



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.

Recipient of the 2021 Judge James R Knott Historical Contribution Award

November 2022

The Sound of the Sea: Seashells and the Fate of the Oceans with Cynthia Barnett **Monday, November 28, 2022 @ 7-8pm EDT via Zoom**

For emails on file, check your inbox for an invitation from BBHSPrograms@gmail.com. If your email isn't already on file with us, send a request to BBHSPrograms@gmail.com and we'll send you the invitation.

In a partnership between **Florida Humanities** part of Florida Humanities' Florida Talks program,



and the **Boynton Beach Historical Society**, as tonight we welcome speaker, **Cynthia Barnett**.

The human fascination with seashells is primal.

Archeological evidence suggests that Neanderthals collected cockle shells on the coast of what is modern Spain, perhaps giving preference to those they found beautiful. Native Americans built "great cities of shell" on the coasts, later carted off for road fill. In the 1950s, the nation burned with a shell-collecting fever only a Florida beach vacation could cure. In tonight's program award-winning environmental author **Cynthia Barnett** explores the long, rich and surprisingly profound relationship between humans and seashells. Traveling from Florida to the Bahamas to the Maldives, West Africa, and beyond, Barnett uncovers the ancient history of shells as global currency, their use as religious and luxury objects, and the rarely appreciated but remarkable creatures that make them. For eons, shell and their mollusk makers have reflected humanity's shifting attitudes toward and precarious place in the natural world. While shells reveal how humans have altered the climate and the sea—down to its very chemistry—they are also sentinels of hope for coastal adaptation for climate change, alternative energy and other solutions that lie beneath the waves. With her engaging account of an aspect of nature and culture long hidden in plain sight, Barnett illuminates the beauty and wonder of seashells as well as the human ingenuity and scientific solutions they represent for our warming world.



Cynthia Barnett is an award-winning environmental journalist who has reported on water and climate change around the world. Her latest book, *The Sound of the Sea: Seashells and the Fate of the Oceans*, was named one of the best science books of the year by NPR's Science Friday, *Library Journal* and others, and a best nonfiction book of the year by *Kirkus Reviews*, the *Tampa Bay Times* and others. Ms. Barnett is also the author of *Rain: A Natural and Cultural History*, *Blue Revolution: Unmaking America's Water Crisis*, and *Mirage: Florida and the Vanishing Water of the Eastern U.S.* She has written for *National Geographic*, the *Atlantic*, the *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Tampa Bay Times* and many other publications. She lives in Gainesville, where she serves as Environmental Journalist in Residence at the University of Florida's College of Journalism and Communications.





Boynton Beach Historical Society

Since 1968

2022-2023 Board of Directors

OFFICERS Elected Annually

President – Anne Rimler

1st Vice President, Programs - Barbara Ready

2nd Vice President, Membership - Sheila Rousseau Taylor

Secretary – John Shelly

Treasurer – Robert Taylor

TRUSTEES 3-Year Term

2023 – Steve Anton

2023 – Heidi Bell

2024 - Donna Artes

2024 – Chadda Shelly

2025 - Virginia Farace

2025 - Ben Lowe

Non-Voting Appointees

Editor, *The Historian* - Anne Rimler

Archivist/Facebook/Webmaster – Janet Naughton

Facebook Admin/Webmaster – Ginger Pedersen

Promotions/Publicity – Nora Gallagher Michuda

Boynton Beach Historical Society

PO Box 12, Boynton Beach, FL 33435

We are on the web www.boyntonhistory.org, and on Facebook [@HistoricBoyntonBeach](https://www.facebook.com/HistoricBoyntonBeach) and on Twitter [@BoyntonHistory](https://twitter.com/BoyntonHistory).

Questions or comments: **Programs** bbhsprograms@gmail.com

Membership bbhsmembership@gmail.com.

The Historian

The Historian, the newsletter of the Boynton Beach Historical Society, is sent approximately six times a year, between October and April, to dues-paid members (one per paid membership).

Previous issues are posted to our website. Issues were not published April 2020 to October 2021 due to COVID-19.

The first line on your mailing label has your **membership expiration date**. If you receive the *Historian* via email, we'll send you a renewal notice before your dues expire.

Dues paid at/after the last meeting of the season will be credited toward the following season. Memberships run Jan 1 to Dec 31.

Become a Member or Renew your Dues

Go to boyntonhistory.org. On the **Membership** tab, pay securely via **PayPal** or download the form and mail in with your check. Thank you!

Historical Society Bylaws

Society Bylaws: www.boyntonhistory.org/membership/

2022-2023 Season – via Zoom except for on-site Art Show

Nov 28: C Barnett/Sound of the Sea: Seashells & Ocean's Fate

Feb 4: Florida Highwaymen Art Show at Arts & Cultural Center

Feb 27: Magdalena Lamarre: Underground Railroad in Florida

Mar 27: Michael McKeich HSPBC: The Gilded Age in Palm Beach

Apr 24: Cori Convertito: Key West Hand Print Fabrics

Zoom Program Meetings are Recorded

Find us on YouTube at "BBHS Programs"

Like and Subscribe



The following represents our Membership Roll to date & Dues received from 10/11/2022 to 11/06/2022

Thank You to our Life Members

Vickie & Anthony **Barbar**

EasyPay Tire, Doug & Ruth **Besecker**

Candy & Doug **Brueggemann**

Linda & Mike **Callaway**

Robert and Jeanne **Gayler**

M Randall **Gill**

Robert & Carrie **Parker Hill**

Robert & Christian **Oyer Macoviak**

Melear Bros., Cliff & Rick **Melear**

Wayne & Eva Brooks Knuth **Netzler**

Susan **Oyer**

Scott & Camilla **Smith Richardson**

Sandy A **Simon Jr**

Voncile Marshall **Smith**

George & Christine Weaver **Ternenyi**

William & Gaye **Weaver**

Marion Weaver **Wester**

Bill & Elsie **Winchester**

Thank You to our Corporate Level Members

Boynton Memorial Chapel, Stormet C **Norem**

Dan & Regina **Day, Delray Awning**

Scobee-Combs-Bowden Funeral Home & Crematory

Daniel & Lisa Ames **Suiter**

Thank You to our Patrons

Tim **Bednarz**

Charles & Mary Theresa **Bilthuis**

Ron & Sarah Thomas **Bollenbacher**

Richard B **Castagnoli**

Michelle **Donahue**

Robert W **Ganger**

Gayle **Kranz** & George **Greider**

William G **James**

Charles & Betty **LaBella**

Sandra & Eugene **Palchanis**

Ward & Martha **Parker**

Mary **Scheitler**

Billie Jo **Swilley**

Sheila **Rousseau** & Robert **Taylor**

Mary **Burns** & Tom **Warnke**

Anne **Watts**

Suzy **Winchester**

New and Renewed Memberships

Dorothy **Ferris**

Thank You!

Carol **Kuenzel**

Boynton Woman's Club Luncheon Nov 17 11:30am

The BWC extends an invitation to Society members: **Erica Whitfield**, District 4 member of the PBC School Board and champion of public health issues, will be the guest speaker at a luncheon at the Quail Ridge CC. Reservations are required; contact **Michele Walter** at mcwalter4@gmail.com by Nov 14th.

Florida Humanities & Boynton Beach Historical Society

Would you please take a moment to complete a brief survey about the program? Your feedback will help shape future programming.

Search for 'Florida Humanities Program Survey' on Google or click this link:

<https://floridahumanities.org/grantee-resources/forms-and-resources/survey/>

Also see page 3 for further information.



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A Message from Membership Chair, Sheila Rousseau Taylor

Greetings, Boynton Beach Historical Society Members & Friends!

The Society's Board of Directors kicked off the 2022/2023 season with very successful Zoom Directors' meetings in September and October. Business included saying a "Fond Farewell & Thank You" to **President Randall Gill** and a warm welcome to incoming **President Anne Rimler**, Secretary **John Shelly**, Treasurer **Bob Taylor**, and Promotions/Publicity person **Nora Gallagher Michuda**.

We all agree that the Zoom meeting option works well for our directors. The most recent meeting occurred while two directors were in Vancouver, two officers in Vermont, and the rest of the directors attended from Boynton and Boca Raton. Likewise, our free and open to the public Zoom Programs have been attended by numerous out-of-state members and interested friends.

I am pleased to announce that our membership is growing and to extend a huge THANK YOU to each of you for your continued loyalty! Our renewal option to "**Buy One Give One**" has been an exciting success! Almost half of all BOGO recipients have renewed their memberships following their gratis introduction!

This offer is available again with your 2022/2023 renewal. You may give a one-year membership to a first-time member for FREE. For your convenience, use the BOGO form on the reverse of this page and the self-addressed return envelope. Please check your mailing label for your renewal due date. If you wish to pay securely online, PayPal is available from our website, www.boyntonhistory.org/membership/. Remember to send your recipient's contact information to me at BHSMembership@gmail.com. We'll do the rest.

Remember our gift options for memberships, gifts in honor or in memory are also available. If you have questions or comments, email me at: BBHSMembership@gmail.com.

Thank You!

Sheila

Sheila Rousseau Taylor
2nd Vice President Membership

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This Florida Talks program is a partnership between Florida Humanities and Boynton Beach Historical Society. Funding for this program was provided by Florida Humanities and sponsored in part by the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Arts and Culture, the Florida Council on Arts and Culture, and the National Arts.





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MEMBERSHIP SPECIAL - BUY ONE:GIVE ONE. **BOGO**.

We are incredibly pleased to make this SPECIAL offer! When you become a member or renew your membership, you can give a FREE one-year membership for one friend, family member or other interested party!
BUY ONE:GIVE ONE*. BOGO*. TWO memberships for the SAME PRICE!

Please provide the recipient's name, mailing address, email, and phone, and they will also receive "The Historian," via email, in addition to important Society notifications.

Have you already sent in your dues for 2022/2023? Thank you! Please designate your BOGO recipient by sending an email to bbhsmembership@gmail.com with the info requested for your BOGO recipient. We'll do the rest.

****The BOGO recipient must be a NEW member to the Society.
*Student membership level is not eligible to gift the BOGO special.***

Boynton Beach Historical Society Membership Form

BUY ONE:GIVE ONE

My Name _____

Select one – this is a:

___ New Membership. ___ Membership Renewal.

Street _____

Select Membership Type:

City _____

___ Individual \$25

___ Family \$35

State / Zip _____

___ Patron \$50

___ Corporate \$100

Email _____

___ Student* \$10 (please provide valid Student ID)

___ Life (one-time payment) \$500

Phone # _____

BOGO Recipient's Information - I would like to share a Free One-Year Membership with:

Name _____

Street _____

City _____

State / Zip _____

Email _____

Phone # _____

**The BOGO recipient must be a NEW member to the Society. Student membership level is not eligible to give BOGO specials.*

Complete and mail with payment: Boynton Beach Historical Society PO Box 12 Boynton Beach FL 33425-0012. Or pay online using PayPal at www.boyntonhistory.org/membership/ and send BOGO Recipient Information by email to bbhsmembership@gmail.com.

The Society is a 501(c)(3) Organization; dues are tax deductible.

Membership year runs Jan 1 to Dec 31. Dues are not pro-rated. Expiration date is shown on first line of your mailing label.



The Historian

Boynton Post Office History by Janet DeVries Naughton

Boynton's first official United States post office opened in April 1896 in Lyman's Ocean Ave. store with William H. Cox as the first postmaster. Cox filed the Boynton Post Office paperwork on January 31, 1896. In his application he stated that the nearest post offices were Hypoluxo and Lantana (three and four miles north) and Linton (five miles due south). He noted the post office would be located 100 yards east of the new FEC railway station. The stop was called Boynton after civil war major Nathan Boynton. The mail chiefly consisted of letters, postcards, newspapers, magazines, catalogs, seeds, packages, home furnishings and even livestock delivered to the station. Since the Boynton settlers were cut off from most of the world and were hungry for news from their families and hometowns, mail delivery was important to rural life.

Several men held the postmaster title over the next decade including H.B. Murray, J.P. Harper, and C.W. Pierce. Pierce, a former Star Mail Route (aka barefoot) carrier served the longest. He was postmaster from 1901 to 1903 and notably from 1908 until his death in 1939 when his wife, assistant postmaster Ethel Sims Pierce assumed the position. Charlie Pierce managed the 1911 stand-alone post office on Ocean Ave. Constructed with lumber from the 1909 Coquimbo shipwreck, the post office served as a community focal point. Pierce curated a book lending library for the residents in the post office.

In May 1928 a new post office opened next to the old wooden post office. Pierce's official government report indicated that the new building was located 365 feet east of the Florida East Coast Railway. The Town of Boynton incorporated as the City of Boynton Beach in 1941 with postmaster Ethel Pierce filing the post office name change. In 1946 receipts exceeded \$10,000 making Boynton eligible for a new post office building. The post office moved to the Puritin Building (also on Ocean) in 1949. Mail delivery began in 1956 after Mrs. Pierce convinced town officials to number all residences and businesses. Mail carriers rode bicycles or drove cars on their routes. Mrs. Pierce retired after this big change, with Richard Monahan succeeding her long tenure.

A modern, air-conditioned fire-proof post office at the corner of Seacrest and Boynton Beach Blvd. opened in 1963. The large new facility had automatic lights, improved mail processing capacity, a vending machine for dispensing stamps and self-service post office box rentals. This post office has served as the downtown post office for six decades, and the familiar building still looks much the same as it did when it was new.

For more information please go to: <https://www.boyntonhistory.org/boynton-post-office-history/>



Courtesy Boynton Beach City Library Archives



Photo illustration by Anne Rimler and Peter J. DeCrescenzo



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Archivist's Corner by **Georgen Charnes, Library Archivist, Boynton Beach City Library**
<https://www.boynton-beach.org/city-library> (561) 742-6390 100 E Ocean Ave, Boynton Beach, FL 33435 charnesg@bbfl.us

Dating Maps

I recently inventoried and numbered the map collection and digitized a few that are in good enough condition to run through the scanner and not protected by copyright (they're available for viewing on the website). Since a few of our Boynton Beach maps were noted as "undated," I was pulled down several historical rabbit holes, searching for historical details. Over a couple of weeks, I came up with a useful checklist of dates. Here are a few:

- 1953 - Boynton Beach changed street names to numbers, Green Street renamed Seacrest Blvd
- 1955 - **Bianca's Birds** closes after being open for about five years
- 1958 - **City Hall** moves from Federal Highway to NW 2nd Ave (now Boynton Beach Blvd)
- 1958 - Boynton Junior High built in 1958 (Galaxy Elementary in 1976, was rebuilt and opened in 2013)
- 1959 - Bethesda Memorial Hospital opens on Feb 9
- 1961 - Melton's Autorama closes (it operated from 1 April 1953 to 1 Oct 1961)
- 1962 - SR 804/NW 2nd Ave extended west as New Boynton Rd, northern fork renamed Boynton West Rd
- 1963 - Blvd Manor Nursing Home built adjacent to Bethesda Memorial Hospital
- 1965 - Boynton Beach Florida East Coast Rail station torn down
- 1965 - Northern Pines Mobile Homes Park
- 1967 - **Woolbright Ave bridge** across the Intracoastal canal completed
- 1969 - **Military Trail Golf Course** opened
- 1969 - Southeast Tuberculosis Hospital renamed A.G. Holley State Hospital
- 1970 - Royal Manor Mobile Home Park, Sand & Sea Village, and **Jamaica Bay Mobile Home Park** built
- 1975 - Final portion of I-95 completed through Boynton Beach
- 1983 - SR 804/New Boynton Rd renamed to Boynton Beach Blvd, Boynton West becomes Old Boynton Rd
- 1984 - Several blocks of NE 10th Ave renamed Martin Luther King Jr Blvd

Although not exhaustive, this list has allowed me to date the map on the left side of the image (below) to circa 1968, because Woolbright Ave Bridge is present; but not present are Military Trail Golf Course and Jamaica Bay Mobile Homes. It's still easy to be undecided when dating maps, especially when the maps are incorrect! An example is a map produced by First Federal Savings and Loan Association of Lake Worth at 901 S. Federal Highway (which did not open until 1959) features Bianca's Birds, which closed in 1955, and the Boynton Beach City Hall on Federal Highway, although it moved in 1958. Still, what fun would it be if it were obvious?

