

Monthly Publication from the Zephyrhills Historical Association

Volume 15 – Number 2

February 2013

The next Zephyrhills Historical Association meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 5<sup>th</sup> at the Zephyrhills Depot Museum, 39110 South Avenue. The business meeting is scheduled for 6 p.m. and the program is at 7 p.m. Refreshments will be served.

## Speakers



Our speaker for the February meeting was Norm Pricher, retired CPA and a 1954 graduate of ZHS. He told several humorous stories involving members of our family, none of which were factual. His one true story of the night involved an incident that occurred on the way to a high school football game in which Coach Clements was a major player. We had a great deal of fun listening.

Our speakers for the March meeting will be Carolyn and Billy Dean. Carolyn currently works for the City of Zephyrhills, but is quite close to retirement. Her brother works in the maintenance department for The District School Board of Pasco County. Both are graduates of Zephyrhills High School. They will be talking about their younger years spent here, and particularly about the dairy which was a big part of their family's life and the life of our community. We look forward to having them with us. It promises to be an informative time. Please come join us!



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My email address is on the opening page

#### ZHA Mission Statement

The mission of the Zephyrhills Historical Association is to research, gather, and share local historical information with all generations, through our literature, programs, and scholarships, and to volunteer assistance to the Zephyrhills Depot Museum and WWII Barracks Museum.

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**Member Spotlight**  
***Coach John and Beanie Clements***

By Clereen Brunty

At our February meeting, Coach John Clements and his beautiful wife, Beanie, were inducted as Honorary Members of the Zephyrhills Historical Association. The large crowd of members and guests welcomed them with a yummy cake displaying their names. As many of you know, the Clements have been icons in the Zephyrhills area for many years due to all their love and support to Zephyrhills High School and the



community. Here is a little background on them from an interview Madonna Wise and I did a couple of years ago in connection with the Centennial Celebration.

John F. Clements--born January 20, 1920 in Baxley, Georgia--a country boy who retains the warmth and down-home caring of his roots. When John was five years old his father passed away, and his family relocated to Bunnell, Florida in the early 1930's.

A man of strong family values, Clements and his beautiful wife, Marvene (better known as Beanie), will be celebrating their 70<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary this year!!! They have two children, John Clements, Jr. of Zephyrhills and Diane Clements Capsas of Baton Rouge, La. as well as two grandchildren, Johnny III and Kim McGavern Roth.

Along the way, Johnny became a professional league baseball player before assuming a teaching/coaching position at Zephyrhills High School. He had affiliations with the Cardinals, Phillies, and the Tampa Smokers.

Zephyrhills knows his name from the "John F. Clements Field," on County Road 54 East, home baseball field of the ZHS Bulldogs. The field dedication comes from not only his extraordinary humanity but an unparalleled coaching record! In 1988 Clements' record was recognized by the FHSAA with a plaque for being one of only five high school coaches in the USA with a winning record of more than 400 games.

**Shirts & Caps**, founded in Zephyrhills in 1982, is now an internet-based national supplier of custom screen printed t-shirts. Still family owned and operated; find us online at [www.ClassB.com](http://www.ClassB.com)!

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Consider...Zephyrhills Football from 1948-61; 1966-67 (record 57-94); baseball 1949-1972 (record 419-127), basketball 1947-1955; and track 1949-1952.

Coach Clements was a Senior Class Sponsor at ZHS for 20 years, a Driver’s Education teacher, a Baseball Coach for many years, a Red Cross Swim Instructor and Facilitator of the Summer Swim Program for 15 years at the infamous City Pool next to Zephyr Park. Many readers will remember the wonderful memories of going to the City Pool.

Zephyrhills provided an exemplary swimming program that certified 500 youth in Red Cross Swimming every summer. Impressive by today’s standards, but this is actual data from the 1950’s and 1960’s. Their team included the legendary Marianne Simons as a swimming instructor and a variety of ZHS coaches including Coach Clements and Coach McKinney. Kids literally came from a five county area to the program—children from Brooksville to Lakeland.



How did this begin? John Phillips, City Manager, in the 1950’s heard that John and Beanie had been lifeguards and recruited them. They managed the pool for 15 years and that would add up to 7500 children learning to swim in the combined levels. Coach said



*“We had kids coming from everywhere and we divided the group up in order to teach them all...beginners, juniors, intermediates, junior life saving, senior life saving and survival swimming. In addition to this, one night per week, we had adult classes.”*

Folks may not know that the Clements also managed all of the cleaning and maintenance of the pool. Beanie said, *“I’ll never forget the big hole you went down and there was an old rickety ladder...often*

*there were snakes down in there. John had to mix up a big vat of chlorine and go through several processes to keep the pool clean, draining it once a week. We would have the state inspector come around and we always passed.”*

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John Phillips, City Manager requested that we fill the pool at night so we wouldn't take the water pressure away from the people who lived nearby.

The recently published book, *Zephyrhills From A to Z*, details that Roosevelt's New Deal WPA funds built the state-of-the art pool which opened June 1, 1939. Admission to the pool was five cents and for five cents more a towel was included. The Clements said the admission never went higher than a quarter. For an additional ten cents more, you could sign up for swimming lessons. The configuration/construction of the pool was quite efficient—a baby pool was available for young children, sloping from 8 inches to 17 inches; the main pool had a gradual incline to ten foot deep with two diving boards...one stationary board and a ten foot high diving board. The VFW Hall served as the dressing room area.

So many stories about the lifeguards and various folks! Several ZHS students /graduates manned the chair including Mary Lou "Cookie" Massey who was their most notable lifeguard serving for many years; she went on to become a mermaid at Weeki Wachee Springs. Others mentioned were: Casey Kearse, J.W. Wells, Clayton Stokes and Glenn Miller, and ZHS teachers such as Bill Kustes and Ann Crawford were lifeguards as well. The Clements credit the dedicated staff for the remarkable safety record of no serious injuries during their fifteen years of operating the pool.



Coach John & Beanie Clements, Grand Marshalls, Founders Day Parade

Stories, however, were abundant and some of their favorites were the tales of kids who snuck in for night swims by climbing over the chain link fence. John related the account of Floyd Kersey, Ernie Peeples, and Bob Howell creeping over the fence one particularly dark evening. As the tale goes...just as one of them was about to jump off the high dive, Ernie said, *maybe we better check to make sure there is water?* Sure enough, the pool had been drained—bone dry. *Thank heavens for the intuition of Ernie!* Beanie said, *can you imagine...wouldn't that have been awful?*

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On any given summer day, approximately 100 children were swimming throughout the day. Everyone agreed the snack bar was exceptional and Beanie said that was in part because she is a chocoholic and kept an ample supply on hand. Interestingly enough, the Clements also did bookkeeping for the kids! Children would bring in a small amount of money and they kept an account of how much each spent and how much was left. Judi Dunnigan, daughter of Bill Kustes would help Beanie in the snack bar while her dad watched the swimmers. All in all, the pool was a babysitter in so many ways!

Daughter, Diane, ZHS class of 1965, summed it up best: *“My life pretty much began at that point. Swimming aimlessly and playing childhood games could become monotonous without some kind of structure. The swimming lessons at the pool gave us all a practical and challenging change of pace and something to look forward to. One of the most enjoyable and defining parts of my life revolved around the swimming pool.”*

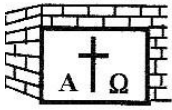
Welcome, Coach and Beanie to the Zephyrhills Historical Association...

**A Personal Note From the Desk of the Editor**

The direction of my life was most influenced by my two wonderful parents, Otis M. and Ellene Thompson Pricher, but my life was also molded by some other terrific individuals from our community. I have mentioned two of those in this spot before, Bill Kustes and Dick Tucker. I feel a great debt of gratitude for their friendship and guidance across the years. Likewise with John and Beanie Clements, who have always been there with a kind word of encouragement. These two people have contributed so much to our community because of their caring spirit. They have always exhibited an interest in all people with whom they come in contact. This is the basis of their great influence in my opinion. When you are greeted by either of them you feel important, and it does not appear to me to matter to them how important the rest of the world thinks you are. You're important to THEM. This ability is among their greatest gifts and so much like what I have read about Jesus. These folks have always walked the walk, and I admire them very much.

I did not have my brother's good fortune. I was not very good in baseball, so I was only coached by John Clements in one sport, football, for one season, 1966, but he's been my coach in so many ways my entire life. It should be obvious to the reader that I love these two people very much. Last June at the ZHS Alumni and Friends Luncheon Dave Walters, of the Zephyrhills News, took this picture of Coach and I. It's stored in my "Treasures" folder, and I share it here.



<p style="text-align: center;"><b>CornerStone</b></p> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;">  <div style="margin-left: 10px;"> <p style="font-size: 1.2em; font-weight: bold;"><i>Baptist Church</i></p> <p>7th Street &amp; 8th Avenue</p> </div> </div> <p style="text-align: center;">Come be our special guest</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Coffee &amp; Donuts 10:30***** Worship 11:00 A.M. and 6:00 P.M.</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em; text-align: center;">Dr. Neal Resue—Pastor * NealDoe1956@verizon.net</p>	<p>In Memory of</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.1em;">Ryals Furniture Exchange</p> <p>And Great Parents</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.1em;">Powell &amp; Maude Ryals</p> <p>From son James</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.1em;">God Bless America</p>
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WWII BARRACKS MUSEUM



Member John Bolender did another bang-up job! Those of you who missed it be sure to put it on your calendars for next year.

**7th Annual  
BIVOUCAC & BARRACKS**  
Benefiting the WWII Barracks Museum

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**SCHEDULE OF EVENTS**

**FRIDAY**  
1:00 Weapons Demonstration

**SATURDAY**  
12:00 Weapons Demonstration  
2:00 Battle Re-Enactment

**SATURDAY EVENING**  
USO Show at AMVETS Post 550  
6:00 Doors Open  
7:30 USO Show

**SUNDAY**  
8:00 "In the Field"  
Church Service  
11:00 Weapons Demonstration  
Noon Battle Re-Enactment



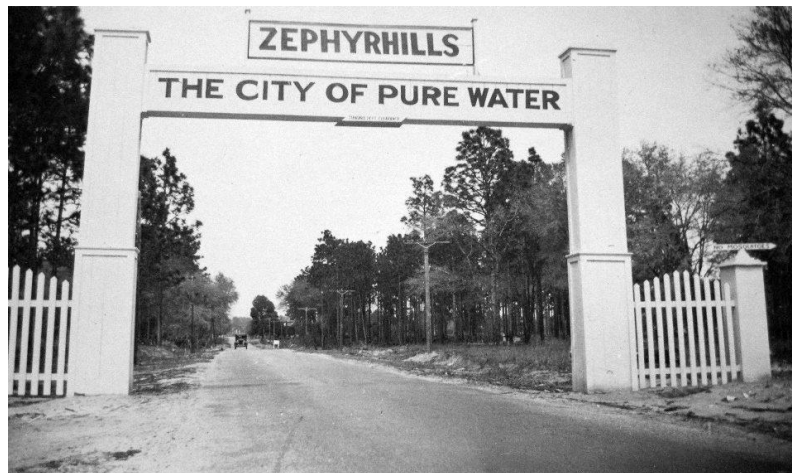
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**ZHA Represented at Annual Bivouac & Barracks Event**

Members of the Zephyrhills Historical Association set up a Gift Shop at the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual WWII Bivouac & Barracks Event February 15-17<sup>th</sup>. Items sold included train whistles, bandanas, rulers, lantern pencil sharpeners, sunglasses, lanyards, centennial calendars, Zephyrhills A to Z books and several donated books of various genre including Presidents of the past and their family lives. All the money collected goes to the Rosemary Trottman and ZHA Scholarship Funds. Pictured are Patty Thompson, Margaret Seppanen, Jo White, Clereen Brunty, Betty O'Dell, Ken Cummings, Jerry Pricher. Not pictured is Margie Partain, who was a big part of making this possible but did not happen to be there when the pictures were taken.



**South Gate**



This picture was posted on Facebook recently by Jeff Miller. It is NOT the same as a postcard photo he showed us, and it includes a small sign on top of the right-hand post reading “NO MOSQUITOES.” Does anyone know anything about this photo?

<p><b>Rinnai</b></p> <p><b>BAHR'S</b></p> <p>Lenny Bahr Kevin Bahr Owners</p> <p><b>PROPANE GAS AND A/C INC.</b></p> <p>4441 Allen Rd. Zephyrhills, FL 33541 Ph. (813) 782-5013 bahrs.ac@tampabay.rr.com • www.bahrspropanegasandac.com</p> <p><b>Amana</b> SALES AND SERVICE</p> <p>Sales Service Installation</p> <p>15229 US Hwy 301 Dade City, FL 33523 Ph. (352) 567-7678</p>	<p>Cutting Edge Beauty Salon</p> <p>Joni Gauger Stylist / Owner</p> <p>6132 Ft. King Rd. Zephyrhills, Florida 33542</p> <p>813-782-4001 or 813-469-3437</p> 
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