



The Historian

The Newsletter of the Boynton Beach Historical Society

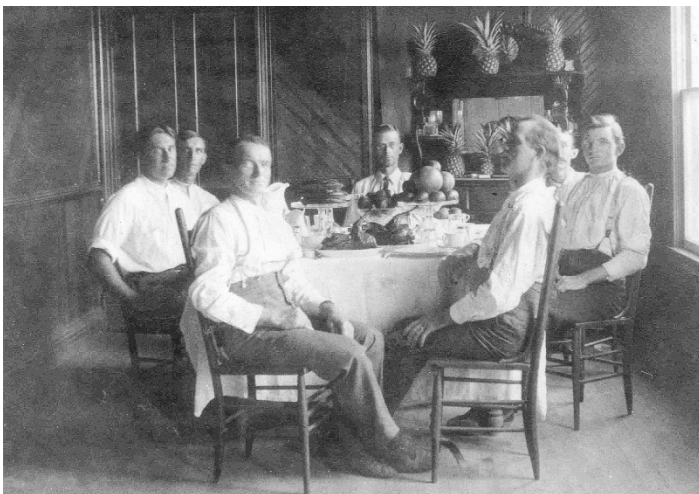
Serving Boynton Beach, Ocean Ridge, Manalapan, Gulf Stream, Briny Breezes, Lantana, Hypoluxo, the Village of Golf and all areas of West Boynton, in addition to supporting the preservation of the history of Palm Beach County and the State of Florida as a whole.

2011 Number 4

April 2011

WHAT FACE? WHAT PLACE? WHAT YEAR?

is the title for our April 11 program. Can you help us out? Our original speaker for April has asked us to postpone his presentation until fall, so Janet DeVries, in her role as Historian and Archivist for the Society, asks for our help in identifying, if we are able, persons, places and times represented in some of the photographs in our collections. Please join us for an interactive program at our next meeting. Janet will project a number of photographs that are unidentified, and we are hoping that you can help identify the people, the buildings, and/or the time they represent in our history. Some photos have brief descriptions and others have none. Or simply come and listen to the discussion that will surely enhance your knowledge of Boynton's past. Some examples of our mystery pictures follow.



Titled "Pineapples and Prosperity," but who are the people? Do you recognize any of these gentlemen? Do you know the year?



Ocean Avenue Bridge," but approximately what year would this have been? The car on the bridge may be a clue, and the original photograph is in color.

BOYNTON BEACH HISTORICAL SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS—2010-11

OFFICERS [Elected Annually]

President	Voncile Smith
1 st Vice President, Programs	Janet DeVries
2 nd Vice President, Membership	Bev Cormany
Recording Secretary	Anne Watts
Corresponding Secretary	Diana Dennis
Treasurer	Frances McKeral

NON ELECTED

Editor <i>The Historian</i>	Voncile Smith
Archivist and Webmaster	Janet DeVries

DIRECTORS [3 year staggered terms]

2011	Steve Anton
2011	Sally Dye
2012	Sheila Rousseau Taylor
2012	Delma Swilley
2013	Tim Bednarz
2013	Gloria Partin Turner

TRUSTEES [3 year staggered terms]

2011	Randall Gill
2011	Wendy Franklin
2012	Victor Norfus
2012	Dan Rousseau
2013	Brian Edwards
2013	Virginia Farace

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. Voncile can be reached at 561-734-5653.

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.

ANNUAL MEETING

In accordance with the Bylaws of the Society, we must schedule an annual meeting in April of each year for the general membership. We hold this as a portion of the April program meeting. The purpose is to elect officers for the coming year. Most years it has consisted of a report from a nominating committee and an election by acclamation. The total process is usually completed in no more than 15 minutes.

The offices to be filled include those of all officers, two directors, and two trustees. All officers are elected annually for one year terms. Directors and Trustees serve for 3 year staggered terms.

When you receive this newsletter, there is still time to be considered for an office. If you would be willing to serve in one of these positions, please notify Virginia Farace at 965-9426 or at FARACE_V@popmail.firn.edu or call Voncile at 734-5653.

MAY MEETING

In May, which will be our last meeting until September, we meet on Sunday, May 15, 5:00 p.m. at the Boynton Woman's Club for a covered-dish dinner. The Society provides the main entrees, the beverages, and the set-ups. Sharon Koskoff will discuss Art Deco in South Florida. More details in the May *Historian*, but mark your calendar now.

1927 HISTORIC HIGH SCHOOL

Some of you attended the charette held March 26 to consider possible funding sources for rehabilitating the old building. We should note that while the City has conducted numerous studies in the past, none has considered funding sources specifically for the old high school.

Currently we have a City Commission whose members all favor finding some means to finance restoration. A survey conducted in connection with the charette indicates that citizens are willing to see tax money used for the right project, even if it means raising taxes. Less than 20% opposed such usage. The survey and the participants in the charette indicate strong support for a mix of private and public usage of the building.

Rick Gonzalez, a restoration architect, who has been directly involved in restoration at City Place and the 1916 Courthouse in West Palm Beach and the Lake Worth Casino, has stated that the quality of construction in the 1927 building could not be duplicated today for \$20 million. Mr. Gonzalez has been instrumental in attempting to find the means to save the structure. We all hope the future outcome will be positive. The Florida Trust for Historic Preservation which has had the building on its Most Endangered List for two years is now moving it to its Watch List because of the more optimistic outlook.



1927 Boynton High School

GOLD COAST TRAILS

[Part III]

By Margaret Garnett Harris

"Now, to our 'Gold Coast Trails.'

"My husband, two of our sons and I were on a glass bottom boat during the Christmas holidays going out to the coral reefs at John Pennecamp State Park, when the news came over someone's transistor radio that the astronauts had arrived safely from orbiting the moon; a three day trip from the moon to the earth. In the magic of the moment, and during the drive home from Miami along the ocean, it was difficult for us to realize that it had taken my father, one of the Star Route mail men, three days to return from Miami. Also it was always difficult to realize he knew everyone in what is now the Palm Beach area to and including Miami, whereas, I scarcely know all the people in my block.

"A few years ago a speaker for the Palm Beach Historical Society steamed in a little late and complained that traffic was terrible. It had taken him two hours to get there from Coral Gables. I told him after the meeting that I had just been reading a copy of the original Pierce manuscript, and in it Mr. Pierce told of taking a week to get to Miami because he went by boat and had to depend on wind and tides.

"St. Augustine is the oldest city in the United States. By 1825, Key West was the largest city in Florida. Yet, 100 years ago there were no permanent white settlers in the Lake Worth area. When I say Lake Worth, do not confuse it with the present town of that name, which was settled much later than Palm Beach, Lantana, Hypoluxo and Delray, and Boynton. Incidentally, I have seen a map on which the lake is named 'Hypoluxo,' which means, 'big water all around, no get out.' The first white settlers in the Lake area came in the early 1870s,



H.D. Pierce, leaning at post on right, at his home on Hypoluxo Island, built in 1876 from lumber and driftwood salvaged from the Beach.

the first homestead was in present day Palm Beach, and the second was on Hypoluxo Island by the Pierce family. White men had been here before. The Military Trail was thus named because it was hacked out of the palmetto scrub for use during the Seminole Indian War, 1835-1839, but was not used again and was overgrown by the 1870s.

"The next settlement to the south was on Biscayne Bay. Until 1909, Dade County included Broward, Palm Beach and Martin Counties. The County Seat was in Miami, except during the years 1890 to 1900, when it was at Juno, a settlement at the north end of the Lake. This meant that communication between the people on the Lake and those on Biscayne Bay had to be established. How did they go from here to there or there to here?

"In 1885, when my father came, there were no roads to Miami, no railroad, and no intra-coastal waterway. To send a letter to Miami, it had to go by boat to Jacksonville, by railroad to Cedar Keys on the west coast north of Tampa, by steamer to Key West, and by schooner to Biscayne Bay, where the waterproof mail packet was thrown overboard and picked up by a smaller vessel waiting for it. The inlets into Lake Worth and the channel into Biscayne Bay had not been dug. One could go by ocean directly to Miami on a small boat, defying treacherous reefs and winds, or walk the beach.

"In that same year, 1885, the Star Mail Route was begun from Lake Worth (the Lake) to Miami. E.R. Bradley and his son of Lantana took the first two-year contract. Ed Hamilton, who came from Kentucky with my father and was 'batching' with him, as Dad called it, took the second contract in 1887. That same year Ed Hamilton lost his life in the Hillsboro Inlet. Charlie Pierce and my father had signed his performance bond - in other words, they were to take the mail if Hamilton could not. My father died in 1940 before I asked all the questions I should have asked. A letter from Mrs. Voss, which I have, says my father and her brother Charles Pierce, made an agreement that my father would finish out the year and a half, with Charlie taking over if illness or something prevented my father's going. Dad spoke of it as a lonely, hard way to earn the \$800.00 a year. This era in the history of our area was scarcely recorded and little known until Theodore Pratt's novel 'The Barefoot Mailman' was published in 1943. There followed the most ridiculous movie I could ever imagine, by the same title, also a song almost as silly. There are, however, some really splendid murals in the West Palm Beach Post Office by Stephen Dohanos, of Saturday Evening Post cover fame."

[Illustration from *Pioneer Life in Southeast Florida*, by Charles W. Pierce, edited by Donald W. Curl, University of Miami Press, 1970.]

[to be continued in May]

SOME MORE PICTURES TO SHARE



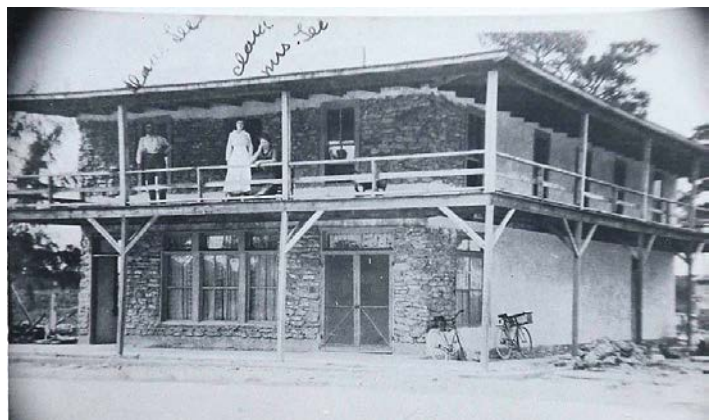
Some old homes that once stood on Wells Avenue [now M. L. King Blvd] (Photo courtesy Victor Norfus, in "Foundations of Faith, Early African Americans in Boynton Beach, Florida, p 53.)



Briny Breezes, 1946. Bert and Lola Aiken. He was first mayor of Briny Breezes. (Photo courtesy Dorothy Mann McNiece.)



Curtis Weaver, Charlotte Oyer, and Katherine Garnett Eubanks in 2006 at Harvey Oyer's 80th birthday party at the Boynton Beach First United Methodist Church.



Mrs. Lee's Boarding House, pictured L to R: David Lee, Clarice, Mrs. Lee.



Joann McCall and Rosalie Alvaroe Morrissey, November 1984, Boynton Woman's Club Diamond Jubilee.



Methodist Tabernacle destroyed by 1928 hurricane. After the Methodists sold their building on Ocean Avenue and Federal Highway, they bought the property at what is now Seacrest Boulevard and First Avenue and erected a wooden, screen-sided tabernacle to use until they could begin construction on a new permanent building. After the hurricane wrecked the temporary structure, they had to meet in various other buildings where they could find space.



In memory of days spent
together in the school-
room, this token is pre-
sented with the compliments of
YOUR TEACHER



Public

School
Souvenir

LEARNING BY STUDY
MUST BE WON

BOYNTON
PUBLIC SCHOOL

District No. 5

Palm Beach Co., Florida

AGNES J. HELSETH, Teacher

School Officers

H. B. Murray Harry Dyer

J. R. Pomeroy



PUPILS

4th Grade

Cecil Harper	Mae Wadford
Lillie Wadford	Raymond Hilliard
Horace Murray	Bailus Cline
Marion Maull	Grace Hunt
Bobbie Lee Hodges	Robert Hoch
Lyman Boomer	Leighland Frutrell
Reginald Rousseau	

2nd Grade

Teddie Murray	Sam Jeffrey
Beatrice Jeffrey	Rollyn Spafford
Ila Spafford	Helen Tasker
Jessie Beatty	
Margaret Murray	Warren King
Gertrude Smith	Lucile Maull
Basil Flora	Tuffie Tabit
Wibur Harper	Jack Wadford
Marjorie Coon	Claribel Comstock

Ralph Collins
Primer

Gladys Ward	Homer Cline
May Dell Fuller	Virgil Flora



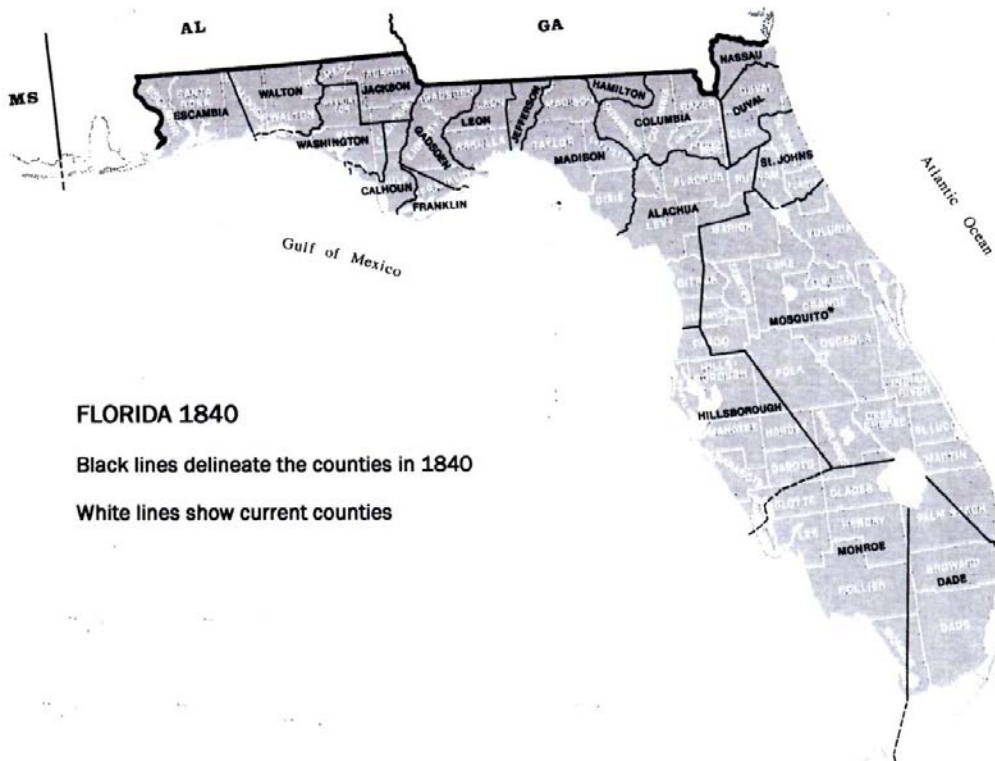
Boynton Public School which was housed in a little wooden building preceded the 1913 schoolhouse which housed more grades and was a more durable structure. This form was presented at the end of the 1912-1913 school year by the teacher to each of her pupils as a remembrance gift. Agnes J. Helseth is the teacher and her photograph is attached. This copy was given to Gladys Ward. [Courtesy of James Shelton.]

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.

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) _____
 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): _____

BOYNTON BEACH HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

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



FLORIDA 1840

Black lines delineate the counties in 1840

White lines show current counties

There were no settlers in the Boynton area in 1840, but note that all the coastal region of Palm Beach County lies in what then was Mosquito County. Mosquito was renamed Orange County in 1845.