

The Historian

The Newsletter of the Boynton Beach Historical Bociety

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.

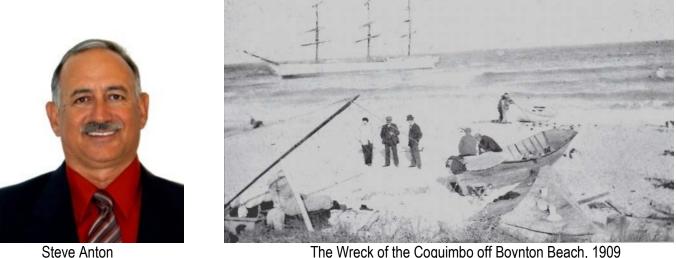
2016 Number 8

November 2016

BOYNTON SHIPWRECKS OVER THE YEARS

is the topic for the Monday November 21st program for the Boynton Beach Historical Society at the Boynton Beach City Library at 6:30 p.m.. Steven Anton, a member of the Board of Directors of the Society, who is an award winning photographer and videographer will speak about famous and not so famous shipwrecks located off the beaches of Boynton. Some are easily visited and very close to shore.

Steve is a native Floridian who began swimming at age 2, snorkeling at 4, and in 1974 took up scuba diving. His passion for diving led him to join the United States Navy where he became a Navy diver. Here he worked on all aspects of diving from ship and salvage diving to dive supervisor and to an Explosive Ordinance Disposal diver. While in the Navy he also began his work in the hyperbaric industry in 1968 aboard a submarine where he served as a torpedoman and ship's diver and as the ship's hyperbaric chamber operator. In 1981 after returning to civilian life, he became a NASDS scuba instructor. His wound-care and hyperbaric career began in 1987 at Tallahassee Community Hospital's multiplace hyperbaric unit. Steve's injuries during his Navy service ultimately resulted in his retirement, but in his free time he takes photos while snorkeling and scuba diving around South Florida.



Steve A	Anton The Wreck of the Coquimbo off Boynton Beach, 1909
<u>WHAT</u> :	Multi-Media Presentation, "Boynton Shipwrecks Over the Years," with Steve Anton
WHEN:	Monday, November 21, Meet & Greet 6:30 – 7:00 p.m., Program—7:00 – 8:00 p.m.
WHERE:	City Library, 208 S. Seacrest Blvd., Program Room. OPEN FREE TO THE PUBLIC

BOARD OF DIRECTORS--2016-17

OFFICERS [Elected Annually]

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1 st Vice President, Programs	Ar
2 nd Vice President, Membership	Vo
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Voncile Marshall Smith Janet DeVries Ginger Pedersen

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

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

Our website is <u>www.boyntonhistory.org</u>. The e-mail address is <u>boyntonhistory@gmail.com</u>.

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 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 Ernest G. Simon Voncile Marshall Smith Dorian Beck Trauger Charlotte Tatum Weaver Curtis and Nain Weems Weaver

CORPORATE MEMBERS – 2016

Boynton Woman's Club Delray Awning, Inc., Don and Regina Day Easy Pay Tire Stores, Inc., Doug Besecker (2017) 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

A NEW MEMBERSHIP YEAR – 2017

In past years, a number of you have paid dues for the upcoming year before the first of the year. If you pay before the first of February, it saves us the work of preparing and sending you notices later. Since all we do depends upon volunteer work, we very much appreciate your help. If you are currently a member, you need simply to mail us your check to P. O. Box 12, Boynton Beach, FL 33425. Unless some of your information has changed, you do not need to fill out a membership form.

Members whose dues for 2017 are already paid:

Life Members:

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

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IN MEMORIAM

GORDON READY—We are said to report that Gordon Ready, the husband of Barbara Ready, one of members of the Board of Directors of the Boynton Beach Historical Society died suddenly in September. We extend our sympathies to all the Ready family.

MEMORIAL GIFTS

Often members and others present the Historical Society with a gift to honor the passing of a loved one or a birth or some special occasion. The Society deposits cash gifts into a gift savings account and we use them for special projects. One such project funded with contributions in honor of Harvey E. Oyer was the rehabilitation and reissue of the 1976 film "History of Boynton Beach' narrated by Norman Thomas. Another was the furnishing of the Principal's office at the new Galaxy School in honor of Betty Thomas.

Currently we are committed to cleaning and rehabilitating five paintings by muralist and painter Bernard Thomas which he contributed to Forest Park School some years ago.

When a committee to plan for this restoration went to Forest Park School, Fran McKeral took the following photographs. Unfortunately, she had to photograph the paintings from an angle, and the beautiful colors cannot be included in our reproductions.







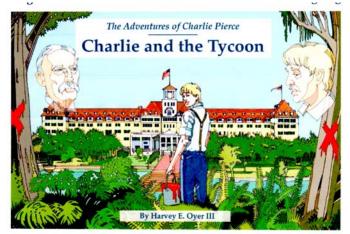




We have received two memorial gifts honoring Gordon Ready; one from Susan Oyer, and one from Harvey E. Oyer, III. We have also received a memorial gift honoring Dr. Heather Frazer from Voncile Smith. 8-16

HARVEY OYER ANNOUNCES 5th BOOK

Award winning author Harvey E. Oyer, III, has been writing and publishing a series of books for elementary school children about the history of South Florida. He has just announced that the fifth title in the series is now available.



This book is available for pre-order and is not yet available in bookstores or at Amazon. Pre-order before Midnight on Thanksgiving and receive a \$5.00 discount by using coupon code TYCOON at checkout. The bookstore price is \$19,95/Special Offer to Charlie Pierce Fans is \$14.95. Your book will be delivered by December 10, 2016.

www.theadventuresofcharliepierce.com/the-bookstore or mail to Harvey E. Oyer III Esq.,PA, 525 Okeechobee Blvd, Suite 1100, West Palm Beach, FL 33401.

OH, FLORIDA! How America's Weirdest State Influences the Rest of the Country by Craig Pittman

This book was published earlier this year by St. Martin's Press, and, as the dust jacket says, "it's a state where the voters went for Barack Obama twice yet elected a Tea Party candidate as governor. Florida is touted as a carefree paradise, yet it's also known for its perils—alligators, sinkholes, pythons, hurricanes and sharks, to name a few. It attracts 90 million visitors a year, some drawn by its impressive natural beauty, others bewitched by its man-made fantasies. . .[Oh, *Florida!*] is the first book to explore why Florida is so wild and weird and why that's okay. . . Oh, *Florida!* explains how Florida secretly, subtly, influences all the other states in the Union, both for good and for ill." This is a very humorous look about the past and present events of the Sunshine State.

The author is a native Floridian and an award-winning reporter and columnist for the *Tampa Bay Times*.

CREDIT, HOUSING AND CARS: 1930s TO 1950s by Voncile Smith

As I remember, my mother and father never had credit cards. I am not sure they existed in the 1930s, but I do know that if they did, they were not plastic. Most major credit cards as we know them did not really gain widespread acceptance

until well into the 1960s. For years there was only Carte Blanc and it, like its later cousins Mastercard, Visa and American Express, had high interest and service fees.

When I was a child in the 1930s and 1940s most people I knew paid cash for everything. You saved until you could buy a car or a house, or you might take a personal loan from a friend. I know some people had mortgages, but most did not want to pay the interest that a mortgage loan entailed. Anyway, during the Great Depression of the 1930s many banks failed which led to a serious decrease in home loans and ownership. Most home mortgages were short-term (3 to 5 years) with no amortization. The banking crisis of the 1930s forced lenders to retrieve due mortgages, refinancing was not available, and many borrowers, now unemployed, were unable to make mortgage payments. Banks collected the foreclosed homes, but low property values resulted in banks having a lack of assets.

The National Housing Act of 1934 created the FHA (Federal Housing Administration) to insure mortgage loans for qualified mortgagees. Its intent was to regulate the rate of interest and the terms of the mortgages it insured. These practices increased the numbers of people who could afford a down payment on a house and monthly debt service payments on a mortgage. Even though housing sales picked up, with so many people unemployed, few were able to qualify for FHA help.

Changes occurred after World War II. The GI Bill provided low percentage loans to returning veterans to enable them to buy homes. FHA loans had been around since the 1930s, and with an improved economy many buyers were able to qualify for a mortgage through this means.



Voncile with daughter Denise in 1952 in front of GI Bill house In 1952 my veteran husband and I bought a home under the GI Bill in Dade County for \$6,200. It was concrete block on a poured concrete foundation with a tar and gravel roof, 3 bedrooms, one bath, and a total of 1200 square feet on a 100' by 100' foot lot. At [Continued on page 5] 8-16 4 [Credit, Housing and Cars - continued from page 4]

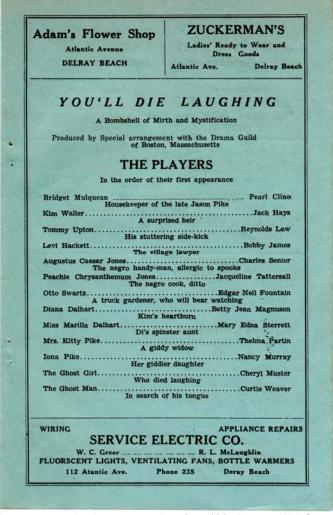
that time most builders did not "sod" lawns, but instead "sprigged" them with little cut off pieces of sod. Needless to say, we had small sandstorms, when the wind blew, until the sprigs could spread into runners and cover the soil. The builder provided no other landscaping. No telephone lines were available during the two years we lived there, although Southern Bell did later run in lines to install a pay booth on each block. Streets were black asphalt with no curbs, gutters or sidewalks. We did have city water, however, and adequate electricity with a fuse box (no breaker switch), asphalt tile floors, casement windows and wood jalousies on front and back doors. Homes at that time were not air-conditioned, and, if the weather turned cold, ours had a little gas wall heater in the hall. Our 30 year mortgage interest rate was 4%.

Also in the early 1950s one of my cousins with her new husband purchased a house with a conventional 30 year mortgage at 6% interest. Her parents, who believed in cash only purchases, had a fit. They viewed the interest over the 30 years as the actual cost of the house and were horrified at the extra thousands of dollars the young couple would ultimately pay. Realtors explained that cost was no more than rent and was over time going toward making the house theirs. Most mortgages permitted amortization.

In the 1930s and 1940s income for those employed was low compared to today's salaries, but costs were correspondingly low. My father paid about \$700 for a 1940 Chevrolet 2-door sedan that he drove until 1952. The only "extra" he added was a heater-no cars had air-conditioning then. We had no radio, no turn signals, and he shunned an automatic transmission ("It would just drink up the gas," my father said). There was no power steering, power brakes, or automatic push-button windows (they opened and closed with a hand crank). The area in front of the front windows was equipped with "wings" (extra vertical windows one adjusted by hand to direct the wind toward the passengers to help keep one cool (In more recent years these were abandoned because of the danger of serious injury or decapitation in accidents). Little on the car operated automatically. Even the roofs on convertibles had to be opened and closed manually - a distinct disadvantage in South Florida where sudden summer thunderstorms often arose more rapidly than the driver could convert the convertible roof. And of course, seat belts and air bags did not exist.

But gasoline was less than \$.30 a gallon, and sometimes during "gas wars" (price competitions among area service stations) it dropped as low as \$.13 to \$.15 a gallon.

Early 1942 cars were the last models produced until late 1947 when manufacturing resumed after the war ended. Cars were still inexpensive. My future husband bought a 1949 Ford for under \$1,000 and more people were financing loans to purchase them. The floor mats were rubber and it had fabric upholstery and a fabric head liner. But my husband liked automatic steering, and we had a radio.



Program page showing cast members from 1945 Boynton High School Senior Play

A tradition during the 1930s and 1940s at Boynton High School was for the senior class to present a play in which all the class participated as performers. The income received was used to finance various senior class expenses. The teacher, in this case Marian LaQuitte who was the senior class sponsor, directed the play. Students who did not have roles handled sound effects, lighting and ticket sales. The junior class also helped including serving as ushers, backstage prop and scenery aides, etc.



Pearl Cline and Thelma Partin, two 1945 graduates

BOYNTON BEACH HISTORICAL SOCIETY	1
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION	

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Phone	Cell	
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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 <u>www.boyntonhistory.org</u> Che Cistorian Boynton Beach Historical Society Post Office Box 12 Boynton Beach FL 33425-0012



The Boynton High School Class of 1945: Top row, Ann Mayberry, Louise Bell, Cheryl Muster, Nancy Murray. Bottom row, Curtis Weaver, the total class.