



# *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.

2016 Number 5

May 2016



## DINNER with NATHAN

Come join us at our Annual Covered-Dish Dinner on Sunday, May 1, at 5:00 p.m. at the Boynton Woman's Club. This is a time for good food and good fellowship and should give you an opportunity to discuss Boynton history with a number of members who have good stories to share about what has happened in the City over the years. There will also be discussion and a short video on Major Nathan Boynton and his role in the founding of what was to become the Town of Boynton which later became what we know as the City of Boynton Beach.

This event is open to members and guests and each of you is asked to bring a dish—a salad, a vegetable or a dessert—large enough to serve eight (8). The Boynton Beach Historical Society will provide the entrée, the beverages and the place set-ups (plates, flatware, cups and napkins). If you are unable to bring a covered dish, you are still welcome, but each person who does not bring a dish will be expected to contribute \$10 at the door.



Captain Nathan Boynton

**WHAT:** Annual Covered-Dish Dinner and Video-Discussion about Major Nathan Boynton for whom Boynton Beach is named.

**WHEN:** SUNDAY, May 1<sup>st</sup>, 5:00 p.m.

**WHERE:** Boynton Woman's Club  
1010 South Federal Highway

Members and guests are to each bring a covered dish—a salad, a vegetable, or a dessert to serve 8. In lieu of bringing food, participants are asked to contribute \$10 each at the door. Entrees and beverages will be provided.

## BOYNTON BEACH HISTORICAL SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS--2016-17

### OFFICERS [Elected Annually]

President	Randall Gill
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President, Programs	Anne Rimler
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice President, Membership	Voncile Marshall Smith
Recording Secretary	Diana Dennis
Corresponding Secretary	Anne Watts
Treasurer	Frances Tuite McKeral

### [Non-Elected]

Editor, <i>The Historian</i>	Voncile Marshall Smith
,Archivist/Facebook/Webmaster	Janet DeVries
Facebook Administrator/Webmaster	Ginger Pedersen

### DIRECTORS [3-Year Staggered Terms]

2017	Steven Anton
2017	Barbara Ready
2018	Sheila Rousseau Taylor
2018	Diane Gerino
2019	Tim Bednarz
2019	Judith Merkel Howard

### TRUSTEES [3-Year Staggered Terms]

2017	Ginger Pedersen
2017	Sarah Thomas Bollenbacher
2018	Janet DeVries
2018	Vacant
2019	Virginia Farace
2019	Susan Merkel Shaffer

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. Boynton Beach Historical Society number is 561-327-4690.

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.

### LIFE MEMBERS

Lenore Benson Raborn Boonstra  
Randall and Ann B. Gill  
Robert and Christian Oyer Macoviak  
Melear Bros., Inc. - Cliff and Rick Melear  
Scott and Camilla Smith Richardson  
Alexander "Sandy" Simon  
Voncile Marshall Smith  
Dorian Beck Trauger  
Charlotte Tatum Weaver  
Curtis and Nain Weems Weaver

### CORPORATE MEMBERS – 2016

Delray Awning, Inc., Don and Regina Day  
Florida Coalition for Preservation  
George and Christine Weaver Ternenyi  
Marion Weaver Clark Wester  
Pearce Doors & Windows Inc., Glen Pearce, President  
Scobee-Combs-Bowden Funeral Home & Crematory

## SOCIETY OFFICERS ELECTED APRIL 18

At the Annual Meeting held April 18, the following officers, Directors and Trustees were elected for 2016-2017:

President -- Randall Gill  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice President -- Programs -- Anne Rimler  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President -- Membership -- Voncile Smith  
Recording Secretary -- Diana Dennis  
Corresponding Secretary -- Anne Watts  
Treasurer -- Frances McKeral

### Directors:

Tim Bednarz -- 2016-2019  
Judith Howard -- 2016-2019

### Trustees:

Virginia Farace -- 2016-2019  
Susan Shaffer -- 2016-2019

---

## 2016 MEMBERSHIPS

The following people who have not been listed in earlier editions of *The Historian* have joined for 2016:

**Corporate Membership:** Don and Regina Day (Delray Awning, Inc.), **Family Membership:** Mike Fitzpatrick and Lisa Hanley; **Individual Membership:** Warren Adams; Wendy Franklin; Barbara Gellner; Margaret Guyder; Nancy Rosa.

---

## NEXT HISTORIAN WILL BE MAILED IN SEPTEMBER

This is a reminder that we do not issue copies of *The Historian* during the summer months of June, July and August. Issues follow our program schedule, so we will have a program in September which will be announced in advance in the September issue of this newsletter. In the meantime, we would appreciate receiving pictures, letters, documents, and other memorabilia of your life in Boynton that you may have. Don't throw away those old pictures of Dad or Grandma. They are important to us. Even old receipts, mortgage papers, and subpoenas all show what life was like in another period.

---

## 1927 BOYNTON HIGH SCHOOL

It will probably be several months before we know the fate of the 1927 schoolhouse. The law suit that Juan Contin, the developer from several years ago, filed is still pending, but is expected to be settled, or possibly dismissed, sometime this summer. Whether the City will then contract with Palm Beach Restoration Architect Rick Gonzalez who made a proposal last fall is uncertain. Gonzalez's plan would require the City to come up with \$1 ½ million before beginning, and despite that the Gonzalez plan offers to invest \$4 million, the long range cost to the City will be over \$11 million, most of which is projected to come from rentals of the renovated building.

## GOVERNMENT CLOSES HYPOLUXO POST OFFICE – 1964

By Theodore Pratt

[Editor's Note: Novelist Theodore Pratt is the author of *The Barefoot Mailman*. He wrote this article about the closing of the Hypoluxo post office for one of the local newspapers at the time]

Yesterday afternoon, at Hypoluxo, I witnessed the sad ending of an era in Florida.

The tiny, historic Hypoluxo post office was closed. This was known as "the barefoot mailman postoffice." It was known that way for several reasons.

One reason was that at Hypoluxo I had Steven Pierton, the chief character in my novel "The Barefoot Mailman," settle down after carrying the mail along the beach to Miami in the Eighties.

Another reason was that Hypoluxo was the last place from where the real mail was carried along the beach by the unique and famous barefoot mailman service. Before that the north stations had been located at Jupiter, then at Palm Beach, and finally at Hypoluxo.

For years Hypoluxo has had a sign on Route One across from the tiny little old postoffice [sic] stating, "Home of the Barefoot Mailman."

The Postoffice Department in Washington decided that the Hypoluxo postoffice was an uneconomical operation. Mail could be delivered more cheaply from Lake Worth to Hypoluxo residents.

The order came through to close Hypoluxo.

For months, readers of "The Barefoot Mailman" and friends of the Hypoluxo postoffice petitioned everyone concerned not to close this pioneer postoffice. They said there was more than economics involved, that Florida history even a tourist attraction would be destroyed. Thousands of tourists stopped at Hypoluxo to have letters and cards mailed from the barefoot mailman postoffice and to see the last stand of the shoeless mail carrier.

The order to close stood.

Mrs. Effie Keller, Hypoluxo resident and probably the little postoffice's greatest friend, fought up to the last minute. Yesterday, with tears in her eyes, she spent the afternoon at the postoffice taking pictures of the last people to patronize it. She mailed the final letters out of it with the Hypoluxo cancellation stamp on them—one to me as the author of the novel about the mailman.

This will be one of my treasured remembrances and will be included in the collection of my Florida manuscripts and papers which one day will be presented to a Florida University or library, chosen from the many who have requested this from me.

Mr. James M. Brown, one of the oldest settlers of Hypoluxo, yesterday afternoon pointed to Postoffice box No. 100 and said, in a breaking voice, "For fifty years I got my mail in that box. It will never be the same."

Mr. and Mrs. Fred Voss are even earlier settlers; they received their mail for most of their lives in Box 155.

Mr. and Mrs. Porter, fine simple people of pioneer Florida character, who operated the postoffice, fought long and hard

to retain it. James Melton's Motorama, nearby, owns the tiny, frame postoffice building. The Porters have found the interest in preserving it so great that they have asked the Motorama people for the building and have been promised it so that they can move it from its present site and take it up the road about a hundred yards. There, in this old barefoot mailman postoffice building, they plan to establish "The Barefoot Mailman Museum."

I have promised to help them with ideas for it. I will give them a framed page of the research material I gathered when I wrote my novel, a Florida map of the times I used for reference, and posters from the motion picture of the book. Other people have volunteered to give objects of the barefoot mailman days to go into the Porter's Museum. If you have such objects they would be welcomed by Mr. and Mrs. Porter at Hypoluxo.

The final closing of Hypoluxo was a sad moment. More than those principally involved were moved by the event. A bystander said, "I thought hurricanes were supposed to be our roof snatchers, here it is the government." Another person, speaking of the barefoot mailman, said emotionally, "Poor guy, no shoes—no roof."

To me, as the author of the novel commemorating the barefoot mailman, the closing of the Hypoluxo postoffice marks the end of an era. Those were the innocent, altogether attractive days of Florida. People then had time to enjoy life. The coast was uncrowded, still natural and beautiful. Fishing and hunting were excellent. The crash of automobiles killing their occupants and the roar of plane motors overhead hurrying people to their important destinations were unheard. Even up until comparatively recent years there was still enough left of this part of virgin Florida to be enjoyed by those of us who appreciated it.

Now the bulldozers close in. They attack from all sides. Beautiful Florida palm hammocks are knocked down. The land is spread flat, denuded of natural growth.

Progress, they call it. There are also other names for it, such as destruction and desecration. Those whose pockets are filled by whatever this kind of progress is say you can't stop it. Which is true. And unfortunate. You can only ask why? For what purpose?

One manifestation of this progress has closed the barefoot mailman postoffice at Hypoluxo. A period of Florida history ends and another begins.

The one that has ended will at least be commemorated by the Porters when they start their Barefoot Mailman Museum in the little old postoffice building by the side of busy, roaring Route One. Those who have a few minutes to spare from frenetic modern "civilization" will be able to see a memento of what it was like in quieter days.

Goodbye, Hypoluxo. May you be happy wherever it is that postoffices go after they die.

[To the Editor's knowledge, the Porters were unable to use the old post office building to establish their museum. James Melton's Motorama closed in the 1960s and most of his antique cars were sold to a Vanderbilt. Theodore Pratt, who is credited with originating the name "the barefoot mailman," later gave his papers to Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton.]

Pictures of the Hypoluxo post office and Theodore Pratt with Henry Porter are shown on page 4.



## THE HYPOLUXO POST OFFICE



Hypoluxo Post Office ca 1960



EX-POSTMASTER HENRY PORTER, RIGHT, TELLS THE AUTHOR OF "THE BAREFOOT MAILMAN" of plans to convert the Hypoluxo post office building into a museum. Mr. and Mrs. Porter have obtained permission from the James Melton Motorama, which owns the building, to move it up the road where they will establish their "Barefoot Mailman" museum. *Staff Photo by T. P. Wyatt*

Newspaper photo [possibly from a small, local newspaper] from the time showing Theodore Pratt with newly unemployed postmaster Henry Porter inside the post office in 1964.



SIGN INDICATES LANDMARK IN Hypoluxo, the building housing the recently closed Hypoluxo post office will be moved and converted into a "Barefoot Mailman" museum by the former operators, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Porter. Theodore Pratt, right above, tells Porter he will donate to the proposed museum research material which he gathered for his novel and a Florida map he used for reference when writing the "Barefoot Mailman."

*Staff Photo by T. P. Wyatt*

Another newspaper photo that accompanied the Pratt article on page 3 that shows Pratt with Henry Porter on a bench near the post office.



In the Pratt newspaper article we have copied on page 3, Theodore Pratt describes activity by Mrs. Effie Keller mailing out letters from the post office with last day cancellation stamps. The address flap on this envelope shows the name Keller, apparently one of the letters Mrs. Keller mailed that day, March 31, 1964. Note the special stamp featuring the barefoot mailman that the post office used. Note also the postage used at that time. Yes, that is a 3 cent stamp.



# Conrad Pickel Celebration

A celebration about renowned stained glass artist, Conrad Pickel, his life and global vision of the arts.

Kick-off the celebration by taking a narrated historic bus tour highlighting Conrad Pickel's artwork. Later, join the experts in a series of lectures to discuss Conrad's life, the art of glassmaking, glass art demonstrations and a Conrad Pickel exhibition.

**WHAT:** Conrad Pickel Celebration

**WHEN:** May 21st, 8:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

**WHERE:** Boynton Beach City Library, 208 S. Seacrest Blvd.

**COST:** FREE

To register for the bus tour, call 561-742-6066.

\*Schedule subject to change.

Hosted by:



## Schedule of Events:

### 8:00 a.m. - Pickel's Historic Bus Tour\*

Boynton Beach Memorial Park Mausoleum  
Ascension Lutheran Church  
St. Joseph's Episcopal Church  
Former Gallery Fantasia

### 10:30 a.m. - Back to Back Lectures\*

**Conrad Pickel: Historical Timeline and Imprint on Boynton Beach**

Presenter: Warren Adams, City of Boynton Beach Historic Preservation Planner

**Conrad Pickel: Nick and Conrad - Two of a Kind**

Presenter: Bob Schmidt, Schmidt Stained Glass

**Paul Pickel: Fresh from Germany - New Directions of Stained Glass**

Presenter: Paul Pickel, President, Conrad Pickel Studio

**Conrad Pickel: Beyond Boynton Beach**

Presenter: Gloria Jacaruso and Caroline Hejja

### 12:30 - 1:30 p.m. - Glass Demonstrations & Conrad Pickel Exhibition\*

Glass Demos: Conrad Pickel Studio and Schmidt Stained Glass  
Plein Air Palm Beach: Paintings of Historic Conrad Pickel Sites

This document is available in alternate accessible formats upon request by calling the City of Boynton Beach ADA Coordinator at (561) 742-6241 or (TTY) 1-800-955-8771. Anyone who requires an auxiliary aid or service for effective communication, or modification of policies or procedures to participate in a City program, service or activity, should contact the ADA Coordinator at (561) 742-6241, (TTY) 1-800-955-8771, as soon as possible but no later than 48 hours before the scheduled event.

The Boynton Beach Historical Society is one of the sponsors with the City of Boynton Beach of the annual Conrad Pickel celebration which will take place May 31<sup>st</sup>. Note the free bus tour begins at 8:00 a.m. and requires advance registration. There are several lectures in the morning after the tour that feature among others Warren Adams, the City's Historic Preservation Planner, and members of Conrad Pickel's family.

## IN MEMORIAM

If we learn of the loss of one of the members of the Boynton Beach Historical Society, we try to include this information in *The Historian*. Occasionally, however, we also provide information about members of families that have had a significant impact on Boynton Beach history. We were saddened to learn this week of the death of Martha Janet Woolbright Mills. Members of the Woolbright family were major figures in helping to establish the Historical Society and remained members the remainder of their lives.

**MILLS, Martha Janet Woolbright** –Janet Mill passed away on April 14, 2016. She was the daughter of Beryl M. and Nellie P. Woolbright. She was predeceased by her parents; two brothers, Beryl M. Woolbright, Jr. and by Thomas Edward Woolbright; two sisters Virginia Woolbright Roman and Wynelle Woolbright Stephens. She was also predeceased by one son, John A. Mills and one daughter, Brenda K. Mills. She is survived by two sisters, Marie Woolbright and Patricia Woolbright Franklin, as well as two daughters, Wanda Mills Batz [Paul] and Becky Mills Ocello [Charlie] and numerous grandchildren, great-grand children and nieces and nephews. We send our best wishes to all the family members.

## 1930s SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS



Back row: Callie Rousseau, Leland [Pete] Garnett, Bob Johnson, Roger Fain, Mabel Rousseau, Center: Alice Rousseau, Ruth Lacey, Verna Rousseau, Vivian Shepard, Dorothea Benson, Dorothy Powell, and teacher Mrs. Clara White. Front row: Thelma Jordan, Helen Shepard, Ethel Powell, Beral Austin. This was a Methodist group, but the picture was posed in downtown Boynton on the south side of Ocean Avenue.

5-16

**BOYNTON BEACH HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

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

2nd Member's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

THE SOCIETY IS A 501 © 3 Organization so dues are TAX DEDUCTIBLE!

TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP: (Check one)	INDIVIDUAL	(\$25.00) _____
	FAMILY	(\$35.00) _____
	PATRON	(\$50.00) _____
	CORPORATE	(\$100.00) _____
	STUDENT	(\$10.00) _____
	LIFE	(\$500.00) One time Payment only.

The membership; year is from January 1 to December 31 of each year.  
Dues are not pro rated.

Complete this form and mail it with a check for the appropriate amount to  
Boynton Beach Historical Society, POB 12, Boynton Beach FL 33424-4012,  
You may pay by PayPal at [www.boyntonhistory.org](http://www.boyntonhistory.org)

*The Historian*

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



Paul Dunbar's Ye Tower Restaurant on U.S. Highway 1 in Lantana before the 1928 storm reduced the tower