



The Historian

The Newsletter of The Boynton Beach Historical Society

Voncile Smith, President

Volume 2005, No.6, September, 2005

Voncile Smith, Editor

A Word from the Editor—

This begins my fourth year as the Society's President, and my fourth year writing *The Historian*. I must report to you that I feel more successful with the copy than I do with my administrative role. Boynton, Palm Beach County, and the State of Florida have such a rich historical heritage that material for the newsletter abounds. People have been kind to share photographs and stories, and there is a rich supply in our holdings stored in the City Library. The Cultural Center and the Historical Society of Palm Beach County are generous to share materials when I ask, and other historical libraries probably would be also.

As your President I had hoped to accomplish several things that are yet not done. We need more time applied to archival cataloging and storage of the materials we own. We need to have our Minority History Committee organized and working. And we need more visibility in the community, and more members and member involvement. A large share of Boynton's history is slipping away with time, especially in the minority community, and we need to see that information is located and preserved for the future. Although the Library, the Historical Society, and the Cultural Center have done some oral histories, more need to be undertaken. So you see, there is much to do. I hope all of you will agree to help me when I contact you about ways we can make the Boynton Beach Historical Society a greater asset to our beautiful area and to find the means to serve our members and friends better. I hope this year brings renewed success to all our efforts.

Voncile

September Topic: The Civil War in South Florida

Speaker: Rodney Dillon, Historian
Date: Monday, September 12, 2005
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Place: Boynton Woman's Club
1010 S. Federal Hwy

Rodney E. Dillon, Jr. is a Florida "cracker," born in Fort Myers and raised in Palm Beach County. He graduated from Palm Beach Gardens High School and received his BA in History from Florida Atlantic University and his MA at the University of Florida, where he wrote his master's thesis on "The Civil War in South Florida."

He has been Research Historian for the Fort Lauderdale Historical Society and Administrator of the Broward County Historical Commission. He has published several articles on Florida history and served as editor of the "Broward Legacy" historical journal. He and his partner, **Barbara Poleo**, currently own and operate the **Past Perfect Florida History** bookstore in the Ocean Plaza at 640 East Ocean Avenue in Boynton, selling new, used and antiquarian books and specializing in Florida and related topics.

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IN MEMORIAM



Rebecca Partin Merkel
[Photo courtesy of Gloria Turner]

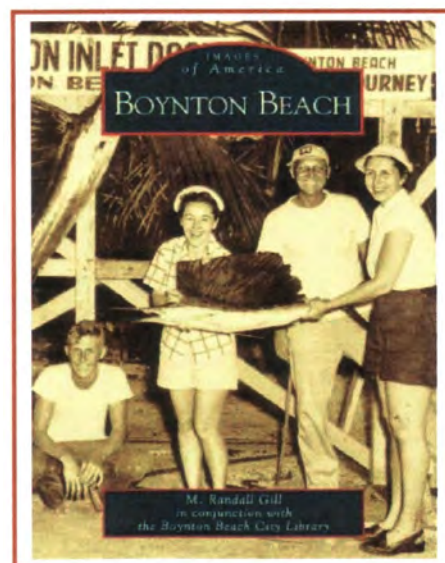
The Historical Society lost one of its charter members this summer. **Rebecca Partin Merkel** was a long time resident of Boynton Beach having moved here with her parents in the 1920s. She was a descendant through her father **Mott Hall Partin** of **Lyman Hall** a signer of the Declaration of Independence from Georgia. She had been very active in the Daughters of the American Revolution. She also participated regularly in the activities of the Boynton Woman's Club and in church—originally in the First United Methodist Church of Boynton Beach, and later in St. Joseph's Episcopal Church. In 1939 she married **Norman B. Merkel** who with his brother **Jean** operated Alberts/Merkel Brothers Orchids for many years on South Federal Highway.

Their home built on the intracoastal behind the orchid nursery was razed by a developer to build Tuscany Apartments. The house was unique and of historical interest. It was built of antique Georgia bricks salvaged from homes destroyed by General Sherman in his march through Georgia during the Civil War. The Merkels had them trucked in when they began construction.

A daughter, a sister, and an aunt also are current members of the Boynton Beach Historical Society. Our sympathy and best wishes to Judith Howard, Gloria Turner, and Wilese Langford and to all others of Rebecca's family.

Somethings New

Now available—a new book—*Images of America: Boynton Beach*



The Boynton Beach City Library proudly announces the publication of *Images of America: Boynton Beach*. This new 128-page local history book by **M. Randall Gill** in conjunction with the Boynton Beach City Library was co-authored by Library Associate and Archivist **Janet DeVries**. The book includes over 200 vintage photographs from the historical archives. Proceeds will benefit the Schoolhouse Children's Museum. Books are available for purchase at the Boynton Beach City Library, the Schoolhouse Children's Museum and at local bookstores. For more information call 561-742-6397 or 742-6380.

New for the City—the Boynton Beach Arts Commission, chaired by **Debby Coles-Dobay**.

A special presentation for the members of the Historical Society and the Boynton Woman's Club, has been scheduled for Thursday, October 20, 2005, 1:30—3:00 p.m. at the Senior Center, "Picturing Florida Program" by artist Ellen Harvey. All are welcome, no admission. More detail will be provided in the October issue of *The Historian*.

Professor Quiz Program Given Boynton P.T.A.

**Girls Receive Theater Party
As Winners; A. V. Peter-
son Is Professor Quiz**

Mr. A. V. Peterson acted as Professor Quiz in the "Professor Quiz" program given recently in P. T. A. From an audience of seventy-two Mr. Mercer was chosen as captain of the boys team and Mrs. Benson was chosen as captain of the girls team. Mr. Mercer chose Mr. Chester White, Mr. R. O. Myers, Mrs. O. C. Knuth Mr. Fred Benson and Mr. Hugh Brown to be on his team. Those chosen by Mrs. Benson were Mrs. R. O. Meyer, Mrs. T. E. Woolbright, Mrs. James, Mrs. C. H. Hood and Mrs. Herbert Keats.

The high point of the meeting was when Professor Quiz asked Mr. Mercer what the three r's stand for and Mr. Mercer was unable to answer. Mr. White had to come to the rescue.

Another interesting discovery was the alacrity with which Mr. Knuth answered his questions, even such questions as the island Columbus discovered.

The girls appeared to have fresher memories, since they won the contest by a score of 1800 to 1275 points for the boys.

The winning side was awarded theater tickets. The following
(Continued on Page Four)

ORCHESTRA SWINGS OUT AT BEGINNING SCHOOL WITH MANY MEMBERS

An orchestra has been organized under the direction of Miss Bowery, the music teacher. They have rehearsals every Thursday at sixth period.

The orchestra is composed of:
Violins: Thelma Partin, Mildred Traylor, Curtis Weaver and Mary Julia Thompson.

Trumpets: Marcus Weaver, Charles Senior, Burnie Thompson and Edna Easton.

Saxophones: Helen Senior and Pearl Cline.

Clarinet: Charles Weaver.

Drum: Philip Traylor.

Piano: Alma Pent and Alton Murray.

Any one who is interested in joining the orchestra will please see Miss Bowery.

First grade, 27 pupils; second grade, 23 pupils; third grade, 17 pupils; fourth grade, 18 pupils; fifth grade, 17 pupils; sixth grade, 14 pupils; seventh grade, 26 pupils; eighth grade, 16 pupils.

Boynton Bugle Staff Members



The staff of the Boynton Bugle which composed the first issue released from the publishers today. They read, left to right: (front row): Mrs. Roxane McCall, faculty business advisor; Alma Pent, news editor; Mary Julia Thompson, editor in chief; Irene Phillips, feature editor; (middle row): David Mayberry, sports editor; Melvin Partin, associate editor; Richard Pierce, assistant circulation manager. (Back Row): Bob White, circulation manager; Clyde Brown, advertising manager; L. B. Crane, principal; George James, business manager.

Boynton Gets New Blues Reported In Produce Market; To Be Big Boast Here Inlet Yields Catch

**City's Business To Be Helped
By Addition Of Com-
munity Market**

The construction of a produce marketing platform on the Dixie Highway was begun last week. The building is being built by a Delray Beach concern, The Gulfstream Engineering Company, whose bid of \$4,895 was accepted.

The bids were opened Monday October 2 in the Lake Worth Drainage District field office at Boynton for a building to be fifty feet by one hundred fifty feet, and frame structure on a concrete foundation. With these plans the Gulfstream Engineering Company expects to complete construction on or about November 15.

Mr. H. E. Motter, secretary of the Boynton Produce Market, states that, heretofore farmers have had to haul their products all the way to Pompano only to have the produce wasn't quite as fresh as that in the nearby territory, due to the fact that it has to be packed and shipped from Boynton to Pompano.

The town will be directly and indirectly affected in many valuable ways with the advent of the market.

**1,000 Or More Said To Have
Been Caught At Popu-
lar Fighting Site**

The fall and winter fishing season got off to a good start here in Boynton with the arrival on October 5 of the blues, although the first day's catch wasn't as heavy as was expected. All day spectators at the inlet said it exceeded a thousand or more fish, which, of course, doesn't count the big ones that always get away.

But, fellow fishermen, don't think for one minute there aren't any other kind of fish but blues over there, because according to those three fishing fools, Bob White, Herbert Schultz and Wilbur Hackle, there's more snook, jack and snapper and such, than usual.

Deep sea fishing, as I understand it, has not been quite up to snuff in the past summer but with the winter season coming on it may change a good deal. The cruiser "Dorothy" under Jack Williams, caught three nice tarpons on a trip last week. Any of you people who would like to do a bit of deep sea fishing can find the inlet boats at Fishermen Ore at your disposal at a very nominal sum.

The ads in The Bugle make the existence of this paper possible.

High School Has Two Assemblies Good Programs

**President Roosevelt's Speech
On Neutrality Heard By
Student Body**

The high school has enjoyed two assemblies in the last two weeks. In the first chapel we listened to President Roosevelt's radio speech on the neutrality act. By the amount of applause given parts of the speech by members of Congress, we gathered that the main thought of every person present was to keep America out of the European war.

The second assembly was given by Miss White's Latin class. Reverend Ware led the devotional portion of the program. Afterwards a schoolroom scene was given by the members of the Latin class.

David Mayberry said Lincoln's Gettysburg address in Latin, Jacquelyn Partin gave a talk on the coliseum, Burnie Thompson recited a Latin poem, Marion James spoke on Roman weddings, and Betty Lou Holden talked on "The Gods." Others taking part in the classroom scene were Howard Austin, Lenora Benson, Janie Croft, Weldon Jones, Jessie Lowe, Alton Murray, Glen Murray, Benjie Price, Ramona Traylor, Marcus Weaver, Pat Woolbright and Milton Culpepper. Patsy Maddox was the teacher and Margaret Shepard played the piano. The curtain was then drawn, and a short comedy
(Continued on Page Four)

MANY PUPILS VISIT WORLD'S FAIR THIS SUMMER NEW YORK

Lenore Benson, Burnie Thompson, Joan Jones and Mary Julia Thompson visited the World's Fair in New York.

Marvin Benson, George James, and Margaret Shepard went to North Carolina.

Irene Phillips and Virginia Jones spent their vacation in Georgia.

Betty Jean Magnuson, Joan and Jean Jones and Patricia Phillips visited Michigan.

Helen and Charles Senior went to Chicago, Ill.

Howard, Marvin and Wayne Austin spent their vacation in Indiana.

Patsy Maddock, Melvin and Carol Partin spent their vacation in Florida. Patsy in Lakeland, Melvin and Carol in Kissimmee.

Keith McRae visited in Ohio this summer.

"Education is the one interest worthy the deep, controlling anxiety of the thoughtful man."

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WORTHMOR ICE CREAM

The Boynton Bugle was a publication of the historic old Boynton High School. It was printed on newsprint in the format shown here. Students wrote the articles under the guidance of two faculty advisors, Mrs. Roxanne McCall and Mrs. Laura Watson. Marjorie Bynum, a member of the Historical Society, in preparing to move to Sebring, found two copies of the Boynton Bugle in an old trunk that had belonged to her mother, Etta Lamb, and sent them to the editor of The Historian. During the year, we will print both copies in full. Each issue is 4 pages, but we will print the first and fourth pages together because some of the articles from page one are continued on page four. Pages two and three from this issue will be included in next month's Historian.

Don't Look Now -- But

Well, we are back in the swing again and the school is fairly reeking with romance and gossip.

Have you noticed the way Herbert S. sits up and takes notice when Bernice Lombard appears? Well, it is so!

Bernice Traylor lost Clyde Miller's ring and was she ever in a state of affairs? Of course; Bernice, we know that romance was going on last year. But what happened to Howard Lamb?

Frances McBride must have lost all hope in getting Marvin Benson back. She and Mike's sister are seen together constantly.

Scotty, you had to live over by Lorraine this year. You at least get to walk to and from school with her.

Since Phyllis Lamb left Bob White has really looked down and out. Don't mind, Bob, she'll come back someday.

Topsy, we are really and truly sorry that Ellen isn't coming here to school instead of Delray.

Marvin, we thought you and Jackie broke up last summer. Well you can't tell what will happen, can you?

The other night Lenore was sporting two boys from North

Carolina. And gee whis! Was she in a dither! To everything you said to her, she would just giggle. Te, he, he. And then we saw you making eyes at Scotty French in perfectly on everything.

Some of the last year senior class is missed very much, especially by Virginia Jones, Patsy Maddox and Jean Jones. We are not saying whether it is the boys or girls. But we think it's the boys, don't you?

Some people really fuss when they see their name in this column but we know they just love it. So don't say a word. You really want everyone to know what you do and say.

Harbert, you had better watch Clayton Williams. He is trying to take your girl friend away from you.

Dinky Hogan has never lost that one little hope of getting Jackie Partin. Did we see you two walking to school together. Well, well, well.

I'll be seeing you.

TEACHERS RECEIVE DEGREES

Mrs. A. C. Shepard graduated from Florida Southern College, in Lakeland, this summer. She received her B. S. degree in education.

Miss Mabel Rousseau received her A. B. degree in English, history and elementary grades from the Florida State College for Women in Tallahassee.

HIGH SCHOOL HAS

(Continued from Page One)
version of the Shakesperian play "Julius Caesar" was enacted by Milton Culpepper, Burnie Thompson and Weldon Jones.

The closing portion of the assembly consisted of three songs, "Old Folks at Home," "Oh, Susanna" and "The Star Spangled Banner," played by Milton Culpepper on the harmonica.



IN THE CAFETERIA

Ice cream is now being served in the cafeteria, and we are very proud of the box in which we keep it. There are usually two or three vegetables, salad, chicken, chocolate and sweet milk and sometime deserts other than ice cream served.

PROFESSOR QUIZ (Continued from Page One)

evening the girls enjoyed a theater party.

Mrs. Fred Benson was the receiver of the highest individual score.

Fifteen dollars in subscriptions was given to the library by the P. T. A. They also have given a new Westinghouse refrigerator to the cafeteria.

Three new teachers have been added to the high school faculty this year, to fill the places left vacant by Mrs. Weaver and Mrs. Woolbright.

Mrs. Charles Watson, who is teaching English and speech, and is literary adviser for the school paper, is a graduate of Greensboro College, Greensboro, N. C. Later she received her Master of Arts degree from Stetson University at

DeLand, Fla. While at Stetson she taught all private speech work for two years. She was a member of Theta Alpha Phi, national honorary dramatic fraternity.

Miss Mary Ann Thomas is teaching seventh grade literature, spelling and geography, eighth grade history, literature, spelling, health and agriculture. She also teaches Latin 1 and 111. She is a graduate of Florida State College for Women. At Tallahassee she was president of the classical club, business manager of the annual and a member of the Latin honorary Eta Sigma Phi.

Miss Louise Bowery, who is teaching music and directing the school orchestra, went two years to Florida State College for Women and the following two years attended Siena Heights College in Adrian, Mich.

The only new grade school teacher is Miss Martha Myers, who is teaching the first grade. She is a graduate of Stetson University at DeLand, Fla. For the past several years she has attended summer school at Duke University. She taught at Jupiter and Westgate before coming to Boynton.

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LAKE WORTH

For those of us who can remember, some of the advertisements recall a different world. Coca-Cola was popular then, too, but a six-ounce bottle cost only five cents. Little four-ounce paper cups of Alfar ice cream came in a variety of flavors and had collectible lids of movie star's pictures. They, too, cost a nickel. Special flavors of ice cream were available at Worthmor in Lake Worth. Your editor's favorite flavor for at least a year was "Jitterbug," to take advantage of the name of the popular dance. (That flavor was actually a tutti-frutti variation similar in taste to Italian Spumoni, which we had never heard of.) As you look over the paper, note the kinds of stories the students included—it was town news for Boynton and the paper was enthusiastically supported through business ads.



First Palm Beach County Sheriff's Patrol, ca. 1957

Two early Boynton families were represented in this group. In the front row, fourth from left, is Buddy Partin. Pat McGregor Murphy is standing, third from right. Pat lost his battle with cancer just last month. (His sister, Sue Murphy Beaman, served as the Historical Society's Treasurer for many years.) Buddy died several years ago. He was a brother to Rebecca Partin Merkel whose memory we honor on page 2 of this issue of *The Historian*. (Photo courtesy of Sue Beaman)

At the time John Kirk became Sheriff, his Department's role was very limited in law enforcement. Its duties consisted of providing bailiffs in the courts, maintaining the county jail, serving summons, and answering calls only when people called in that a crime had occurred in the county. Sheriff Kirk divided the county into four districts with 16 deputies divided among them who were assigned to patrol the rural area of Palm Beach County on a 24/7 schedule. This changed the role of the Department in county law enforcement substantially.

Gulfstream Author to Speak in October

Robert W. Ganger is a retired corporate executive and business development consultant who owns a home in Gulfstream, "Miradero," that once belonged to Lila Vanderbilt Webb. Inspired by research related to the restoration of this house, he wrote a book about the life of the original owner, *Lila Vanderbilt Webb's Miradero: Window on an Era*, published by the Historical Society of Palm Beach County.

Mr. Ganger is a graduate of Yale University and attended Harvard Graduate School of Business

Administration. *The Historian* will provide additional information in the October issue.



Lila Vanderbilt Webb, c 1901

BOYNTON BEACH HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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2nd Member's Name _____

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

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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, Briny Breezes, and all area west of Boynton Beach to U.S. Hwy 441, and, on occasion, greater Palm Beach County.

THE HISTORIAN
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Boynton Beach, FL 33425-0012