, she was under contract to MGM Studios in Hollywood. It is among the memorabilia she has kindly consented to share with the Boynton Beach Historical Society. Many Boynton Beach residents still fondly recall their associations with her.



JOHN PENNEKAMP CORAL REEF STATE PARK

Do you know what the most popular park for visitors to the Florida State Parks system is? It is John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park located on Key Largo which includes approximately 70 nautical square miles of adjacent Atlantic Ocean waters. It was the first underwater park in the United States. It was added to the National Register of Historic Places on April 14, 1972. The primary attractions are the coral reefs and their associated marine life.

Did you know that the founding of this park had direct ties to Boynton Beach? Dr. Gilbert Voss, a renowned marine biologist was the youngest son

of Lillie Elder Pierce Voss and Captain Frederick Voss. Lillie was born at the Orange Grove House of Refuge in Delray Beach in 1876. Two of her grandsons, Harvey E. Oyer, Jr., and Dr. Stephen Voss are current members of the Boynton Beach Historical Society.

The Florida Keys have the only living coral formations in the continental United States. Plans to include the reefs off Key Largo in a park started in the 1930s when a state sanctioned Everglades National Park Commission proposed a national park for the Everglades that would have included most of Key Largo and the reefs to the east of Key Largo. Opposition from property owners, outdoors men, and Monroe County Commissioners stopped the plan. When Everglades National Park was created in 1947, the boundaries did not include Key Largo or any of the reefs.

By the late 1950s people were growing aware of severe damage occurring to the reefs. Seashells, corals, sponges, sea horses, and other marine life were being hammered, chiseled, and even dynamited from the reefs to provide souvenirs for tourists. Dr. Gilbert of the Marine Institute of Miami successfully recruited conservationists to support his contention that the reef should be protected, but his most powerful ally would eventually become an assistant editor the *Miami Herald*, John D. Pennekamp. The two teamed up to lead a fight to protect the reefs from further damage. Pennekamp had strong credentials for the fight. He had been active in establishing Everglades National Park, had been the first chair of the Florida Board of Parks and Historic Memorials and had been a consultant with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

The effort led by Dr. Voss and Mr. Pennekamp led the Florida Board of Parks and Historic Memorials to designate the reefs off Key Largo that were in state controlled waters as a permanent preserve. In the spring of 1960, President Dwight D. Eisenhower proclaimed the adjacent federally controlled area of the reefs as the Key Largo Coral Reef Preserve. Florida Governor Leroy Collins later changed the name of the preserve to John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park in recognition of John Pennekamp's efforts to save marine life. The park opened in 1963.

We are proud to serve Boynton Beach, Ocean Ridge, Manalapan, Gulf Stream, Lantana, Hypoluxo, Briny Breezes, and all areas west of Boynton Beach to U.S. Hwy 441, and, on occasion, greater Palm Beach County.

Other (Specify):
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 choices:
 I will be willing to serve on the following committees (Circle)
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 Telephone _____ e-mail _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Street _____
 Name _____
 2nd Member's Name _____
 Member's Name _____

BOYNTON BEACH HISTORICAL SOCIETY
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

THE HISTORIAN
 P. O. Box 12
 Boynton Beach, FL 33425-0012



Lillie Elder Pierce Voss and Captain Frederick Voss celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary c. 1943 at the Pioneers of Lake Worth annual picnic traditionally held at the Norton Art Gallery. Pictured L to R: Charlotte Oyer, Walter Voss, Charles Voss, Captain Voss, Lillie Voss, Freda Voss Oyer, Lois Oyer and Harvey Eugene Oyer, Jr.