



The Historian

The Newsletter of the Boynton Beach Historical Society

50th

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.

2018 Number 3

March 2018

MEETING NOTICE

Mon, March 19, 2018

NEW LOCATION!

First Presbyterian Church

Fellowship Hall

235 SW 6th Av

Boynton Beach FL 33435

Two blocks west of Seacrest Blvd

Meet & Greet 6:30-6:45p

Program 6:45-8p

All programs are FREE and
OPEN to the Public



Dubois House Atop Mound
[Courtesy R.E. Guerrero]

Rose E Guerrero presents:

Ancient People of South Florida: A Trail of Palm Beach County Heritage

Many are surprised to learn that Palm Beach County's rich history stretches back 12,000 years. This lecture will introduce the county's earliest Native American residents through historic sites and markers from Jupiter to Boca Raton and from West Palm Beach to the Glades.




Drawing, Wood Statue
[Courtesy R.E. Guerrero]



Rose E. Guerrero

Rose E. Guerrero is originally from Miami, Florida, where her love for history was formed. She earned a Bachelor of Arts and Master's degrees in Anthropology from Florida Atlantic University. Rose has worked with several organizations as a preservationist of cultural heritage; co-authored a children's book, *The Misadventures of Sandy Trowels*; and was an educator for PACE Center for Girls – Broward. In 2016 Rose joined the Historical Society of Palm Beach County as Education Coordinator.

SAVE THE DATE for our next program! Mon, Apr 16th @ First Presbyterian Church Fellowship Hall 6:30-8p

Like us on  HistoricBoyntonBeach

Follow us on  @BoyntonHistory

www.boyntonhistory.org

BOYNTON BEACH HISTORICAL SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS--2017-18

OFFICERS [Elected Annually]

President	Randall Gill
1 st Vice President, Programs	Anne Rimler
2 nd Vice President, Membership	Sheila Rousseau Taylor
Recording Secretary	X Ginger Pedersen
Corresponding Secretary	Anne Watts
Treasurer	Frances Tuite McKeral

[Non-Elected]

Editor, <i>The Historian</i>	Voncile Marshall Smith
Archivist/Facebook/Webmaster	Janet DeVries <i>Naugh to 1</i>
Facebook Administrator/Webmaster	Ginger Pedersen

DIRECTORS [3-Year Staggered Terms]

2018	Heidi Bell
2018	Virginia Foot
2019	Tim Bednarz
2019	Judith Merkel Howard
2020	X Steven Anton
2020	Barbara Ready

TRUSTEES [3-Year Staggered Terms]

2018	Diana Dennis
2018	Voncile Marshall Smith
2019	Susan Merkel Shaffer
2019	Virginia Farace
2020	X Janet Hakala
2020	Sarah Thomas Bollenbacher

Our website is www.boyntonhistory.org. The e-mail address is boyntonhistory@gmail.com

Please email inquiries or information to our local address

P.O. Box 12, Boynton Beach, FL 33425.

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
Robert and Christian Oyer Macoviak
Melear Bros., Inc. - Cliff and Rick Melear
Wayne and Eva Brooks Knuth Netzler
Scott and Camilla Smith Richardson
Alexander "Sandy" Simon
Ernest G. Simon
Voncile Marshall Smith
George and Christine Weaver Ternenyi
Dorian Beck Trauger
Charlotte Tatum Weaver
Curtis and Nain Weems Weaver

CORPORATE MEMBERS - 2018

BMark Properties, William and Gaye Weaver
Boynton Memorial Chapel, Stormet Norem
Boynton Woman's Club
Easy Pay Tire Stores, Inc., Doug Besecker
Florida Coalition for Preservation
Scobee-Combs-Bowden Funeral Home & Crematory

2018 MEMBERSHIPS

The following is a list of those who have paid dues since February 1. If you paid prior to that date you should have been listed in the January-February *Historian*. Those who pay after March 1 will be listed in a later edition.

STUDENT MEMBER:

Peter Aispuro

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS:

Heidi Bell
Doris Braunworth
Emme Cortelyou
Ellen Brown Curtin
Sarah (Sally) Dye
Virginia Farace
Dorothy Ferris
Nadine Smith Hartling
Wilise Jones Langford
Denise Smith McCulloch
Rosalie Alvaroe Morrissey
Lyn Smith Orletsky
Nicholas Orletsky
Susan Revie
Susan Merkel Shaffer
Donna Fuller Smith
James Marshall Smith
Jean Ann Thurber
Cynthia Weeks
David Wilkins

FAMILY MEMBERS:

Kurt and Denise Godfrey
Ann Marie and Ron Lind
William and Laura Orlove
Michelle Quigley and Steve Plamann
Barrie Byron and Bit Shaw
Sheldon and Terri Voss

PATRON MEMBERS:

David Blutworth
Jeffrey and Africa Fine
Gayle Kranz and George Greider
Marion Weaver Clark Wester

Welcome to new members Dorothy Ferris and to Ann Marie and Ron Lind. Thanks, too, to all of you who have renewed for this year. We are so pleased you have chosen to join us.

CORRECTION

The January-February *Historian* incorrectly identified Randall Gill as president of the Boca Raton Historical Society. He is not. He is president of the Boynton Beach Historical Society. Your editor apologizes for the error.

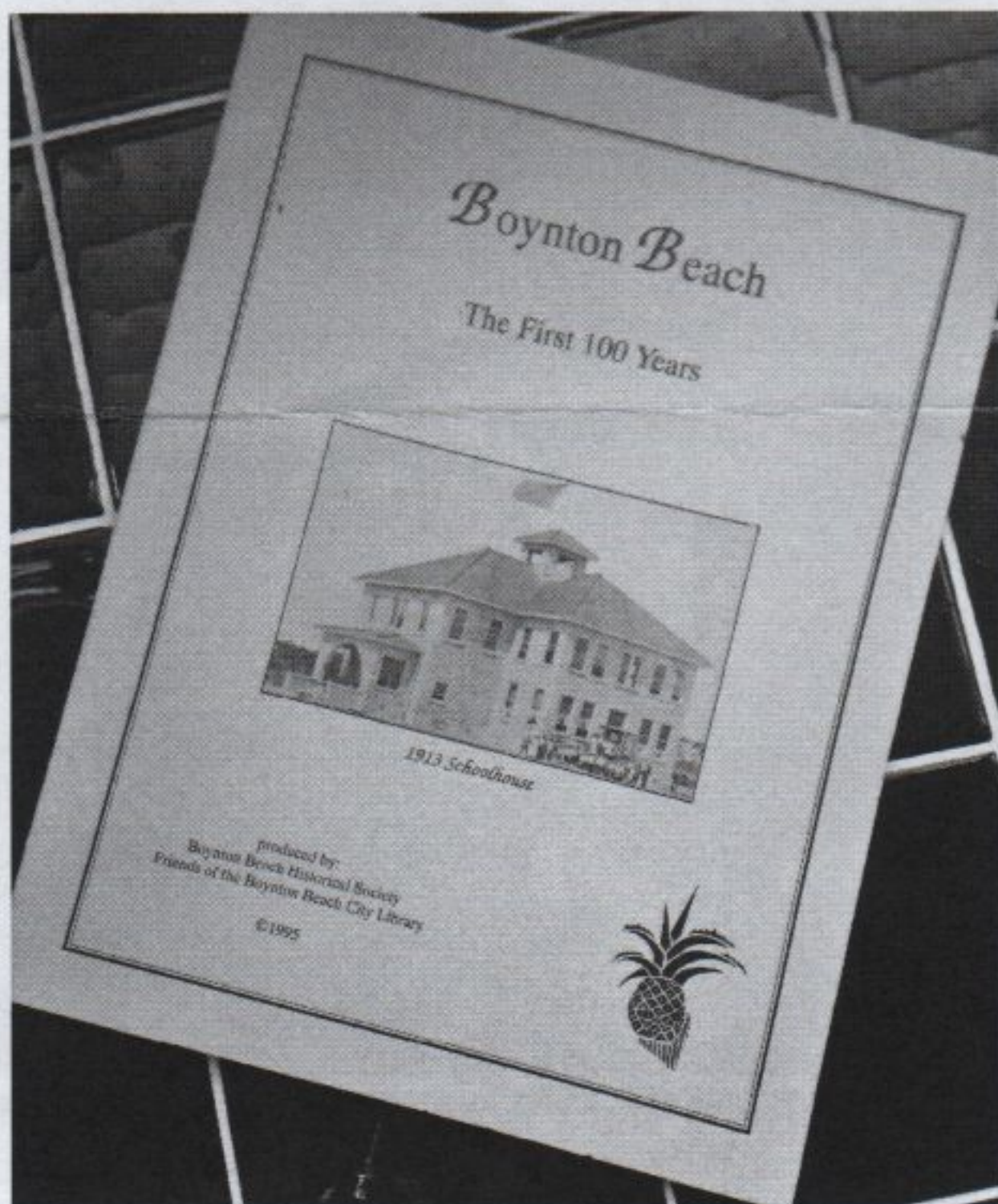
OUR GOLDEN CELEBRATION



The Boynton Beach Historical Society was established in 1968, so in 2018 we are celebrating 50 years of service to the community. To honor our achievements the Board of Directors is planning several events throughout the year.

Most of us like cake, so there will be a number of opportunities to eat what one might call ongoing birthday cake sampling. We had slices of two flavors available at our February program meeting and expect to serve some on other occasions.

But, on a more serious note, we are planning to print a "Memory Book," in which we plan to include pictures, anecdotes, descriptions of events and an updated "timeline." It will be patterned after the "Blue Book" published in 1995 by the Boynton Beach Historical Society in cooperation with Friends of the Boynton Beach City Library entitled Boynton Beach: The First 100 Years.



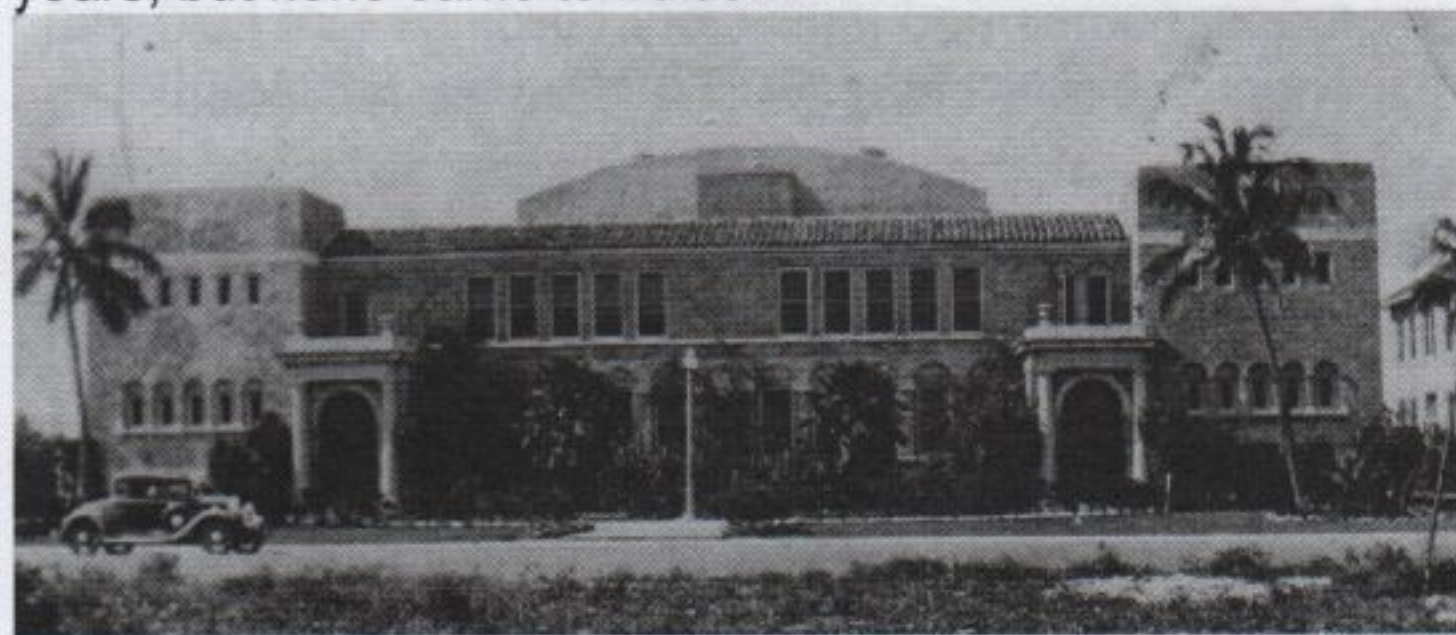
We need the help of all our members and friends in order to accomplish this. Please let us copy your photos, letters, awards or other materials that will help make this book a part of your life that is a part of Boynton history. You can email us or send materials through U.S. mail to Box 12, Boynton Beach 33425 or bring them to us in person at any of our program meetings including the May dinner meeting.

We are planning other aspects to our celebration that we will announce as they approach, but we need extra time to assemble materials for this memory project, and, especially, **WE NEED YOUR HELP** to make it happen.

UPDATE ON HISTORIC 1927 HIGH SCHOOL and SURROUNDING AREA

After years of neglect, the old 1927 Boynton High School appears to be saved. The Boynton Beach Historical Society has struggled for years to save two buildings since the early 1990s when the Palm Beach County School Board deeded the 1913 schoolhouse and the 1927 building to the City of Boynton Beach.

Within a few years of the transfer, the 1913 schoolhouse opened in the early 2000s as the 1913 Schoolhouse Children's Museum [later designated the 1913 Schoolhouse Children's Museum and Learning Center]. But the City displayed indifference to the preservation of the 1927 structure always citing the high estimated cost of renovation as a reason for doing nothing. Several proposals for its reconstruction and use were aired over the years, but none came to fruition.



Historic Boynton High School ca. 1934

Now the City is proposing and seeking funding for a multimillion dollar, 16-acre redevelopment project which includes the old high school, the current library and police station. Plans call for transforming this tract, which is to be known as Town Square, into a town center with new and modern public buildings such as a City Hall and fire station, a 40,000 square foot amphitheater, parks, parking spaces and apartments, a hotel and retail space to be funded through a private/public partnership.



Hotel and retail space proposed for southeast corner of Boynton Beach Boulevard and Seacrest Boulevard [Rendering by E2L Real Estate Solutions]

The City plans to demolish the current library and replace it with a four-story [continued on p.5 – Buildings]

SOME RECOLLECTIONS OF 20th CENTURY LIFE

by Voncile Smith

I marvel at the many changes in life around me that I have been privileged to observe in the many years I have lived in South Florida. This morning, for example, I was discussing earlier years with a person who has lived in the area for more than 40 years, but he could not imagine how anyone was able to exist without air-conditioning. He was astounded when I told him we did not miss what we had never had. In the days prior to air-conditioned homes, we stayed indoors or in shady areas during the hottest part of the day, tried not to overexert physically, and drank an abundance of liquids. I remember sleeping under light cover during nights throughout the summer.

In the 1930s, 40s and 50s the area did not have the many roads, homes and multi-story buildings that hold and radiate heat and may block the prevailing easterly winds we enjoy for much of the year. There were far fewer black asphalt surfaces and far more dirt or shell rock streets and roads in both the rural and town areas. Few buildings exceeded two stories, and houses were built primarily of lumber (often Dade County pine) with high ceilings in the rooms, wooden floors elevated above the ground to allow crawl space beneath the house, and windows placed strategically to encourage cross ventilation. And there was greenery everywhere. With an absence of condominiums, most people lived in houses with ample yards filled with vegetation. Admittedly there were many flowering plants that were exotic, often having arrived from the Caribbean or South America. Dreadful exotics like melaleuca, Australian pine, and water hyacinths fanned across the land, rivers and canals creating problems some of which we experience even today.



Introduced into Florida in 1906, the melaleuca became an extreme invasive species crowding out native vegetation and absorbing a disproportionate amount of water.

The post Depression period and the end of World War II

brought new people into the state where new funding encouraged the rapid building of many single-family homes, often duplicative tract-houses with poured concrete floors and cement block walls, both of which hold moisture and heat. Large sections of land were cleared for housing developments with native palmettos, pines and ground-covers stripped away to be replaced post-construction with limited exotic vegetation, few trees and St. Augustine grass.

Sprinkler systems to water the new vegetation were relatively rare until well into the 1980s and people irrigated with portable sprinklers attached to hoses that users needed to move frequently to reach all the plantings in one's yard. St. Augustine grass likes water.

Many houses in the 1930s and 40s had no bathrooms. People in them relied on outhouses and sponge baths. If a house had indoor plumbing, one bathroom was considered all that was needed and was perhaps all that was affordable. No one had a shower unless it was a hose draped over a tree limb outdoors. Automatic water heaters were rare since they were "wasteful" and expensive to operate. We had a kerosene water heater on our back porch. It was connected to the bath, but not the kitchen and my mother lit it but once a week. Unless I heated water on the kitchen stove, I took cold water baths on days other than Saturday.



The Oyer buildings on East Ocean Avenue were attached to septic tanks until the mid-1990s

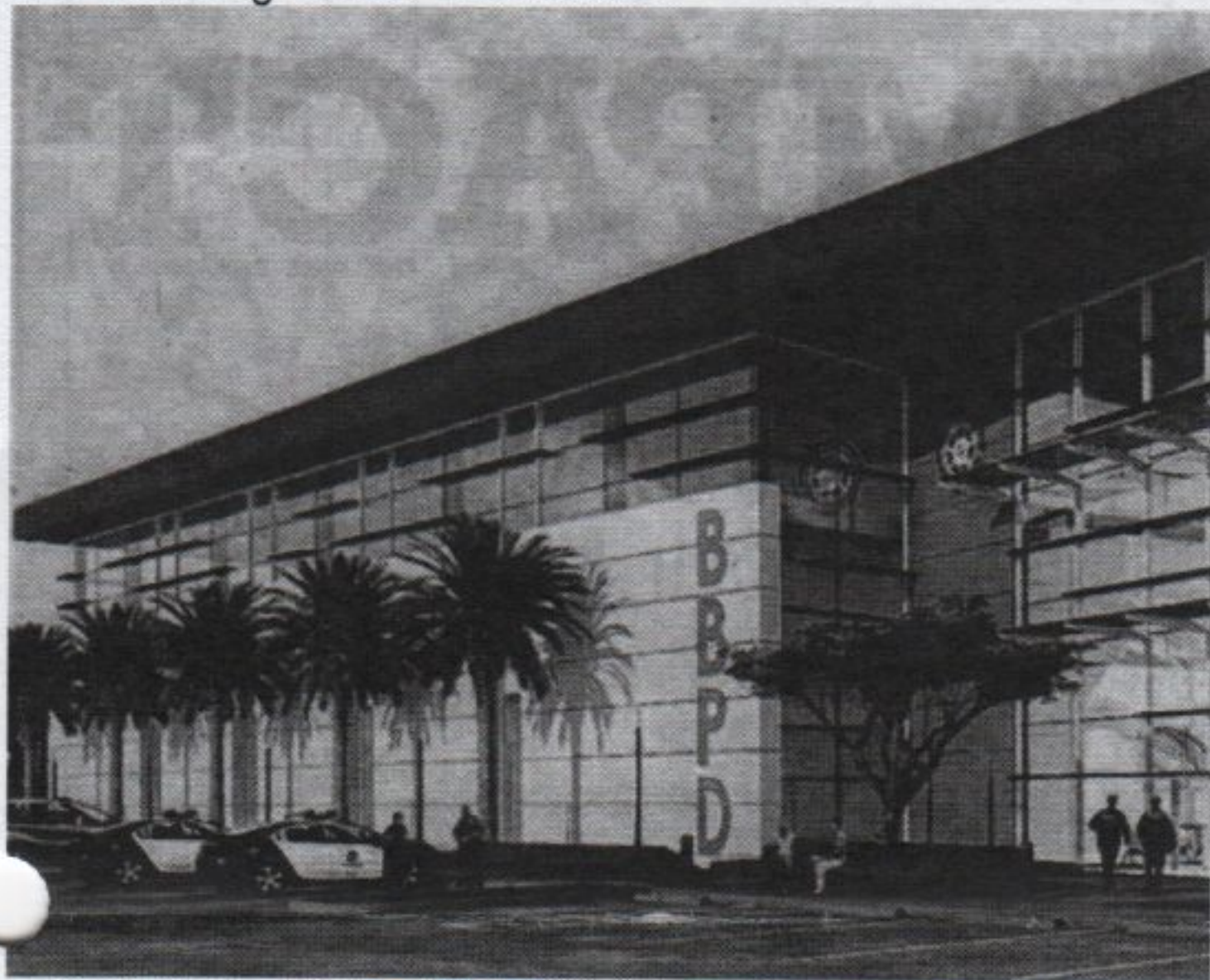
Often towns and cities had no sewer systems, and homes as well as businesses, were connected to septic tanks. Even when sewer lines were installed, replacement of septic tanks was not guaranteed. In the mid-1990s Harvey Oyer was dismayed to discover when he had a plumbing problem that all his commercial buildings on Ocean Avenue in Boynton were still connected to septic tanks. Harvey had been paying the City for sewage disposal for years and did not realize his buildings had never been converted. He got no refund from the City and instead had to pay several thousand dollars for sewer connections.

[Buildings - continued from p.3]

combined City Hall and library. The library has major water intrusion problems and, according to Vice Mayor Justin Katz, architects estimate repair costs would be greater to repair the building and locate the new City Hall at a different location than to tear down the library and build a new one that combines the two facilities.

A new fire station will be erected on NE 1st Street.

The historic high school is now under renovation as a cultural arts and civic center. Estimated cost for renovation is \$10.5 million. The 1913 Schoolhouse Children's Museum and Learning Center will remain.



Rendering by E2L Real Estate Solutions of proposed Police Station

Plans call for the current police station to be razed and a new 53,000-square-foot building to be built at S.E. Gateway Boulevard and High Ridge Road next to Fire Station 5. This proposed relocation has generated some controversy since City Commissioner Joe Casello believes this location is too far from the City's downtown.

JKM Developers and E2L Real Estate Solutions as the private venture in this project will construct 705 residential units in three buildings which may be as high as 8, 6 and 4 stories. Because the developer plans to include workforce housing, the City will allow a height bonus in return. The tallest residential building will have ground floor commercial space and is expected to be built at Boynton Beach Boulevard and N.E. First Street.

A 120-room hotel is proposed at the corner of Boynton Beach Boulevard and Seacrest.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

The next three program meetings of the Boynton Beach Historical Society are all scheduled to be at the First Presbyterian Church Fellowship Hall. Monday, March 19 and Monday, April 16 will be evening presentations at 6:45. Sunday, May 6 is our traditional covered-dish dinner at 5:00 p.m. Look for more details on this last event before we take a summer break in the April and May newsletters. We have our 50th anniversary in mind.

MEMORIAL GIFTS

The Boynton Beach Historical Society has received two memorial gifts to add to our gift projects account.

Our thanks to Dr. Bob Gayler of Phoenix, Maryland for a gift to honor his brother

Winfred Wade Gayler, 1925 – 1944

Valedictorian, Boynton High School

Class of 1943

PFC, United States Army

Killed in Action, Metz, France

And to Dr. Voncile Marshall Smith for a contribution to honor a descendant of 1873 South Florida pioneers and "Mr. Boynton Beach" on his birthday, March 31

Harvey Eugene Oyer, Jr., 1926 - 2010

Boynton High School, Class of 1944

FLORIDA STILL HAS CATTLE DRIVES and RANCHES

A recent email from Harvey Oyer, III, indicates he plans to ride in the annual cattle drive in Immokalee on March 10, moving 200 head of cattle. All the riders are either Seminole Indians or multi-generation Floridians.

It's the annual Immokalee Cattle Drive and Jamboree, a day-long festival of the Immokalee Pioneer Museum at Roberts Ranch. In Collier County around Immokalee real cowboys on real ranches are working real cattle every day, all day.

Clint Raulerson is the cattle-drive boss. He's a 5th generation cattleman. "I work now for a ranch owned by the granddaughter of the man my grandfather worked for. I ride the same ground my father and grandfather rode. I'm on horseback every day before daylight. We move cattle from pasture to pasture, load 'em on trucks and take 'em to market in Okeechobee or Arcadia. I look after several ranches, a little over 2000 head of cattle."



Cowboys in Immokalee saddle up.

[Photo by Bernard W Moore courtesy The News-Press]

Boynton Beach History Society Membership

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

Name _____
Street _____
City _____
State/Zip _____
E-mail _____
Phone # (____) _____

Membership Year is Jan 1 to Dec 31.

Dues are not pro-rated.

Membership Expiration Date on mailing label.

Complete above and mail with payment to:

Boynton Beach Historical Society

PO Box 12

Boynton Beach FL 33425-0012

Or pay online using PayPal at

www.boyntonhistory.org/membership/

Indicate Membership Type:

- ____ Individual \$25
____ Family \$35
____ Patron \$50
____ Corporate \$100
____ Student \$10
____ Life (onetime payment) \$500

Thank you for your support!



Boynton Beach Historical Society
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