



# *The Historian*

*The Newsletter of The Boynton Beach Historical Society*

Voncile Smith, President

Volume 2007, No 2, February 2007

Voncile Smith, Editor

## A TRIBUTE TO BRINY BREEZES

Briny Breezes, a thriving mobile home community between the Intracoastal Canal and the Atlantic Ocean and sandwiched between the luxury homes of the towns of Ocean Ridge and Gulf Stream, has received much media coverage in recent weeks. In the coming months the mobile homes will apparently disappear as the entire community is sold to a real estate developer, and new high-priced residences will replace it..

In recognition of this historic alteration to our local landscape, the Boynton Beach Historical Society has scheduled a special program on Briny Breezes including a look at its residents and its unique structure among towns in America. In addition to a Powerpoint slide presentation, several residents of the current town will participate in a discussion of what life in their "paradise" community has been.

**WHAT:** Powerpoint Slide Presentation  
Accompanied by Discussion

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

**TOPIC:** Briny Breezes: Past,  
Present and Future

**DATE:** Monday, February 12, 2007

**TIME:** 6:30 p.m.

(Please note change in location for the meeting.)

All programs of the Boynton Beach Historical Society are OPEN and FREE to the General Public. For more information e-mail us at [boyntonhistory06@yahoo.com](mailto:boyntonhistory06@yahoo.com) or call us at 561-742-6397.



A street in the Town of Briny Breezes  
[Photo courtesy Michael Watkins, 2006]



1939-40 at Briny Breezes  
Helen Mann, Bob Kraft, Dorothy Mann and Buddy  
[Photo courtesy Dorothy Mann McNeice]  
(More on Briny Breezes on page 3)

**BOYNTON BEACH HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS—2006-07**

**OFFICERS**

President	Voncile Smith
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President, Programs	Randall Gill
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice President, Membership	Bev Cormany
Recording Secretary	Betty Thomas
Corresponding Secretary	TBA
Treasurer	Claire Weems

**DIRECTORS**

2007	Gloria Turner
2007	Curtis Weaver
2008	Lucile Dickinson
2008	Fain Weems
2009	Helen Adams Bonomini
2009	Nain Weaver

**TRUSTEES**

2007	Janet DeVries
2007	Marion Weems
2008	Harvey Oyer, Jr
2008	Stanley Weaver
2009	Virginia Farace
2009	Dan Rousseau

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

**ELECTIONS SCHEDULED FOR APRIL MEETING**

The election of officers, directors and trustees will take place at our April meeting. If you would be willing to serve in one of the following, please contact Betty Thomas, Chair of the Nominating Committee, through our website (see above) or at P. O. Box 12, Boynton Beach FL 33425-0012.

All officers serve one year terms

These are President, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, and Treasurer.

All Directors and Trustees serve 3 year staggered terms.

Directors terms that will be vacant:

There are 2, both to run from April 2007 to April 2010

Trustees terms that will be vacant

There are 2, both to run from April 2007 to April 2010.

A description of the duties of each office is listed in the Bylaws. If you would like to review a copy, please let us know and we will mail you one.

**IN MEMORIAM**

We are saddened to report that a long-time member of the Historical Society, **Helen Avery**, died several months ago.

Three early Boynton families share the recent loss of **Ethel Powell Miner**. Mrs. Miner's father, Joseph Powell, was an early bridge tender on Ocean Avenue at the Intracoastal. One of her sisters, Dorothy Powell Williams, was the City Clerk of Boynton Beach for many years. As Clerk she was the chief administrative officer in the period before Boynton had a city manager. Mrs. William's husband, Jack Williams was a charter boat captain. Another sister of Ethel Miner is Penny Powell Lyman, wife of Kenny Lyman. The Historical Society sends its condolences to the families.

**Kenneth Gouge**, the husband of one of our members, Lorraine Keatts Gouge, died several weeks ago after an extended illness. Mrs. Gouge's parents were Herbert and Clorice McGregor Keatts, both long time community residents. The Historical Society wishes the family well and is sorry for their loss.

**Nancy P. Martin** passed away January 18, 2007. Both she and her husband, Jack Martin, are current members of the Boynton Beach Historical Society. Her son John is a past president of the Society. Many people of Boynton will miss her presence and her community involvement. We extend to her family our best wishes.

Although she was not a member of the Historical Society, many people in the area knew **Joanne McCall** and her mother, Roxanne, who was a teacher in Palm Beach County for many years. Although Joanne graduated from Boynton High School in 1948 and moved away from the town in adulthood, friends in Boynton have maintained contact with her. She died Thanksgiving Day, 2006.

**A CALL FOR A SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE**

The Board of Directors of the Boynton Beach Historical Society recommends that the organization establish a scholarship award. We are seeking members who would be willing to serve on an exploratory committee to propose what we should do in this area. Numerous ideas have been suggested, but we are limited in what we can afford to do initially. Among the suggestions:

- ✓ Establish an academic award to a high school senior planning to major in history
- ✓ Establish an academic award to a college junior or senior already established in a history or other relevant major
- ✓ Establish an academic award to a graduate student in history or other relevant major
- ✓ Establish funds for an internship program for a college junior/senior/graduate student to learn historical conservation or archiving in a relevant setting.
- ✓ Establish a one-day workshop to invite selected students to participate in a series of presentations on historical preservation.

If you would like to serve on or contribute to this committee, please contact us at our website, telephone or USPS address.



## MORE ABOUT BRINY BREEZES



Ward B. Miller home. In 1905, Ward Miller a Michigan retiree came to Florida. He bought beachfront land south of Maj. Boynton's hotel and built this large Spanish-style home. Later naming it Shore Acres Dairy, Miller bought cattle and prospered as a dairy farmer. Excited by the Land Boom in 1925, he sold his cattle and hired a developer to lay out a community which he named Briny Breezes. After losing money in the Boom Bust, he began truck farming. Travelers began stopping on his property in the late 1920s, and he let them park free overnight. By the time Ward Miller died in 1937, Briny Breezes had become a full-blown trailer park.



Paul Miller, Ward Miller's son, joined his father to help manage the trailer park. By 1958 many of the residents were permanent and the Millers sold the land to the residents. Five years later they registered themselves as a township within Palm Beach County run as a corporation by a board of directors with the residents owning shares based on the size and location of their lots.

Briny Breezes is a 43-acre town with 600 feet of oceanfront and 1,100 feet along the Intracoastal Waterway. On January 10, 2007 the residents voted to approve the sale of the entire community for \$510 million. The sale is scheduled for completion in 2009, but the Towns of Gulf Stream to the south and Ocean Ridge to the north have expressed concern about the projected construction plans, population density, and increased traffic flow. Boynton Beach which supplies water and waste removal is also concerned about the impact. Completion of development plans will depend on decisions by Palm Beach County and the State both of whom will listen to and be influenced by what the three municipalities mentioned above may have to say.



A Briny Breezes street in 1939 is quite a contrast to a street in 2006 shown on page 1.



Briny Breezes Clubhouse 1955.



Dorothy Mann, Bob Kraft and Helen Mann board the school bus in 1942. School buses at that time were painted orange rather than the familiar yellow of today. This bus first picked up children who lived in the rural areas west of the school on Ocean Avenue in Boynton Beach, then made the run to Briny Breezes. In the afternoon the bus first drove the Briny Breezes children home, then drove to the west. A yellow bus first appeared after World War II.



Bob Kraft's family owned this trailer in 1939. Bob continued to visit the park regularly and has lived there for many years. The residents still occasionally refer to themselves as "tin can tourists," a name which originated in the late 1920s to apply to many transients who built their mobile homes on flat bed trucks before the manufacture of house trailers became common. Because of limited finances, they seldom ate in restaurants and relied on easy to prepare meals often prepared by opening cans. A number of "tin can camps" flourished in Florida during that time, so Briny Breezes was one among several in the state. Another version of the "tin can" concept suggests that the trailers themselves looked like big tin cans, hence the name.

## FEBRUARY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

The next Board of Directors meeting of the Boynton Beach Historical Society will be Wednesday, February 21, 2007 at the Boynton Woman's Club at 5:30 p.m. The Board consists of all the Officers, Directors and Trustees, but any member in good standing is welcome to attend. We will publish the preliminary agenda on the website several days before the meeting.

---

## SOME SPECIAL EVENTS

Janet DeVries has done a masterful job of designing and setting up the following:

### **Seminoles: Their Journey to Florida and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century:**

A special exhibition now open runs through April 12, 2007 in the Community Archives Gallery of the Schoolhouse Museum. It will give visitors a special view of the Seminole Tribe through artifacts, objects and documents. The Tribe's journey to Florida through what we know as the Trail of Tears, its establishment in Broward County, the realization of its dream museum *Ah-Tah-Ti-Ki* (Meaning 'A Place to Learn') in the Everglades, and the final step towards full economic independence with the opening of the new Hard Rock Casino in 2004—all are included in this exhibit.

A palm frond spathe by artist Eleanor Bowles, depicting a likeness of Chief Osceola in the foreground, with an abstract, color background formation that alludes to the Trail of Tears, is the exhibition's title panel.

School tours will be offered by reservation on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 10:00 a.m. to noon. Several family workshops are planned in conjunction with this exhibition including lectures by members of the Ah-Tah-Ti-Ki Museum.

[Ed. Note. Although many people tend to associate "The Trail of Tears" only with the Cherokees, the Trail of Tears refers to the forced removal of all the tribes known as the "Five Civilized Tribes"—the Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Creek, and Seminole. The seven year Second Seminole War from 1836-1843 was triggered by the removal from Florida.]

**Lantana Historical Society—** The Society meets on the second Thursday each month at 7:30 at the Lantana Recreation Center Conference Room, 418 U.S. Hwy 1, Lantana. For further information e-mail LH\_Society@bellsouth.net or write to Lantana Historical Society, P.O.Box 2551, Lantana, Florida 33462.

---

## PARK PROPOSAL POSTPONED

In the January *Historian* we copied a letter from Margaret Garnett Harris in which she indicated that a portion of land in Hypoluxo near where the early Garnetts had their family home was to be named "Garnett Park." Mrs. Harris' niece, Katharine Garnett Eubanks, reports that the Town Council of Hypoluxo has postponed any decision.

## BOYNTON'S HISTORIC BUILDINGS FACE DEMOLITION

Two early buildings are being threatened by the City. One is the Seaboard Coast Line Railroad Station which has already been partially razed. The other is a private home in the Lake Boynton Estates section known as the "Hartley House," at 206 Northwest 6<sup>th</sup> Street.

At the January Board of Directors meeting of the Historical Society, visitors speaking about these matters included Society members Jeff Morgan and Wendy Franklin, and Bonnie Dearborn from the Division of Historical Resources, Florida Department of State.

Although Boynton Beach has Ordinances calling for proper review of any historical site before any alterations can take place, an Historical Preservation Board to oversee such review has never been established. The Board of Directors passed a motion calling for efforts to implement the passage of an Ordinance to create such a Board; and with models provided by Ms. Dearborn, a committee has begun working on a draft.

We will need the cooperation and help of all our members and friends to bring this project to fruition.

Both buildings mentioned above are on private property, but that does not absolve the City from overseeing their preservation. Boynton Beach is one of the few cities in Florida that does not have an Historic Preservation Board.

The committee of the Board of Directors working on the draft includes Wendy Franklin and Jeff Morgan, your President as an ex officio member, Janet DeVries as a consultant, and any others who would like to work with us. Please let us know how you can help. E-mail us, telephone or write to one of the addresses previously listed. Check with us for more information.



Seaboard Coast Line Station

The Seaboard Coast Line Station as it appeared on January 19, 2007. Note the piles of debris surrounding it. The loading platform which was on the left has been completely demolished. The original building served as a refuge to many Boynton residents who were forced to seek shelter in it during the 1928 hurricane. Farmers, over the years packed and shipped produce from this site, the most notable being Oscar Winchester who had pineapples loaded and shipped from the platform.



## THE HISTORIC HARTLEY HOUSE

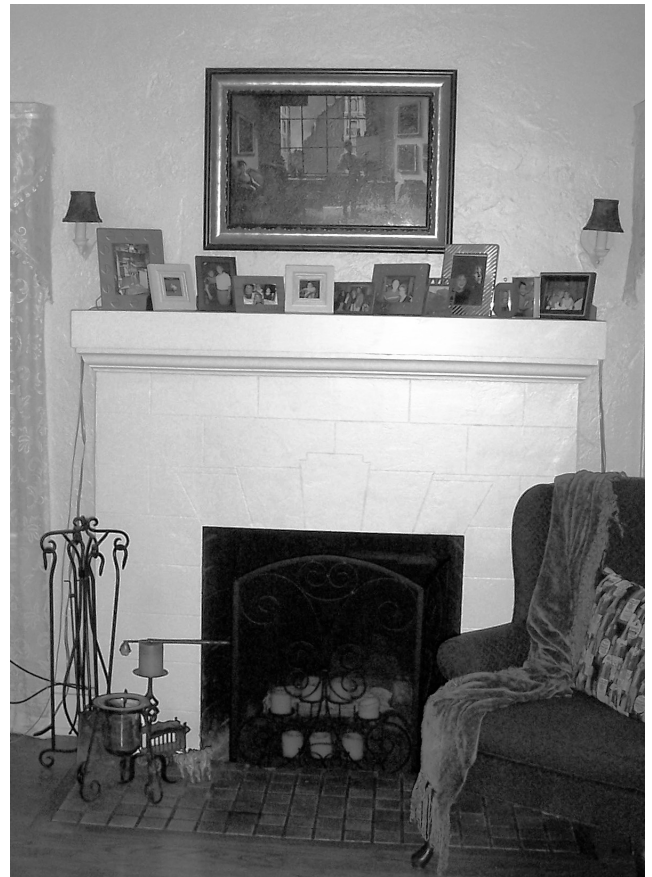


Two views of the front of the “Hartley House” at 206 NW 6<sup>th</sup> Street. The house, currently owned by Dulce and Michael McAndrews, was built in 1926 of stucco over frame. It sits on a large lot shaded by dense vegetation. The house was originally owned by Bertha Hartley and contains some of the original furniture.

How is the house endangered? A developer wants to build warehouses on the site of the old SCL Railroad Station which sits about two blocks south of the Hartley House. It and the area surrounding it has been zoned “Industrial” for many years.

The Lake Boynton Estates neighborhood is concerned about the potential for heavy truck traffic that use of the industrial property would demand. They say that the safety of the many young children who live in the area would be endangered. The residents of Lake Boynton Estates would prefer another use of the land; but, at least, demand that an alternate route be established to decrease traffic. The City’s proposal is to cut an underpass under Boynton Beach Boulevard by I-95, acquire the Hartley House through eminent domain, demolish or move it, and permit traffic to go from the underpass to the warehouses.

{Ed. Note: A warm thank you to the McAndrews for meeting with Harvey Oyer and your editor to show us their home.}



Fireplace in Living Room of Hartley House  
Below, original hutch from kitchen





*The Victorian*  
Boynton Beach Historical Society  
Post Office Box 12  
Boynton Beach, FL 33425-0012

If you have not sent in your dues, why not take a few minutes, write out your check and mail it to us. Thank you!

## JOIN NOW FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR 2007

BECOME A MEMBER OF THE

## BOYNTON BEACH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Memberships are for the Calendar year, January 1 to December 31. Check the appropriate line and return this form with the dues for that category to The Boynton Beach Historical Society, P. O. Box 12, Boynton Beach, FL 33425-0012. If you have questions, please contact Voncile Smith, 561-734-5653, or e-mail [smithvm@bellsouth.net](mailto:smithvm@bellsouth.net).

Individual Membership    \$25.00 \_\_\_\_\_

Family Membership    \$35.00 \_\_\_\_\_

Corporate Membership    \$ 100.00 \_\_\_\_\_

Patron Membership    \$50.00 \_\_\_\_\_

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

2nd Members Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address/Telephone/E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

If you would be willing to serve on a Committee for the Society, please check all that apply:

Public Relations \_\_\_\_\_ Educational \_\_\_\_\_ Membership \_\_\_\_\_ Minority History \_\_\_\_\_  
Refreshments \_\_\_\_\_ Archives/ Preservation \_\_\_\_\_ Fund Raising \_\_\_\_\_ Program \_\_\_\_\_

The purpose of the Society is to act as a living repository for the traditions and history of Boynton Beach, 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, Gulf Stream, Lantana, Hypoluxo, the Village of Golf, Briney Breezes, and all areas west of Boynton Beach to U.S. Hwy 441, and, on occasion, greater Palm Beach County.