



# 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.

2014 Number 2



February 2014

### UPCOMING THIS MONTH:

#### PROGRAM MEETING:

Monday, February 17, 2014, 6:30 p.m.

Boynton Woman's Club

1010 S. Federal Hwy

**TOPIC:** *Out of Mind, Out of Sight: A Revealing History of the Florida State Hospital at Chattahoochee and Mental Health Care in Florida* by Sally Ling

#### HISTORICAL MARKER UNVEILING:

Tuesday, February 18, 2014, 9:00 a.m.

Ocean Inlet Park

6990 N. Ocean Blvd.

Ocean Ridge, FL

[See enclosed Post Card]

#### HISTORY STROLL:

Sunday, February 23, 2014, 12:00 Noon

*A Walking Tour of Boynton Beach's Historic Town Center*, 60 minutes with Janet DeVries [Call 561-327-4690 for Reservation]

[See p. 5 for more detail]

### IN MARCH

#### HISTORY STROLL:

Saturday, March 22, 2014, 10:00 a.m.

*Loxahatchee River Battlefield Park*

[Details at BoyntonHistory.org or

See p. 5]

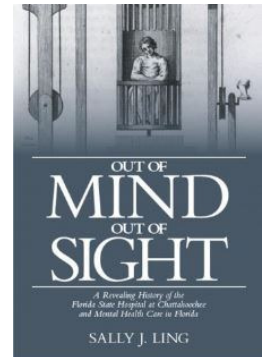
**ALL PROGRAMS OF THE SOCIETY ARE  
FREE TO THE PUBLIC**

## OUT OF MIND, OUT OF SIGHT: A REVEALING HISTORY of the FLORIDA STATE HOSPITAL at CHATTAHOOCHEE and MENTAL HEALTH CARE in FLORIDA

On Monday, February 17, 6:30 at the Boynton Woman's Club, author Sally Ling presents a history of the Florida State Hospital at Chattahoochee from construction of its original buildings in 1864 as part of the Federal Arsenal during the Second Seminole War, to its current role—treating individuals who have been civilly and forensically committed. To put the Florida State Hospital at Chattahoochee in perspective, the story is set against a backdrop of the evolution of institutionalized mental health care both in the United States and Florida where newly emerging treatments—insulin, Metrazol and electroconvulsive (ECT) shock therapies, as well as lobotomies—became part of patient treatment plans. For years this hospital had quite a reputation—most of it bad; but the institution was not alone. Inadequate care and mistreatment of the mentally ill was not the only problem. Thousands of individuals who were not mentally ill at all were confined through ignorance and prejudice of the public, the medical profession and the court system. Historically Chattahoochee is important because of its dual role as historic physical facility and evolving mental institutions which reveal a portrait of Florida—its history, its laws and its people.



Sally Ling, Author



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Our website is [www.boyntonhistory.org](http://www.boyntonhistory.org). The e-mail address is [boyntonhistory@gmail.com](mailto:boyntonhistory@gmail.com)

Please mail inquiries or information to our local address P.O. Box 12, Boynton Beach, FL 33425. Voncile can be reached at 561-734-5653.

You can also find us on Facebook and Twitter:

[www.facebook.com/historicboyntonbeach](http://www.facebook.com/historicboyntonbeach)

[www.twitter.com/@boyntonhistory](http://www.twitter.com/@boyntonhistory)

*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. Copies from past years are posted on the website.

## MEMBERS 2014

If you have been a member of the Boynton Beach Historical Society during the past three years, you received a dues notice in the January issue of *The Historian*. Many of you have responded and in addition to the paid members we listed in the January newsletter, we had received dues from the following by February 1<sup>st</sup>. We thank all of you for your support. Those of you who plan to respond, we would be most grateful if you would send in your dues as soon as possible. We will list additional members in future *Historians*.

### CORPORATE:

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Linda Stabile  
Susan Swiatosz  
Jean Ann Thurber  
J. H. "Jim" Weeks  
Dorothy Whitaker  
Welcome to all of you, and especially we welcome new members Ester Effel and Diane Lynn Gerino.

## NEW MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

At the Board of Directors meeting early this month, the members voted to add two new types of membership to the current list. These are a "Life Membership" for a one time payment of \$500 and a "Student Membership" for \$10 per year.

Under the current Bylaws the Board is responsible for setting classifications of membership and the dues for each. Prior to the adoption of the current bylaws in 1993, the Society had a provision for Life Membership dues, but this was not provided by the Board after 1993. Previously there was no provision for Student Membership. Please note these two new categories of membership reflected in the changed form on the outer pages of this copy of *The Historian*. Beginning in March, any life members will be listed on the masthead beneath the Officers and Directors. Currently, we know of two Life Memberships that were paid prior to 1993. These will be included on the list.

2-14

## A TRIBUTE TO HONOR BLACK HISTORY MONTH RECOGNIZING the EFFORTS of EVEREE JIMERSON CLARKE

By Voncile Smith.

Since soon after I became editor of *The Historian* almost 12 years ago, we have exchanged publications with *The Pleasant City Family Newsletter*, written and distributed by a remarkable woman, Everee Jimerson Clarke. Ms. Clarke has been the driving force behind an effort to preserve Black History in the Pleasant City section of West Palm Beach. Under her leadership the Pleasant City Family Reunion Committee had founded and operated the Heritage Gallery Museum containing significant artifacts and other materials from the area.

Early last summer we received a frantic request for help because the Museum was losing its building, and Ms. Clarke feared the Committee would have to close the Museum. Several of us responded with individual contributions, but the sum needed was too large for their group to raise in the time allowed.

Sadly, they had to close the Museum and place all their historic materials into storage.

But Ms. Clarke is not a person to give up. She continues to issue her newsletter, and writes, "We are not retiring, we are not selling our historic materials . . . we will celebrate our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary July 2014. . . We are getting ready for our Annual Meeting in January. We are seeking new members. Persons who are really interested in history and saving our youth . . . Let it be known that the Pleasant City Family Reunion Committee DBA Heritage Gallery is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit Florida Corporation listed in the Records of the Commerce Department at Tallahassee, Florida . . . only the President [Everee Jimerson Clarke] at this time is authorized to give information about the organization . . . at 561-396-5855."

Ms. Clarke is a determined force to be reckoned with. This column is a tribute to her tireless enthusiasm and her ongoing efforts to save an important portion of Palm Beach County history.



*Everee Clarke, President*

[Courtesy Pleasant City Family Newsletter, V 19, N 4 2013]

## HISTORICAL PRESERVATION IN BOYNTON BEACH

Several important events have taken place recently for the City of Boynton Beach's Historic Preservation Board.

In January the Florida League of Cities awarded Planner Warren Adams First Place in Florida for the Historic Marker Program which is identifying the Historic Trail within the City. These markers will be erected within the next few weeks and will each give a brief description of the location it represents.

The City Commission has approved the requirement that any building within the City that the Historic Preservation Board has identified as having historic significance cannot be razed without the approval of the Board.

The Board has sought to identify and discern the history of a number of historic structures within the City, including Barton Cemetery, 1920s streetlights and early homes and other buildings.

Under Warren's leadership the Board has secured a number of grants to be used specifically for historic preservation.

The Boynton Beach Historical Society is so grateful to the City Commission for establishing and aiding this Board in planning for and carrying out historic preservation.

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## SOUTH LAKE WORTH INLET MARKER DEDICATION

As the postcard enclosed in this newsletter indicates, the long awaited dedication for the historical marker at the South Lake Worth [Boynton] Inlet is to take place on Tuesday, February 18, at 9:00 a.m., the day after our program meeting.

The Neff family has been eager for this marker to be erected and has funded the cost for the marker.

The erection of this marker has been a cooperative effort between the Boynton Beach Historical Society, the State of Florida, the Palm Beach County Commission and the Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Department. All of these entities will be represented at the dedication along with members of the Neff family and the descendants of Captain Walter (Pop) Lyman, whose boat was one of the first to navigate through the inlet. There will be refreshments.

The public is invited.

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## IN MEMORIAM

**WILLIAMS, PERSTEIN**—We were sad to learn of the passing of Perstein Williams on January 22, 2014. Perstein and his wife Sarah Jane Williams had been members of the Boynton Beach Historical Society. Although born in South Carolina, he grew up in Delray Beach and later resided in Boynton Beach. He is survived by his wife and his son Preston Van Williams and Preston's wife Marilyn, four grandchildren and three great-grand children, two brothers and three sisters. He had enjoyed construction, including repairs and intricate alterations, fishing and assisting in the management of Williams Manor Apartment Rentals. He was a member of St. John Missionary Baptist Church. We send our sympathy and best wishes to all his family members.

# The HISTORY of BOYNTON BEACH

By Juanita Hathcock

[Editor's note: In January we printed the first of a series of articles on Boynton Beach History by Juanita Hathcock, published in *The Boynton Beach News* in May, 1946 when Juanita was about 17 years old and a junior at Boynton High School. Two additional sections will appear in the March and April Historians.]

## "First Settlers:

"Cecil Upton bought state land here in 1876 (a school teacher in Alabama). His land was up at the north end, near the canal, where he was murdered in about 1926. He did not come here to live until around 1890-95, but had cocoanut trees and pineapples planted on his place.

"About 1878, a family from Michigan, whose son Dexter Hubble had spent a year or so here, came down by schooner from Jacksonville and unloaded lumber and provisions and an ox team on the beach, just above where the Boynton Casino was built. There were eleven in the family, and they soon built a shack to live in on their Homestead which began at high water mark on the ocean beach and extended back to the little muddy creek on the west. This creek rejoices now in the name Spanish Creek, and there is supposed to be a wreck sunk in the mud; however, the wreck is only a very modern boat and not of the Spanish type at all.

"The creek was called, a little while after the Hubbles had gone back to Michigan in 1880, 'Steve's Creek,' after a young man who used it to keep his boat in. He was the second keeper of the Government House of Refuge at Delray Beach. Steve bought out the holdings of the Hubble family and kept his boat in the creek where he could use it to sail up the lake and get groceries and mail. This was Stephen N. Andrews who was keeper for about 20 years.

"For a great many years previous to this, the creek could have been called 'Indian Creek' as in the high water in the fall of the year, there had been a waterway for canoes through from Lake Worth to Hillsboro River, and thence to New River and Biscayne Bay. This brings us up to the winter of 1897, there came to Southeast Florida a junketing expedition promoted by Congressman Linton of Michigan. Among the party were Major Nathan Boynton of Michigan and his young daughter.

"In those early days the Florida East Coast Railroad terminated at West Palm Beach.

"From West Palm Beach the Linton expedition continued south in a flat bottom boat on beautiful Lake Worth. Their first night was spent in an old Government House, called a 'House of Refuge,' located at the place now known as Delray Beach.

"The 'Houses of Refuge' were so called because of the shelter for the night the small cabins provided travelers on Lake Worth and for those who ventured to travel the difficult trail on land where lurked the many perils of the jungle. The cabins were built by the Government and equipped for the comfort of travelers with sleeping cots for the weary and shelves of canned food for the hungry.

"After exploring the locality. Congressman Linton decided to remain there with his party, but not Major Boynton. He and his party, a group of friends concluded they preferred to settle at a choice place a few miles to the north.

"Back went the Boynton party in the flat bottom boat on the blue waters of Lake Worth. Landing at a point called Manalapan—a narrow strip of land with the Atlantic Ocean on the east side and Lake Worth on the west, the Boynton party, after a careful subservation [sic], agreed the location was indeed very choice.

"Shortly thereafter Major Boynton purchased a large tract of land fronting on the Atlantic Ocean and adjoining Manalapan.

"Later that same year he started building a great rambling hotel naming the structure the Boynton Beach Hotel.

"Also the name Boynton was the name legally adopted for the tract Major Boynton had acquired by purchase.

"The founder of Boynton died in the year 1914. In the year 1925 his holdings at Boynton were sold to the Harvey Development Company. The following year, 1926, the great Boynton Beach Hotel was demolished.

"Homes that are show places have replaced the old hotel where for more than a decade prominent people from the North enjoyed the charm of a Florida winter.

"The section of the town fronting the Atlantic Ocean and east of the canal is called Ocean Ridge. West of the canal is Boynton Beach. Among the names remembered of Boynton's early pioneers are those of H.B. Murry [sic] and family, Bert Kapp and wife, Frank and Ida Funk and W.H. Smith and family now of Stuart, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Davies, Freeland and many others.

"There had to be a way to make a living, so various enterprises were ventured. Raising roses and strawberries was tried and found not profitable, possibly they were planted on the marl lands instead of the higher lands slightly to the west of the marl banks. The canal had drained many acres of deep muck and marl land that for a thousand years or so had been under water, with every fall a dying vegetation and tiny shell life that made it the garden spot of America.

"The new settlers thus took up the art of raising huge 'freeze out' beds of tomato and pepper plans under cloth and warmed by stoves to reset fields when the temperature would occasionally go below 35 degrees.

"Much money was made and also lost in the growing of vegetables. At present this land is practically all gone over to nursery stock where much of the finest stock is grown and shipped away or used in the beautification of landscaping in the surrounding country.

## FOR BRINY BREEZES--

### A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO DOROTHY MANN McNEICE

We are indebted to Dorothy Mann McNeice for putting together a book on the history of Briny Breezes, *Looking Back in Time*, and for presenting a copy to the Boynton Beach Historical Society. She had also given us pictures, clippings and other papers about that little community. Thank you very much, Dorothy.

Dorothy has a long history with the area having first spent time at Briny while still a child. Readers, please remember that most information we have about the area comes from you, so share your family pictures, writings, and artifacts with us.

A selection from Dorothy's book follows on page 5.



## SHARING DOROTHY MANN McNEICE

[Editor's note: Below is a selection from the little book on the history of Briny Breezes, *Looking Back in Time*, written by Dorothy Mann McNeice. Future issues of *The Historian* will include additional excerpts.]

"In 1936, my parents, Glen, age 42, and Ellene Mann, age 38, owned a resort 10 miles north of Port Huron, in Lakeport, Michigan. They rented cabins and boats without motors for perch fishing on Lake Huron.

"My sister, Helen and I, Dorothy, helped with the work of cleaning cabins, washing and hanging the linens, watering the newly planted trees and renting cabins and boats.

"As the resort closed after Labor Day in September, Mom and Dad decided to go to Florida for the winter months. Helen (13 years old, 8<sup>th</sup> grade) and I (11 years old, 5<sup>th</sup> grade) had already started school in Lakeport.

"October 3, 1938 the work of the resort was finished so our family headed for our trip to Florida. Dad was pulling an 18 foot Silverdome travel trailer behind our 1936 Dodge automobile. . . . We arrived in Florida on October 7, 1938 after traveling for 5 days. Florida is known for its many groves of oranges and grapefruit. We stopped at the factory and watched the fruit being sorted in bins for shipping.

"We stayed at the Daytona Tourist Park in Daytona Beach, Florida for several days. While staying at the camp grounds we heard of a good place to camp called Briny Breezes located on the beautiful Atlantic Ocean. So on Sunday, October 9, 1938 we traveled on A1A and headed for Briny Breezes and what was to become our winter home until April 1942.

" . . . We checked in, paid \$7.00 weekly rent, plus \$1.05 for my sister and I. We parked our travel trailer on the first lot located in the south corner of Ruthmary and A1A, which became Old Ocean Boulevard. . .

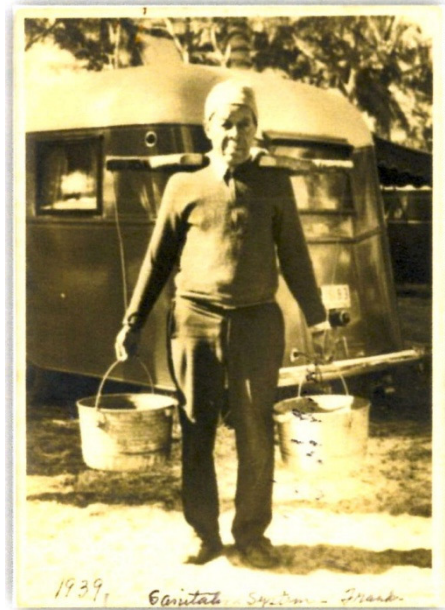
" . . . All telephone calls for the campers came into the office and were announced to everyone via the loudspeaker attached to the office roof. Many of the men ocean fished and when they had extra fish they shared by announcing over the loudspeaker, 'Kingfish, sailfish, come and get it.' All mail came from Delray to the office and was announced, 'Mail's in.'

"There were only two sections to the park then. The bathroom was located in the center of each section and housed the showers. On the outside of the building was a sink and hot water to be used for washing dishes. At night we had to take Mom with us to the bathroom as the crab holes in the campground were plentiful and spiders gathered in the bath house.

"We had no sewer systems so each day the water from the sink in our travel trailer was gathered in pails and emptied by Frank, an employee. He had a wooden yoke across his shoulders and two pails attached by which he carried the water to a truck and then it was emptied at the back of the park.

"It was time to start school for Helen and I. We were bussed from Briny Breezes to Boynton Schools. . . We were under Florida quarantine and not allowed to go to school for two weeks after arriving in Florida. We picked up our books and studied until it was time to start.

"Helen (8<sup>th</sup> grade) attended Boynton High School (built 1927) and I (5<sup>th</sup> grade) attended the Boynton Elementary School (built 1913)."



Briny Breezes Employee Frank with yoke and pails, 1939

## HISTORY STROLLS

### Sunday, February 23, 12:00 noon – "A Walking Tour of Boynton Beach's Historic Town Center."

Join Janet DeVries for a 60 minute tour of Boynton's historic downtown original plat, featuring pioneer homes and other landmarks followed by lunch at Bud's Chicken (Optional). Learn about the original plat of the Town of Boynton, the names of the roads, history of the post office, school houses, train station, library, city hall and more! Meet at the Schoolhouse Children's Museum. Please call 561-327-4690 to make a reservation.

### Saturday, March 22, 10:00 a.m.—"Loxahatchee River Battlefield Park."

Join fellow history enthusiasts on a group tour along the Loxahatchee River led by Guy Bachmann, historian for the Loxahatchee Preservationists, 9060 Indiantown Road, Jupiter, Florida 33478. Bring a picnic lunch or order a box lunch. Please call 561-327-4690 to make a reservation.

### More Information – Loxahatchee River Battlefield Park:

Loxahatchee River Battlefield Park is one of the most significant multi-level historic sites in Palm Beach County. Gateway to the Loxahatchee River, prehistoric and historic habitation has occurred along the Loxahatchee dating as far back as the Archaic Period over 5,000 years ago. The primary goal of the park is to preserve and protect these cultural resources, while providing education and passive recreation opportunities for the public to experience this beautiful place and its history.

The first battle of Loxahatchee, referred to as Powell's Battle, took place on January 15, 1838. The second battle of the Loxahatchee, referred to as Jesup's Battle, occurred nine days later on January 24, 1838. Today, the pine flatwoods, open meadows, cypress swamps and oak hammocks are home to hundreds of native species of flora and fauna, and give visitors a sense of "Old Florida" unique to this park setting.

**BOYNTON BEACH HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM**

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

2<sup>nd</sup> 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 ) \_\_\_\_\_  
                                     STUDENT     (\$10.00) \_\_\_\_\_  
                                     LIFE         (\$500.00) one time  
   payment only.

Complete this form and mail it with a check for the appropriate amount to Boynton Beach Historical Society, P. O. Box 12, Boynton Beach FL 33425-0012

*The Historian*

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

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.



The January Saturday Stroll – Ginger Pedersen leads participants through the High Ridge Scrub Natural Area