



The Historian

The Newsletter of the Boynton Beach Historical Society

The mission of the Boynton Beach Historical Society is to collect, preserve, and promote the rich history and heritage of Boynton Beach, Florida, by educating the public on the importance of understanding historical knowledge. The Historical Society maintains a collection of archival property and acts as a resource and living repository for local traditions and history through community engagement.

**Recipient of the 2021 Judge James R Knott Historical Contribution Award
Recipient of the Schoolhouse Children’s Museum 2023 Spark Award**

November 2024

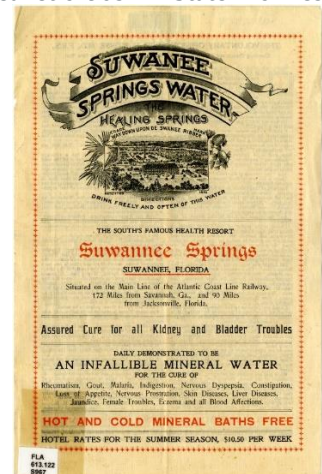
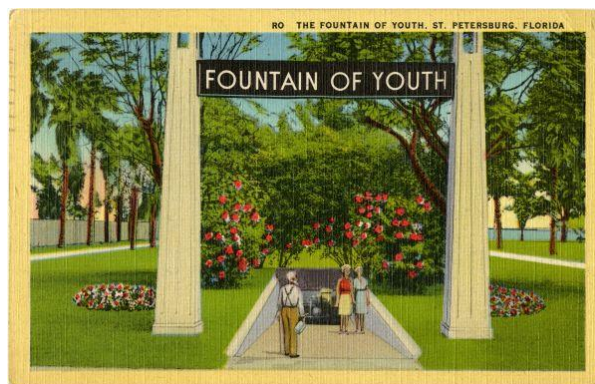
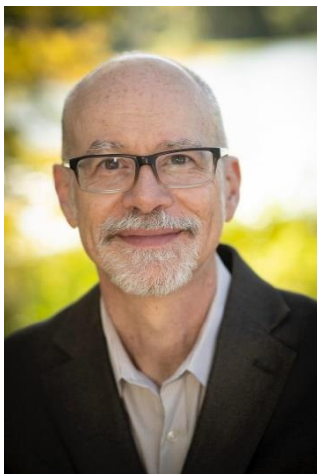
***Florida’s Healing Waters: Gilded Age Mineral Springs,
Seaside Resorts, and Health Spas*
Monday, November 25, 2024 @ 7-8pm Eastern via Zoom**

For emails in our files, check your inbox for an invitation from BBHSPrograms@gmail.com. Remember to set reminders in your calendar. If your email isn’t already on file with us, simply send a request to join to BBHSPrograms@gmail.com and we’ll send you an invitation.

Author **Rick Kilby** explores the Victorian belief that water was the source of healing and rehabilitation, tracing the history of “taking the waters” from its early origins in Europe. Nineteenth-century Americans traveled from afar to bathe in the outdoors and soak up the warm climate of Florida. With more than 1,000 freshwater springs, 1,300 miles of coastline, and 30,000 lakes, water has been an abundant resource in the Sunshine State throughout its history.

Orlando-based writer and graphic designer **Rick Kilby** is the author of “*Florida’s Healing Waters: Gilded Age Mineral Springs, Seaside Resorts, and Health Spas*” (University Press of Florida, 2020), which received the silver medal for Florida nonfiction from the Florida Book Awards and the Florida Historical Society’s Stetson Kennedy Award. His first book, “*Finding the Fountain of Youth: Ponce de León and Florida’s Magical Waters*” (University Press of Florida, 2013), won a Florida Book Award in the Visual Arts category. In the decade since his first book was published, Kilby has given presentations at museums, libraries, conferences, and even on a boat in the St. Johns River.

L: Rick Kilby. Courtesy R Kilby. C: St Petersburg, FL PostCard c1947. FL State Archives. R: Ad Leaflet c1905. FL State Archives



All Programs of the Boynton Beach Historical Society are FREE and OPEN to the Public
Boynton Beach Historical Society The Historian November 2024



Boynton Beach Historical Society

~ Since 1968 ~

2024-2025 Board of Directors

OFFICERS Elected Annually

President – Anne Rimler

1st Vice President, Programs – Angela F Budano

2nd Vice President, Membership – Sheila Rousseau Taylor

Secretary – John Shelly

Treasurer – Robert Taylor

TRUSTEES 3-Year Term

2025 – Virginia Farace/Barbara Ready

2025 – Adam Rousseau

2026 – Linda Allen

2026 – Nora Gallagher Michuda

2027 – Donna Artes

2027 – Chadda Shelly

Non-Elected

Editor, *The Historian* – Anne Rimler

Archivist/Facebook/Webmaster – Janet Naughton

Facebook Admin/Webmaster – Ginger Pedersen

Promotions/Publicity/YouTube – Nora Gallagher Michuda

Boynton Beach Historical Society

PO Box 12, Boynton Beach, FL 33425

We are on the web www.boyntonhistory.org, and on Facebook at HistoricBoyntonBeach. Questions or comments:

Programs bbhsprograms@gmail.com

Membership bbhsmembership@gmail.com.

The Historian

The Historian, the newsletter of the Society, is sent six times a year, between October and April, to dues-paid members (one per paid membership). Previous issues are on our website. If you would prefer to receive *The Historian* via email, let us know by emailing bbhsmembership@gmail.com. Benefits include savings on postage & printing costs, access when you're away, eco-friendly, arrives sooner than print, and links in articles are active.

Become a Member or Renew your Dues

Membership runs Jan 1 to Dec 31; dues expire annually on Dec 31 (except for Life Memberships). To pay securely online via PayPal, go to the **Membership** tab at our website www.boyntonhistory.org. To pay by check, complete the membership form and mail your check to our PO Box. Our Program Season runs Oct to Apr. Thank you for your support!

Historical Society Bvls www.boyntonhistory.org/membership/

2024-2025 Season Monday Evenings via Zoom

Nov 25, 2024 – Florida's Healing Waters, Rick Kirby

Sat, Jan 11 – FL Highwaymen Art Show @Arts & Cultural Ctr

Feb 24, 2025 – Florida Humanities Florida Talks Presentation

Mar 24, 2025 – Florida Humanities Florida Talks Presentation

Zoom Program Meetings are Recorded

Find us on YouTube at "BBHS Programs"



The following represents our Membership Roll to date & Dues received between 10/01 and 11/08/2024:

Thank You to our Life Members

Vickie & Anthony **Barbar**

Doug & Ruth **Besecker, EasyPay Tire**

Michael & Gloria **Bowden**

Candy & Doug **Brueggemann**

Linda & Mike **Callaway**

Robert and Jeanne **Gayler**

M Randall **Gill**

Robert & Carrie **Parker Hill**

Robert & Christian **Oyer Macoviak**

Cliff & Rick **Melear, Melear Bros**

Wayne & Eva Brooks **Knuth Netzler**

Susan **Oyer**

Scott & Camilla **Smith Richardson**

Anne C **Rimler**

Sandy A **Simon Jr**

Voncile **Marshall Smith**

Robert & Sheila **Rousseau Taylor**

George & Christine **Weaver Ternenyi**

Mary **Burns** & Thomas **Warnke**

William & Gaye **Weaver**

Marion **Weaver Wester**

Elsie **Winchester**

Thank You to our Corporate Sponsors

Donald & Regina **Day, Delray Awning**

Laura **Hinzman, Scheurer's Chocolates**

Scobee-Combs-Bowden Funeral Home & Crematory

Dan & Lisa Ames **Suiter**

Thank You to our Patrons!

Charles & Mary **Bilthuis**

Sarah & Ron **Bollenbacher**

Marcia **Crossman**

Gayle **Kranz**

Charles & Elizabeth **LaBella**

Alan **Molle**

Ward & Martha **Parker**

James & Edith **Bennett Pitts**

Billie Jo **Swilley**

Anne **Watts**

Sarah **Williams**

Suzy **Winchester**

Membership Renewals Thank You for Your Support!

Barbara **Berry**

Nora **Gallagher Michuda**

Ron & Sarah **Thomas Bollenbacher**

Bill & Laura **Orlove**

Marjorie **Bynum**

Sandie **Pike**

Donald & Regina **Day, Delray Awning**

Mary **Scheitler**

Diana **Dennis**

Donna **Fuller Smith**

Ann **Gill**

Jerry **Wilcox**

Richard & Judith **Merkel Howard**

Robert **Wilt**

Carol **Kuenzel**

A big SHOUT OUT to our Newest Members Welcome!

Dolores **Erickson**

Kirk & Betty **Kahler**

Boynton Beach Historical Society Notes with Sadness

Capt. **Richard (Rick) E. Ross, Jr**, husband of the Schoolhouse Children's Museum Executive Director **Suzanne Ross**, passed away June 1, 2024.

Former member and friend of the Historical Society, **Jane M Burke**, passed away Nov 7, 2024.

Our sincerest condolences to family and friends.



The Historian

Boynton Beach Historical Society 2024 Strategic Planning Session

On Friday, November 1, 2024, the Boynton Beach Historical Society held a Strategic Planning Session. In attendance were **Anne Rimler, Angela Budano, Sheila Rousseau Taylor, John Shelly, Virginia Farace, Bob Taylor, Adam Rousseau, Barbara Ready, Donna Artes, and Randall Gill**. Invited but not in attendance were **Linda Allen, Nora Michuda, Janet Naughton, and Chadda Shelly**. Our thanks to **Kelly Armstead** Division Director, **April Cheeseboro** Supervisor and **Tia Wright** Specialist from the Boynton Beach Arts and Cultural Center for allowing us to hold our Session at the historic Boynton Woman's Club.

The purpose of the meeting was to refocus, reenergize, and realign leadership and to determine priorities and the accompanying action steps to be taken by leadership. The Planning Team discussed the following goals.

1. Define a **mission statement** to form the basis for the future direction of the Historical Society.
2. Provide education on the **City Library Archives** and the Historical Society Collection held there.
3. Review the Historical Society's **social media presence**.
4. Identify and participate in **additional opportunities** that encourage community engagement.
5. Review **Historical Society governance** and encourage the involvement of new Board members.

We have already completed the first two: A mission statement was agreed upon and will be approved at the November Board Meeting. Our mission appears on page 1 and will be included in Historical Society materials and on social media. This month's Historian also contains additional information from **Jacob Rabinowitz**, City Library Archivist and our October speaker, about the City Library Archives (see page 4).

We also discussed dues and are pleased to announce that we are holding fast to our current dues amounts at this time. We offer six levels (Individual \$25, Family \$35, Patron \$50, Corporate \$100, Student \$10 and Life \$500) and will continue to offer the Buy-One-Give-One Special. Best bargain in Palm Beach County!

Over the next several months, the Board will document ways to achieve the other goals. Projects will be presented to the Board of Directors for approval and work will begin. We will follow up on our progress in future issues of the Historian. The Board left the meeting with an injection of enthusiasm and energy, and a renewed focus on the future of the Historical Society. We invite our members and friends to join us. Stayed tuned for more on volunteer opportunities!



Clockwise from left: V Farace, B Taylor, A Rousseau, B Ready, D Artes, R Gill, A Rimler. Strategic Planning Session. 11/01/2024. Below: Boynton Woman's Club. c. 2020





The Historian

November 2024 "Archives & the Anatomy of a Finding Aid" Presentation Follow-Up

Jacob Rabinowitz, Librarian/Archivist at the Boynton Beach City Library Local History Archives, offered a richly detailed presentation last month about searching the content of the Archives. If you were unable to attend, a recording of his presentation is available on our YouTube channel, along with past presentations, at www.youtube.com/@bbhsprograms5142.

Mr. Rabinowitz has provided follow-up information and links to satisfy one's curiosity. There is extensive fascinating content to be reviewed, including contributions by Historical Society members. If you haven't already, please take the time to take advantage of this wonderful resource.

For searchable **digitized newspapers and publications collection** that span over a century of local newspapers (including the *Boynton Beach Star*, *Lake Worth Herald*, *Boynton Bugle*, etc.)

<http://archive.boyntonlibrary.org/jsp/RcWebBrowseCollections.jsp>

For a **digital photograph collection**, all the images are generously tagged and there are thousands of photos from the late 1800's up to present of Boynton Beach, PBC, and South Florida. Loads of great things here!

<https://boyntonbeachhistory.omeka.net/>

The **physical collection finding aid listings** has all the physical materials housed in the Archives which are available to the public by appointment. <https://www.boynton-beach.org/494/Collections>

And if that isn't enough to get you started, the **contact form** to get in touch with Mr. Rabinowitz can be accessed via this link:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfZQaZ0mOKDaRCnscNzq-xRHOcsJulvtzX7KEca8rRk5WbTjQ/viewform>

Please visit the archive from the comfort of your home or schedule an appointment to peruse in person for research purposes or simply to learn more about the history of our City. We can attest that just visiting the links will lead one down an intriguing journey sparking perhaps new interests or gaining a fuller appreciation of the lives lived in the past that led to present day.

Enjoy, and you will!

Boynton Beach Garden Club Meeting Tuesday, November 19, 2024, 1pm

www.boyntonbeachgardenclub.org

The Boynton Beach Garden Club extends an invitation to Historical Society members to a free tour of **Mounds Botanical Gardens** in West Palm Beach. The group will meet at the Mounds, 531 N Military Trl, West Palm Beach, 33415. Reservations are required - contact Pat Inturrisi at 561-281-6588. Looking ahead: **Fashion show** is March 6, 2025.



Boynton Beach Woman's Club Meeting Thursday, November 21, 2024, 12p noon

www.boyntonwomansclub.com

The Boynton Beach Woman's Club extends an invitation to Historical Society members to attend the club's next meeting. The guest speaker will be **Richard Sartory, Community Affairs Coordinator with the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office**. The meeting will be held at the historic Woman's Club of Boynton Beach, 1010 Federal Hwy, Boynton Beach 33435. A light lunch is available for \$10. More info & to reserve, email bwc1909@gmail.com.

Looking ahead: Past President's tea will be held on December 5 @2pm - and - **100th Birthday Bash** open house will be March 22, 2025 @4-9pm.



Boynton Beach Historical Society Membership Form

Select One: ___ **New** Membership or ___ **Renewal**.

My Name _____

Street _____

City _____

State/Zip _____

E-mail _____

Phone # _____

New Member? Welcome! How did you hear about us?

Select Membership Type:

- ___ **Individual \$25**
- ___ **Family \$35**
- ___ **Patron \$50**
- ___ **Corporate \$150**
- ___ **Student* \$10** (with a valid student ID)
- ___ **Life** (one-time payment) **\$500**

Special Offer: Give a free one-year membership to a friend!
 Buy One. Give One. BOGO! **Mail with payment to:**
 Boynton Beach Historical Society
 PO Box 12
 Boynton Beach FL 33425-0012
 Pay via PayPal at www.boyntonhistory.org/membership/ and
 send an email to BBHSMembership@gmail.com with your
 BOGO recipient's info.

Select Gift type and indicate amount:

___ **Gift** ___ **In Honor** ___ **In Memory** \$ _____

For(name): _____

The Society is a 501(c)(3) Organization; dues are tax deductible. Membership year runs Jan 1 to Dec 31.
THANK YOU!

Did you already renew membership? THANK YOU! In case you forgot to provide your BOGO recipient, email their contact information to BBHSMembership@gmail.com.

Are you a Life member? THANK YOU! You are eligible to give a one-year membership too! Email their contact information to BBHSMembership@gmail.com

I'm taking advantage of the BOGO Special Offer! Please send a free one-year membership to:

BOGO Recipient's Name _____

BOGO Recipient's Street _____

City _____

State/Zip _____

BOGO Recipient's E-mail _____

BOGO Recipient's Phone # _____

THANK YOU!



The Historian

The Rousseau Subsistence Rifle

Part III

Daniel R Suiter



Left: Rousseau Rifle, detail, c.1830. Center: L to R, Ruth Lacey, Verna Rousseau, Rose Murray, Alice Rousseau (Verna's sister) at newly dredged Boynton inlet, c.1920s. Right: Ivan Rousseau on motorcycle, brother of Verna H. Rousseau and son of Robert H. Rousseau and Wilda-Shipp Rousseau. Photos Courtesy - DR Suiter

*From 2000 to 2003, **John N. Suiter** (1931-2008), son of **Verna H. Rousseau** (sixth of seven children, born in Boynton in 1907 to **Robert H. Rousseau** and **Wilda Shipp-Rousseau**), wrote 36 short stories of life growing up in Palm Beach County beginning in the 1930s. The following is an excerpt from one of his short stories. Parts 1 and 2 appear in the March and April 2024 issues of *The Historian*.*

Although this musket is in poor condition now, it has a lot of colorful history. This musket was brought by the Rousseau family to north Florida circa 1830. The musket came into my possession about 1958 by way of my mother, **Verna E. Rousseau**, grandmother of **William J.** and **Daniel R. Suiter**. Most families had a subsistence rifle at that time for protection and mostly to kill wild game to supplement their food supply, which was meager on the frontier at that time.

When my uncle **Ivan Rousseau** found out in about 1962 that I was in possession of this rifle, he gave me a little background about it. He said it was used against the Native Americans during the Seminole wars of the late 1830s, but that is probably speculation. I did find a record of one of my ancestors that was a 6-month enlistment during the late 1830s in that war, and since 6-month enlistments were expected to furnish their own weapon, he no doubt carried this rifle. My uncle also told me it was used in the Civil War at the Battle of Natural Bridge (sometimes called the Battle of the Youngsters and the Oldsters) near Tallahassee, Florida. Tallahassee was the only southern capital that had not fallen to union forces during that war, so the union army sent a contingency of troops to take that city. Knowing that most or all able-bodied men were away in the Confederate Army, the Union did not send a large force. Word was received in Tallahassee that this military unit was on the way. The people of Tallahassee quickly put together a rag tag army of elderly men and young boys. Since I had ancestors living in the Tallahassee area at this time, no doubt one of them was in this unit and carrying this rifle. The southern rag tag army ambushed and defeated the union military unit at a place called Natural Bridge. Whether this rifle killed or wounded a union soldier is pure speculation.

My grandfather, **Robert H. Rousseau**, who was born in 1870, also told me of using this rifle to kill wild game when his father sent him out to do so. One cardinal rule was that he better not waste powder or shot. One system was when he found a covey of quail, he followed them until they were running in single file. He would squat and fire, killing all or most of the covey. I used this technique several times myself in the 1940s, and it worked well. The most I ever got was seven with one shot.

My grandfather sometimes went to a turkey roost. He would hide well and the turkeys would come to roost at dusk. He would wait until he could barely make out their silhouette, as they didn't like to flush after they were settled in for the night. He shot the lowest turkey on the roost first, so he would drop to the ground without falling through the other birds. If he wounded him and he flapped, the other birds would flush. He usually got one or two birds, with the most being 5 at one hunt. He also killed deer, hogs, raccoons, and many other animals and birds with this musket. All of this was done for food, with no sporting activity involved.