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The Spanish River Papers
1987



OLD CITY HALL, HOME OF BOCA RATON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Jeanne Nixon Baur, Artist

A report to the membership of
Boca Raton Historical Society, Inc.

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The Spanish River Papers

1987-1988

VOL. XVI

CLARENCE GEIST AND BOCA RATON

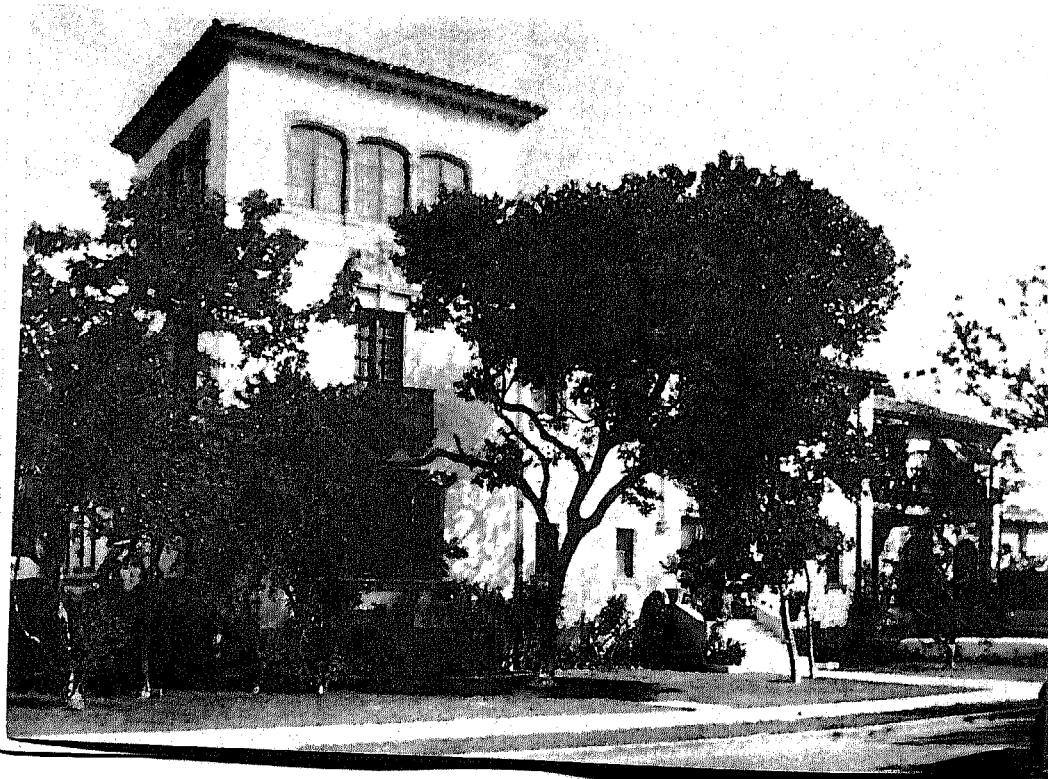
Over the years any number of stories have been told about Clarence H. Geist and his Boca Raton Club. In general they paint a picture of a loud, vulgar, and impolite man who treated servants, staff, and club members with equal contempt and ran the club as a medieval fiefdom. Nonetheless, family members, friends, and others tell a very different story. While it is true that he had little formal education, leaving his Indiana farm home as a very young man to find his fortune in the west, and like many other self-made men, tended to have great self-confidence and as such to be rather domineering, he was also polite, considerate, and kind as an individual.

In searching for the source of the legends of the "Crude Geist" all evidence seems to point to the work of Theodore Pratt. Pratt wrote several articles for national magazines in the 1950s and also published the little booklet entitled *The Story of Boca Raton*. Pratt says that local legend claims that Geist applied for membership in Paris Singer's exclusive Everglades Club and was turned down because of his uncouth manners. Furious at being blackballed, Geist resolved to build his own club that would be so exclusive that "members of the Everglades Club would be excluded. It would also be so magnificent that the Evergladers would look like a tarpaper shack community." Pratt then goes on to say that only the "spirit" of this legend is true. That in reality, "his name was never submitted for membership in the Everglades Club, probably because what would happen was obvious and no one cared to be embarrassed." Pratt also says that Geist bought the Boca Raton Club to both have a place where he could be "czar" and also because he regarded it as a good business proposition.

Theodore Pratt wrote his Boca Raton works just at the time that Alva Johnson was writing on Addison Mizner and his brother Wilson. Johnson's work first appeared in *The New Yorker* and then was published by

Farrar, Straus & Young in 1953 as *The Legendary Mizners*. Pratt published *The Story of Boca Raton* that same year. Both authors allowed their need to tell a good story to play havoc with the truth. While both did much research, when they believed the facts interfered with an interesting tale, the facts suffered.

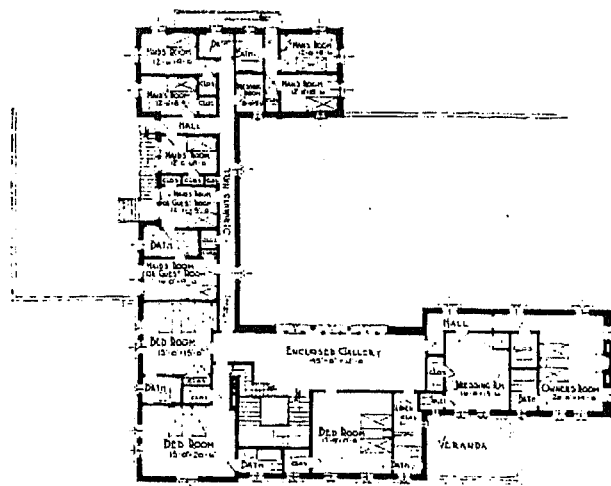
In the case of Geist's blackballing by the membership of the Everglades Club, it never happened. In this period Paris Singer owned the club. While he had a socially prominent and well-to-do board of governors that he consulted on membership and other rules for the club, he ultimately decided who would be approved for membership. Clarence Geist was one of Singer's friends. He was also a member of the Everglades Club. In fact, Geist was both a member of the club and also built his own Palm Beach house on the club grounds. Singer had opened a street overlooking the golf course which ran from the club house to South County Road. He sold lots on the street--today's Golf View Road--to members who wished the privacy that living on the club grounds gave them. Marion Sims Wyeth designed the large, towered Mediterranean villa which Geist built on the first lot on the north side of Golf View Road, just east of the club house.



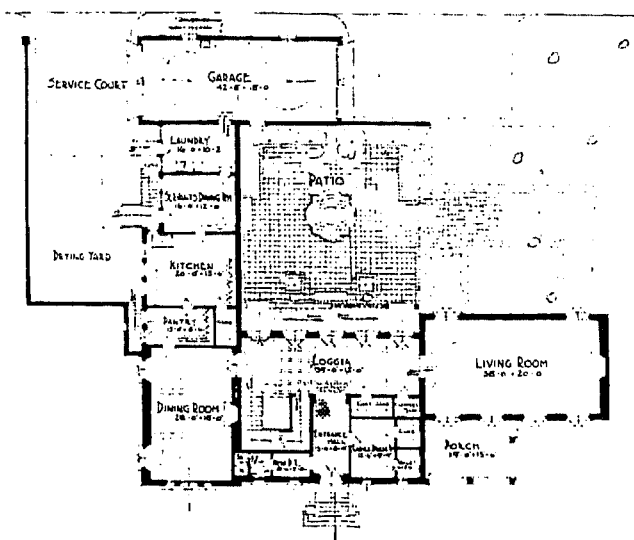
Although there is no real evidence that Geist was overly crude, in the Palm Beach of the 1920s crudity was no bar to social acceptance. Moreover, when the Bath and Tennis Club, the second of the exclusive Palm Beach social clubs, opened in 1927 Clarence Geist also became a member. He did not give up his memberships in the Palm Beach clubs when he moved to Boca Raton.

The following entry can be found in *The Social Index-Directory of Palm Beach for 1927*:

GEIST--MR. AND MRS. CLARENCE HENRY (Florence Hewitt).
 "La Claridad," Golf View Road, Palm Beach.
 Permanent Address "Launfal," Villa Nova, Pa.
 (arriving Jan 1st)
 Clubs--Everglades, Country Club, Union League,
 Hunting Don Valley, Bath and Tennis.
 Adults--Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Sheaffer, (Eloise
 Geist), Bradley L. Geist.
 Juniors--Misses Elizabeth and Mary Golden Geist.



SECOND FLOOR PLAN



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

RESIDENCE FOR MR. CLARENCE H. GEIST, PALM BEACH, FLORIDA
MARION SIMS WYETH, ARCHITECT

From the *Palm Beach Post*, 4 April 1925:

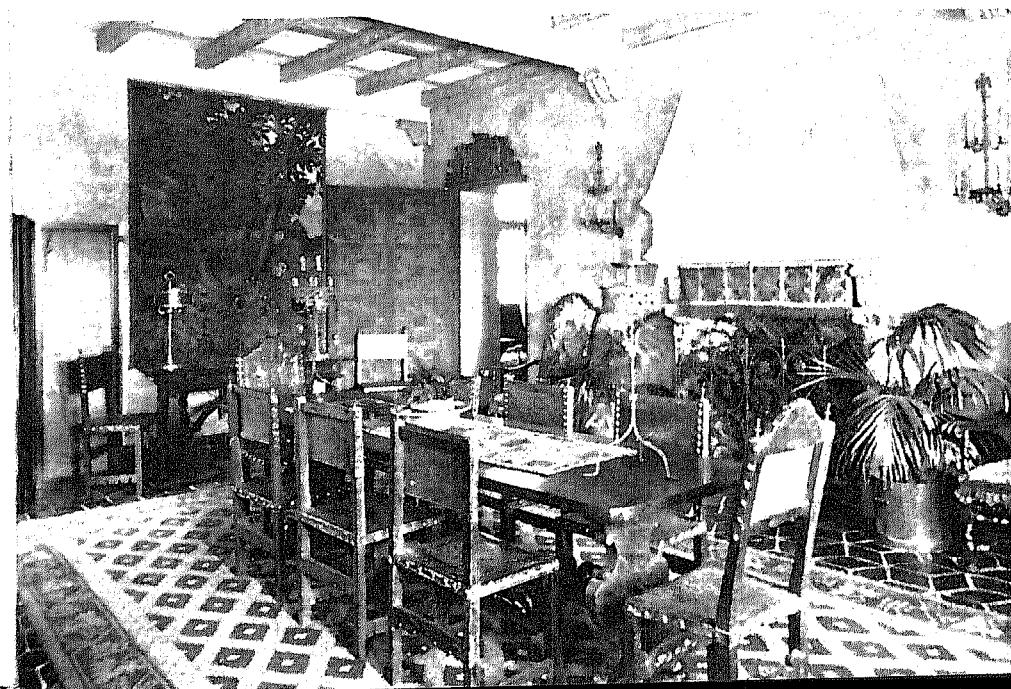
MRS. CLARENCE GEIST ENTERTAINS

Mr. and Mrs. Clarence H. Geist gave one of the most charming and beautifully appointed dinners of the season last evening at their home on Golfview road.

This house which occupies a commanding position at the corner where Golfview road turns on its way to the sea, is said to be one of the most beautifully furnished of the period houses in Palm Beach and Mr. Geist had a representative scouring Spain all last summer for beautiful things to place in it. With its interesting architecture and beautiful interior arrangement, it is an ideal setting for entertaining such as that which Mr. and Mrs. Geist have begun to do since their arrival in the colony this winter.

Mr. Geist is owner of the very exclusive Sea View Club near Atlantic City, New Jersey, which he has built up as a lasting monument to good golf and to provide a charming home for a residence for those interested in golf and their friends. This exclusive club occupies an important place in the social life of the resort and many of the Palm Beach colony are regular visitors at the Sea View Golf Club.

Last evening Mr. and Mrs. Geist had 20 guests which included Mr. and Mrs. Russell C. Love, Dr. and Mrs. Edmund L. Dow, Mr. and Mrs. Frank V. Skiff, Mr. and Mrs. George H. Nicolai, Mr. and Mrs. W. R. Sweatt, Mr. and Mrs. J. Ledly Hees, Mr. and Mrs. Phillip Corbin, Mr. and Mrs. John Demarest, Mr. and Mrs. George A. Dobyne, Mr. H. Caryl Haskins and Mrs. Lothrop Randolph.



U · G · I · CIRCLE

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VOL. XI

Philadelphia, August, 1930

No. 2

C. H. Geist and Edward Hopkinson, Jr., Elected Members of U. G. I. Board

Mr. Hopkinson Also Becomes a Member of Company's Executive Committee

CLARENCE H. GEIST and Edward Hopkinson, Jr., were elected directors of The United Gas Improvement Company on June 25, following the Board's action increasing its number from fourteen to sixteen members. The Company's Executive Committee also was increased from nine to ten members and Mr. Hopkinson was elected the additional member.

Mr. Geist was born and raised on a farm in LaPorte County, Indiana. When 18 years of age he left Indiana for the far West, spending five years in the saddle dealing in live stock, principally horses. He then returned to Chicago because, he says, "No one in the West, at that time, had any money, and I discovered the fact that I could not make money where there wasn't any."

After spending a year on the Rock Island



C. H. GEIST



EDWARD HOPKINSON, JR.

Railroad, he engaged in the real estate business, in which he had a brief but profitable career. He then entered the public utility field, with which he has been identified prominently ever since, having operated electric, gas and water properties serving more than five

hundred municipalities, large and small.

Mr. Geist enjoys a large acquaintance throughout the country. His greatest pleasure, he says, is the operation of public utilities. He is an enthusiastic golfer, having built two of the finest country clubs in the world, one near Atlantic City and the other at Boca Raton, Florida. He has been a resident of Philadelphia for many years and at present lives at Villa Nova, Pa.

Mr. Hopkinson is a partner of Drexel & Company and J. P. Morgan & Company and was recently elected a director of United Cor-



poration. He was born in Philadelphia and received his education in William Penn Charter School and the University of Pennsylvania, from which he was graduated with a degree of Bachelor of Arts in 1907 and from its law school in 1910. He was admitted to the Bar of Philadelphia in 1910, and became a member of the law firm of Dixon, Beitler and McCouch, where he continued until July, 1927, when he became a partner of Drexel & Company.

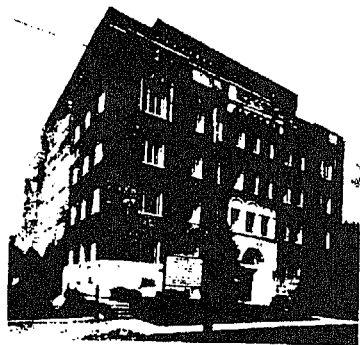
Mr. Hopkinson is a partner of Morgan, Grenfell & Co., London, and Morgan & Cie, Paris, a member of the board of managers of the Philadelphia Saving Fund Society, a director of the Germantown Trust Company, Frankford & Southwark Philadelphia City Passenger Railroad Company, Keystone Watch Case Company, and Pennsylvania Fire Insurance Company; a member of the board of trustees of the University of Pennsylvania and chairman of its board on the Law School, a governor of the Investment Bankers Association of America and chairman of its Eastern Pennsylvania group. He is also chairman of the State and Local Taxation Committee of the Investment Bankers Association of America, and president of the Bond Club of Philadelphia.

Another All-Electric Apartment Opened in Wilmington

WILMINGTON, DEL., which receives its electrical service from the Delaware Power and Light Company, has a number of complete electrically-equipped apartment buildings. The newest addition to this number is the ultra-modern building constructed at 1212 Delaware Avenue.

We feel that the occupants of these modern buildings are fortunate, as in an electrically-equipped apartment they enjoy the comforts and conveniences that only that service can give.

The kitchens in these new apartments include electric ranges, electric refrigerators, electric dish washers and dryers, which meet the needs for a simple breakfast or a formal dinner. The ranges installed are of the latest



Another all-electric apartment building recently was completed and added to the lines of the Delaware Power and Light Company, Wilmington, Del. The apartments in this building offer the utmost in "electric housekeeping".

design in gray and white enamel, are full automatic control and are equipped with cabinet bases for storage purposes. The ranges, incidentally, were purchased from the Delaware Power and Light Company.

Interior and exterior lighting is adequate with convenient electric outlets for the use of appliances at every hand.

Electricity also operates the roomy elevators with speed and safety, while powerful electric blowers, with automatic controls, on the heating and water heating boilers, insure an abundance of heat and constant hot water.

The cost of the electricity used by the occupants, as they enjoy its convenience, is included in the rental charge. The practice of thus supplying the electric service to operate the numerous appliances conforms to the most advanced method of apartment house operation and is being adopted in Wilmington's new apartments. This practice gives the occupants new ideas in the greater use of electric service. We feel confident that future apartment buildings to be constructed in Wilmington will operate in a manner similar to the modern electric apartments which have been recently constructed.—L. R. Leslie.

In traffic, don't LOSE your head, USE it.

Clarence Geist had been an original investor in the Mizner Development Corporation. With the failure of the development, Geist stepped in and purchased the Boca Raton property. The first serious problem for the development came with the filing of a suit by Harry and Ethel Chesebro attempting to recover the land they had sold to Mizner. When the courts officially declared the corporation in bankruptcy, Geist's agent and attorney, Jerome D. Gedney, bid \$5,000 for the property, agreeing to assume the ten to fifteen million in outstanding debts. The referee in bankruptcy decided that the property was worth more and refused to accept the bid. In a second round of bidding, Geist himself agreed to pay \$71,500 for the property. This bid was accepted and the old Cloister Inn became the property of the Philadelphia utilities magnate. As can be seen from the following articles, Geist completely disassociated himself from any connection with the Mizner Development Corporation and immediately began to remodel and add on to the old hotel, creating the new and exclusive Boca Raton Club.

* * * *

From the **Palm Beach Post**, 23 April 1927:

RITZ-CARLTON SALE IS SOUGHT IN SUIT
Harry M. Chesebro and Wife Sue Mizner Company on
Boca Raton Hotel

Sale of the Ritz-Carlton Cloister and 32 acres of land at Boca Raton is sought in a bill filed in circuit court by Harry M. Chesebro and wife.

The bill, which names the Mizner Development corporation as principal defendant, avers that on May 25, 1925, the defendant corporation entered into a contract with the complainants in which the complainants agreed to sell the 32 acres of land, on which the Cloister is now located, to the concern, payments to be made in installments.

The bill claims that the defendant corporation has not complied with the contract and is now in arrears with principal and interest. It is claimed that the balance of more than \$75,000 is due the complainants.

The complainants seek to have a lien declared on the property and the property sold to satisfy the balance claimed due, together with interest and attorney's fees.

More than a score of other concerns and individuals are named as defendants in the bill as holders of claims against the property. The bill asks that a first lien be declared in favor of the complainants, superior to the claim or interest of any of the other defendants.

W.E. Roebuck is attorney for the complainants.

From the **Palm Beach Times**, 19 October 1927:

CLOISTER INN SALE HELD UP
Referee Refused to Confirm Disposition of Hotel for \$5,000, Plus Debt

Confirmation of the sale of the Cloister Inn and all other Mizner interests at Boca Raton for \$5,000 plus the assumption of all outstanding indebtedness was held up by L. Earl Currie, referee in bankruptcy, this morning when he stated that the amount for which the property was sold appeared unusually small.

Another reason for Mr. Currie's decision was the fact that L.L. Ford, one of the trustees in bankruptcy, objected to the confirmation. Mr. Currie stated that he would like to hear from Ford and wanted to delve further into the matter before rendering his decision.

The Mizner interests at Boca Raton, which included Cloister Inn, administration buildings, about 15,000 acres of land and 50 residences erected by the Mizner Development company was sold at auction yesterday to J.D. Gedney of New York city, the only bidder for the entire property.

The sale was conducted under the direction of Mr. Ford, E.T. Halter and E.B. Davis, trustees in bankruptcy. Mr. Halter and Mr. Davis recommended that the bid of Mr. Gedney be accepted while Mr. Ford objected.

A partial report submitted by Mr. Halter this morning was to the effect that the real estate had been appraised at approximately \$2,000,000, that notes receivable on contracts totaled \$211,000, while mortgages on the property would approximate \$12,000,000.

From the **Palm Beach Times**, 28 October 1927:

CLOISTER SALE ON \$5,000 BID TURNED DOWN
Curry Refuses to Confirm Acceptance of Bid--New Officers to Be Asked

New bids for the Cloister Inn and other Mizner interests at Boca Raton will be asked by the trustee in bankruptcy following the decision yesterday of L. Earl Curry, referee in bankruptcy to reject the offer made by J.D. Gedney of New York City.

This action was taken when Mr. Curry expressed his belief that more could be obtained for the property than the \$5,000 cash plus assuming outstanding indebtedness of between \$10,000,000 and \$15,000,000 that was offered by Mr. Gedney.

For the same reason Mr. Curry rescinded his previous action confirming the bid of M. Specktor of this city of \$28,000 for the hotel furnishings.

E.T. Halter, of Boca Raton, E.B. Davis and L.L. Ford, the trustees in bankruptcy, were authorized to dispose of the property by private sale instead of by auction and were given between 60 and 90 days within which to act.

The property consists of Cloister Inn, the administration building, about 40 residences and approximately 15,000 acres of land. Mortgages on the property will total between \$10,000,000 and \$12,000,000 according to the figures of the trustees.

When Mr. Gedney's bid was first called to the attention of Mr. Curry, its acceptance was favored by two of the trustees while the third expressed the belief that more could be obtained for the property. Statements at yesterday's hearing were to the effect that several offers, exceeding those made by Mr. Gedney had been received since the auction of October 18.

* * * *

From the **Palm Beach Post**, 28 October 1927:

TRUSTEES ARE GIVEN AUTHORITY TO WORK OUT PROPERTY DEAL
Fifteen Million Dollar Land Transaction is Delayed by Legal Action

The fate of the Cloister Inn and other valuable Mizner interests at Boca Raton was again plunged into uncertainty yesterday with rejection by L. Earl Curry, referee in bankruptcy, of offers made by J.D. Gedney of New York city. At the same time Mr. Curry rescinded his action of October 19 in confirming the bid of M. Specktor of West Palm Beach of \$28,000 for the hotel furnishings.

In rejecting both of these offers, Mr. Curry stated that the bids were too low. The Gedney bid was for \$5,000 plus outstanding indebtedness estimated at from \$10,000,000 to \$15,000,000. Hearing was held yesterday at Fort Lauderdale. Mr.



Gedney was not present but was represented by his attorneys, Bussey and Johnston of West Palm Beach.

Rejection of these two bids again opens the sale of the Mizner properties, which include the Cloister Inn and valuable furnishings, administration building, 40 residences and 15,000 acres of land.

Authorization was given Mr. Curry for the trustees in bankruptcy to dispose of the property by private sale, instead of by auction as was done previously. E.T. Halter of Boca Raton, E. B. Davis and L.L. Ford, of West Palm Beach comprise the board of trustees. According to the action of the referee the trustees will have from 60 to 90 days to take action, or may act within their discretion.

According to statements at the hearing several offers, exceeding that of Mr. Gedney, have been received by the trustees since the time of the auction on October 18. Sale of the furniture took place on October 11.

* * * *

From the **Palm Beach Times**, 1 November 1927:

Bids on the Cloister Inn and other properties of the Mizner Development company, at Boca Raton, will be opened Saturday in a second attempt to sell the holdings of the defunct corporation, according to an announcement by trustees in bankruptcy.

The Mizner properties will be sold only as a whole, including the hotel, 15,000 acres of land, the Boca Raton administration building and about 40 residences, the announcement stated.

Bids will be received until 11 o'clock Saturday morning by E.B. Davis and L.L. Ford, of West Palm Beach, and E.T. Halter, of Boca Raton, three trustees for the property.

At a former attempt to sell the properties on October 18, a bid of \$5,000 with assumption of obligations by J.D. Gedney was rejected by L. Earl Curry of Miami, referee in bankruptcy, who deemed the bid too low. A bid of \$28,000 by M. Specktor, of West Palm Beach, for the furnishings of the inn, also was rejected by Mr. Curry.

Saturday's attempt to sell the Mizner properties will be conducted in the nature of a private sale, with bids either open or closed, the trustees announced.

* * * *

From the **Palm Beach Times**, 2 November 1927

BOCA RATON BID RAISED TO \$71,500 BY GEDNEY

Trustees Considering Highest Offer

Made for Cloister Inn and Properties

A bid of \$71,500 with assumption of all outstanding obligations, the highest bid at a bankruptcy sale of the Mizner Development corporation yesterday, is being considered by the trustees in bankruptcy.

The largest bid was made by J.D. Gedney, of New York City, representing two clients whose names he did not reveal. Mr. Gedney made the bid of \$5,000 plus assumption of debts at a recent sale which L. Earl Curry of Miami, referee in bankruptcy refused to validate.

Offers for the properties, some for various items of the Mizner holdings, were submitted by 12 persons, among whom was cotton Mather, official of the Mather Furniture stores. His bid was for the furniture in the Cloister Inn.

E.T. Halter, former officer in the Mizner corporation, now trustee in bankruptcy, said that the general opinion at the sale was that the successful bidders, should the sale be validated, intended to carry on the Mizner development in an adjusted form.

The bid of \$71,500, if finally approved by the trustees, will be submitted Monday to Mr. Curry, who will make a decision on the sale after holding a meeting of creditors for which 10 days notice must be given, Mr. Halter said.

The two other trustees who officiated at the sale were Louis Ford and E. B. Davis, both of West Palm Beach. Mr. Halter was the spokesman.

* * * *

From the **Palm Beach Post**, 6 November 1927:

CLOISTER INN WITH GOLF COURSE AT BOCA RATON TO

REOPEN AS SEAVIEW CLUB

Geist of Philadelphia Takes over

Mizner Resort Property

As the Seaview club of Florida, the Cloister Inn and golf course at Boca Raton will be reopened about January 15, 1928, according to the statement last night of Clarence H. Geist, Philadelphia financier and Palm Beach winter resident, who yesterday completed the purchase of the Mizner interests at Boca Raton.

Sale of the Mizner properties to Mr. Geist represented an approximately \$7,000,000 deal, including a payment of \$71,500 in addition to the taking over of all mortgages and obligations on the assets and rights of the Mizner Development corporation. The property involved extends from the Florida East Coast railroad to the ocean, and includes hotel, golf course, administration building and about 15,000 acres of land, much of which has been improved.

Mr. Geist last night outlined plans for remodeling the entire property into a sportsman's resort, similar to the Seaview club of New Jersey, one of the most famous country clubs in the world, which he has operated for the past 13 years.

Council and a Town Clerk and shall be held in the Council Room in the Town Hall of the Town of Boca Raton on the 17th day of July, A.D. 1929 and at said election, there shall be elected a Mayor, 5 members of the Council and a Town Clerk, each of whom shall serve as such officers of said Town, until and including the last day of February, 1931 [emphasis added], as provided by Section 2, Article 4 of the new Charter of the Town of Boca Raton as passed by the Legislature of the State of Florida regular session 1929, which Act was ratified by a majority vote of the electors of the Town of Boca Raton, at an election held pursuant to the terms of said Act, in the Town of Boca Raton on June 14th, 1929 and said election shall be held in every respect according to the Charter of said Town and Ordinances thereof and according to the General Laws of the State of Florida, governing elections.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that persons who desire to qualify as candidates for the aforesaid offices of Mayor, Councilmen and Town Clerk and who desire to have his or her name printed on the ballots for such office, prepared for said election, the same shall be entitled to be placed upon said ballots for the respective offices to be filled at said election, upon request for him or her to be a candidate, by written petition signed by at least twenty five qualified electors, within the limits of the Municipality of the Town of Boca Raton, which electors shall be qualified to vote in the election provided for herein, said written petition shall be filed with the Town Clerk of the Town of Boca Raton not more than sixty days, nor less than twenty days before election, or the same shall not be recognized. And in addition to the names printed on said ballots; and whether there be any names printed on said ballots or not, there shall be printed under each office to be voted for at the election, blank lines in number equal to the number of persons who may be elected to fill that office.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that only duly qualified electors shall be allowed to vote. Qualifications to be based upon the Charter of said Town and General Laws of the State of Florida, governing election; that no candidates shall be elected who do not qualify under the Charter of said Town, as to residence and official qualifications.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that said election shall be held in the Council Room in the Town Hall of the Town of Boca Raton on July 17th, 1929, between the hours of 8 o'clock A.M. and sun down on said day.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Town Commission of the Town of Boca Raton shall place on the official ballot, as candidates to be voted upon, only such names as shall have been filed with the Town Clerk not more than sixty days nor less than twenty days before the aforesaid election, to fill

From the **Palm Beach Times**, 20 November 1927:

CLOISTER INN SALE TO GEIST IS CONFIRMED
Halter Says Millionaire's \$71,500 Bid Has
Won Full Approval.

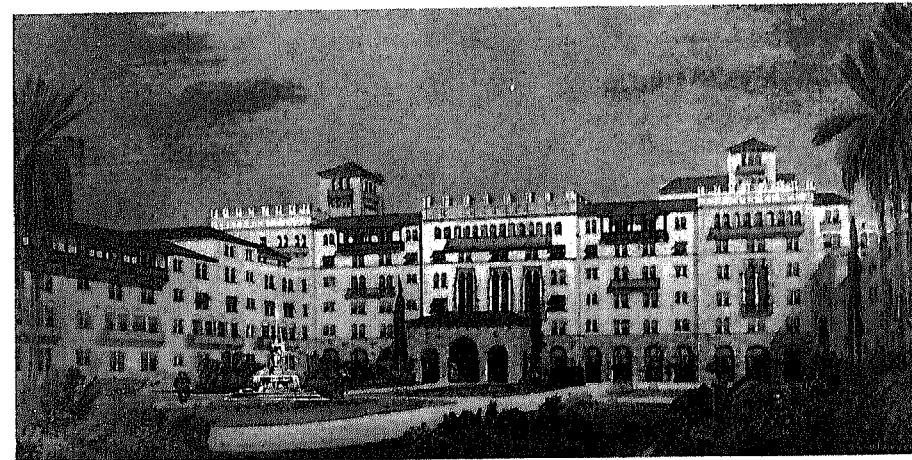
All wrangling over the bankruptcy sale of the Mizner Development corporation properties at Boca Raton apparently are at an end, according to E.T. Halter, former secretary of the corporation, now trustee in bankruptcy, in a statement last night.

Sale of the Cloister inn, golf course and other properties of the defunct development corporation was confirmed yesterday by L. Earl Curry, referee in bankruptcy, at a hearing at Miami.

The property went to Clarence H. Geist, millionaire club operator, on a bid of \$71,500 with the property subject to all liens and incumbrances. The bid was made November 5, at a sale at Boca Raton.

The fashionable Cloister inn will be converted into a sportsman's paradise, according to plans announced by Mr. Geist, who now operates the Sea View club, of New Jersey.

The new owner of the properties also announced that he plans to carry on, in an adjusted form, the projects of the Mizner Development corporation, and that the titles of the property owners will be protected.



Letter from Clarence H. Geist to purchasers of lots
from the Mizner Development Corporation
8 December 1927
My dear Sir:

I have received so many letters from the purchasers of lots under contract with Mizner Development Corporation, Boca Raton, Florida, making inquiries as to where they stand with regard to their purchase of lots, that I thought it best to write each lot contract holder direct.

My primary purpose in purchasing the Cloister and certain adjacent land was to organize a Country Club, where facilities for sport and comfort would be the outstanding features, somewhat along the lines of the Seaview Golf Club near Atlantic City, New Jersey, which Club I organized and financed personally.

The property acquired, in so far as it will not be necessary for the Club and Golf Courses, will be sold. In disposing of this surplus land, my thought is to give preference to the persons holding lot contracts before offering it to others.

I want to take this opportunity of saying, that while I am not under any legal obligations to the purchasers of lots from the Mizner Development Corporation, nevertheless it is my purpose to deal with these purchasers as fairly and equitably as is possible, under the circumstances. I speak of this because of the erroneous report circulated to the effect that I had assumed the liabilities of the Mizner Development Corporation.

As soon as my plans have progressed sufficiently it is my intention to make a definite announcement, which will be communicated to all the lot purchasers. This may take some little time on account of the many details involved. I will write you again as soon as possible.

Yours very truly, C.H. Geist

From the Palm Beach Times, 3 April 1928:

GEIST OPENS BIDS ON HUGE ADDITION TO CLOISTER INN
Philadelphia Capitalists Announces Plans for
\$1,000,000 Building Program

A clubhouse to far exceed a million dollars in construction cost will be started in Boca Raton by Clarence H. Geist, Philadelphia capitalist, within the next few weeks. Bids were opened today in Mr. Geist's office in Palm Beach, and it is expected that the contract will be awarded this week. Work will start immediately and intentions are to rush it through to completion for opening next January.

Cloister inn, the hotel built by Addison Mizner before his development became bankrupt and later purchased by Geist, will serve as the southeast wing of the new club building.

Schultze & Weaver of New York are architects for the 300-room addition, which with the present building when completed, will make a 450-room clubhouse.

The architectural drawings call for a six-story building built around a 350-foot patio. A number of smaller patios are also included in the layout.

A swimming pool will be located in the northwest corner of the building with locker rooms for men on the first floor and for women on the second. A few bedrooms will be located on the first floor, but the majority of the space will be taken up in large dining room, lounges and dance hall. There will also be a number of shops located on the third floor.

So far this is the largest single piece of construction to be announced for the entire east coast this year.



From the **Palm Beach Times**, 4 April 1928:

GEIST PLANS ARE TOLD TO KIWANIS CLUB
Gedney Outlines Boca Raton Development
Work at Lunch Session

The Kiwanis club at its luncheon today at the Elks' club voted to convene future meetings at 12:15 o'clock instead of at high noon, accepted an invitation to lunch on next Wednesday at the filtration plant as guest of the West Palm Beach Water company and heard J.D. Gedney, representative of the Clarence H. Geist development at Boca Raton, unfold some of the purposes of the owner of that property.

It is the purpose of the developer, said the speaker, to make a club out of the former Mizner properties lying east of the Dixie highway that will be a home for its members--a home in every sense of the word. He thought that perfecting the intentions of Mr. Geist would bring to this region many new persons. The club, said, he, would be adequately equipped with fields for sports.

He also announced for the first time publicly that the new owner of the Mizner properties affected would give some consideration to lot purchases for the equity which they hold because of payment on sites.

* * * *

From the **Palm Beach Times**, 7 July 1928:

CONTRACT FOR CLUB IS LET TO JAX FIRM
Boca Raton Construction Will Cost Two Million Dollars, is Announcement.

The Seaboard and Southern Construction company of Jacksonville has been awarded contract for construction of the Boca Raton club at \$2,000,000 according to word received here yesterday.

It is understood that Clarence H. Geist, head of the club who purchased the Mizner properties on which the new building will be located at Boca Raton, intends operations to begin in August and be completed by the fall of 1929.

Officers of the club are out of the city at present and could not be reached. Clark L. Poole, the manager, is expected to return early next week from Philadelphia where he has been in conference with Mr. Geist, and make public details of the project.

Calls for bids of sub-contractors are being issued by the Seaboard and Southeastern company and the builders exchange is seeking to obtain as much of the work as possible for local contractors. The Boca Raton project alone can furnish plenty of work for a number of local men, it was pointed out.

Plans call for a six-story structure with 300 bedrooms and baths, shops, and a patio 350 feet square to be built adjoining the Cloister Inn, the magnificent hostelry designed and built by Addison

Mizner. Landscaping of the grounds, dredging of the lake, and construction of an inlet and jetties is now under way.

The former Boca Raton administration building will be renovated and used as a golf clubhouse during the coming season.

* * * *

From the **Palm Beach Post**, 7 February 1928:

BOCA RATON CLUB 2-MILLION-DOLLAR CONTRACT IS LET
Jacksonville Firm Successful Bidder
for Immense Construction

Local Contractors Bid on Portions of Project
Activity Expected to Provide Work for Many;
Time Clause to Speed Activity

Contract for the construction of the new Boca Raton club at \$2,000,000 has been awarded to the Seaboard and Southern Construction Company of Jacksonville it was announced yesterday.

Announcement came through the Builders' Exchange here in connection with its affiliation with the exchange in Jacksonville. Except to verify the fact that the contract had been awarded there was no further information available from the offices of the Boca Raton Club, Inc., at Boca Raton. Clark L. Poole, manager, left Tuesday night for Philadelphia to confer with Clarence H. Geist, purchaser of the Mizner properties and head of the club, and J.D. Gedney, in charge of the Geist interests.

According to the Boca Raton office, Mr. Poole is expected to return to Florida early next week, at which time detailed announcement of construction plans is anticipated. It is understood that Mr. Geist expects operations to begin in August.

Calls for sub-bids are being issued by the Seaboard and Southern Construction company, and the Builder's exchange here is working with the view to obtaining as much of the work as possible for local contractors. Optimism at the building situation was expressed here yesterday with the possibility of activity for many workers during the next year. The Seaboard contract places October, 1929, as the final date for completion of the work.

Bids on the club house were first received on April 2, prior to the departure of Mr. Geist and Mr. Gedney. Owing to the fact that it was not considered possible to complete the building in time for opening this season, award of the contract was indefinitely postponed.

Plans call for a six-story structure with 300 bedrooms and baths, lounges, dining rooms, dance rooms, shops and a patio 340 feet square. The new building will be built in connection with the Cloister Inn, the magnificent structure designed and built by Addison Mizner, which will form the southeast wing of the club-house.

Adjourned Regular Meeting of August 29th, 1928
held at the Town Hall on August 30th, 1928

Mayor Brown called the meeting to order at 8:00 P.M., August 30th, 1928, and upon Roll Call, the following Commissioners were present:

Mayor Brown, Commissioner Godwin and Clerk Butler

Mayor Brown introduced Mr. H.S.R. McCurdy, Consulting Engineer of the proposed new pumping station and water treatment plant. Mr. McCurdy went most thoroughly into the matter of financing this plant, and read a letter from Mr. C. H. Geist, wherein the details of financing this proposition were outlined. Mr. McCurdy further gave specific data regarding the plant itself and the cost of maintenance and operation of same.

The meeting was then given over to a general discussion. A standing vote was taken to determine the desire of the citizens and tax payers of the Town of Boca Raton, whether or not this plant should be installed, inasmuch as the cost of the same had been definitely learned; the outcome of this vote showed those in favor of erecting plant ; ; ; ; 30

opposed ; ; ; ; 12

The following citizens and tax payers of Boca Raton voted in the affirmative for the erection of pumping station and water treatment plant:

T.D. Giles	Ira L. Davis
George A. Long	I.L. Blackman
H.D. Gates	C.J. Raulerson
Sam Jerkins	J.A. Brent
Earle Moore	J.A. Brent for Mrs J.A. Brent
L.A. Zimmerman	C.W. Brown
C.L. Stryker	Crosby Tappan
Mrs. C.L. Stryker	Leo C. Godwin
N.M. Smock	Beulah Butler
Mrs. Earle Moore	John G. Brown
Mrs. J.V. Hines	H.S.R. McCurdy, repre-
J.C. Mitchell	sending J.D. Gedney
T.A. Butler, as agent for	C.L. Poole, represent-
Mr & Mrs H.V. von Holst	ing C.H. Geist and
Mr & Mrs F.C. Aiken	Spanish River Land Co.
Mr & Mrs John Verhoeven	

The following citizens and tax payers of Boca Raton voted in the negative for the erection of pumping station and water treatment plant:

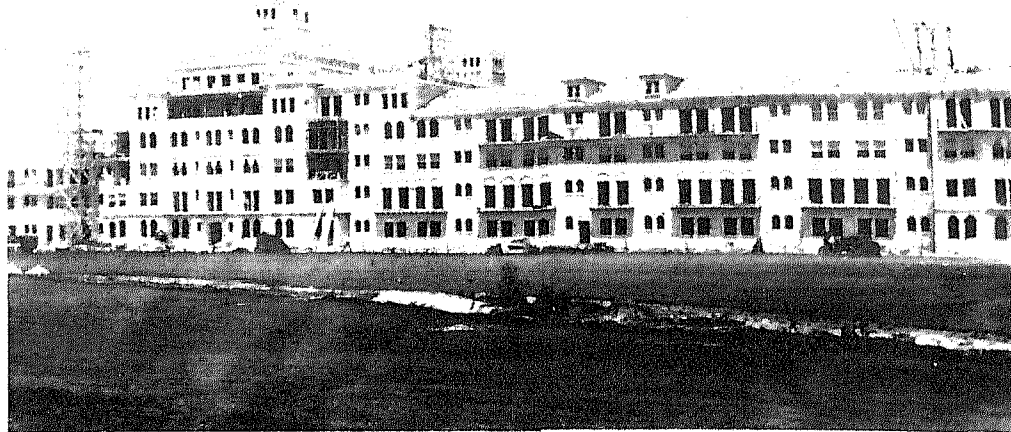
W.P. Purdom	Mrs M.W. Stokes, repre-
J.M. Tanner	sending Mr & Mrs A.E. Stephens
C.W. Stokes	G.J. Bender
Mrs C.W. Stokes	Mrs G.J. Bender
M.W. Stokes	W.C. Young
Mrs. M.W. Stokes	Mrs W.C. Young

SCHULTZE AND WEAVER

For the additions he planned for the Cloister Inn, Clarence H. Geist chose the New York architectural firm of Schultze and Weaver. Leonard Schultze (1878-1951) and S. Fullerton Weaver (1879-1939) had formed the new firm in 1921. Born in Chicago in 1878, Schultze studied at City College in New York and at the architectural school of the Metropolitan Museum of Art under the supervision of E.L. Masqueray. He served as a sergeant in the United States Volunteer Engineers during the Spanish-American War before embarking upon his career as an architect. In 1900 he became associated with the firm of Warren and Wetmore which had designed the Biltmore hotel and the Grand Central Terminal in New York City and had been given the commission to design the oceanfront Ritz-Carlton hotel in Boca Raton which Addison Mizner had originally proposed. Unfortunately, the boom bubble broke before it could even be designed. Schultze was given credit for the design and construction of all the buildings associated with Grand Central Terminal as both chief of design for the firm and later executive in charge of construction.

Weaver had been born in Philadelphia, the son of James Buchanan Weaver and the great-grand nephew of president James Buchanan. After graduating from the University of Pennsylvania in 1903 with a degree in civil engineering he became president of his own construction company and designed numerous apartment houses which he built on the leasehold land of the New York Central Railroad along Park Avenue.

By 1927 the firm of Schultze and Weaver was well-known for its work in south Florida. In 1924 John Bowman of the Biltmore Hotel chain had asked the firm to design his new hotel in Coral Gables. Schultze and Weaver had already completed hotels



for the chain in Cuba and Los Angeles and were working on another Biltmore hotel for Atlanta. By the time the firm received the Coral Gables Biltmore commission it had started construction of the **Miami Daily News** Tower on Biscayne Boulevard and the Roney Plaza across the bay in Miami Beach. The newspaper building, the Roney Plaza, and the new Biltmore had high towers modeled from the fifteenth century Tower of Giralda in Seville. In 1926 Schultze and Weaver received the commission to design a massive office building in downtown Miami and also to plan a new hotel in Palm Beach to replace the old wooden Breakers which had been destroyed by a spectacular daytime fire a year earlier.

The design for the new club house in Boca Raton incorporated Mizner's small Cloister Inn, although its size and scale really engulfed the early structure. A gigantic new courtyard, reached by a palm lined drive from Camino Real, served as the new entrance. The Mizner hotel enclosed the courtyard on the east while the new building formed its other three sides. Schultze and Weaver also retained Mizner's public rooms, though they added a very large new dining room, usually referred to as the Cathedral Dining Room, overlooking the lake. The old Mizner dining room then became a lounge. A porte cachere provided a sheltered entry into a lobby that stretched the length of the northern section of the new building. A new indoor pool and dressing rooms, as well as new kitchen and laundry facilities were also added at this time. A few years later in the 1930s Geist decided the indoor pool was unnecessary and Maurice Fatio fitted a new auditorium into that space.

BOCA RATON SYNDICATE

Report of Syndicate Manager

April 1, 1928.

CLARENCE H. GEIST,
Syndicate Manager.

TO THE SUBSCRIBERS TO THE BOCA RATON SYNDICATE:

Herewith I am sending you a statement showing the names of all persons who became parties to the Syndicate Agreement, dated January 3, 1928, and who contributed to the capital of the Syndicate thereunder the sum of \$1,000,000.00. Also I am sending you herewith a statement showing the moneys disbursed by me as Syndicate Manager to this date.

When the Syndicate was formed it was thought that \$1,000,000.00 would be sufficient to cover the cost of acquiring the necessary property and to provide adequate working capital for the Land Company. More property has been purchased than was originally intended because upon investigation I found that it would be advantageous to have certain additional properties, both from the standpoint of protection to our holdings, as well as because of its prospective value.

Spanish River Land Company was duly organized under the laws of the State of Florida, with an authorized capital of 100,000 shares without nominal or par value; and on February 20, 1928, the charter of Boca Raton Club, first having been duly approved, was recorded in the Public Records of Palm Beach County, Florida.

The necessary agreements have been prepared, and, in the near future, it is my purpose to transfer the real and personal property which I purchased on behalf of the Syndicate to Spanish River Land Company, and it in turn will enter into an agreement with Boca Raton Club wherein it will sell to it the Cloister, the Cloister tract, the furniture and furnishings of the Cloister, land for two golf courses, and land for a suitable bathing beach on the Atlantic Ocean.

The Syndicate requires an additional \$500,000.00. In order to enable us to procure this additional capital it will be necessary to amend the Syndicate agreement. This new agreement will require the signatures of all persons who subscribed and became parties to the original Syndicate Agreement.

I am satisfied that the additional amount suggested will be ample to pay all debts and obligations and to provide a substantial amount of working capital for the Spanish River Land Company. Any balance remaining in the hands of the Syndicate Manager, after the payment of debts and obligations incurred with respect to property purchased, will be loaned and advanced, pursuant to the terms of the Syndicate Agreement, to the Spanish River Land Company for working capital.

Plans for an addition to the Clubhouse were prepared by Schultze and Weaver, Architects, of New York City and when we found that it was practically impossible to complete the building and have it ready for occupancy next Season we considered it would be better to defer

commencing building operations until next fall. We decided that it would be better to have the building completed and ready for occupancy for the Season of 1929 than it would be to open it in an unfinished condition in the Season of 1928. Meanwhile, the other improvements to the property which we have planned and commenced will be proceeded with.

Enclosed herewith are two copies of the amended Syndicate agreement. Please sign one copy and return to me. The other copy is for your files.

Very truly yours,

CLARENCE H. GEIST,
Syndicate Manager.

BOCA RATON SYNDICATE

LIST OF SYNDICATE SUBSCRIBERS

C. H. Geist	\$ 595,000.00
E. A. Belmont	10,000.00
Robert K. Cassatt	10,000.00
Robert E. Coulson	10,000.00
Henry M. Dawes	10,000.00
Rufus C. Dawes	25,000.00
William H. Doubler	5,000.00
George Frazier	10,000.00
J. D. Gedney	25,000.00
R. Glendenning	20,000.00
W. S. Janney	10,000.00
R. E. Horton	25,000.00
George J. Roberts	20,000.00
E. B. Robinette	10,000.00
H. S. Schutt	25,000.00
Dr. J. Sailer	10,000.00
Burrows Sloan	10,000.00
S. Warriner	10,000.00
William Williams	10,000.00
A. E. Newbold	20,000.00
H. G. Lloyd	20,000.00
T. S. Gates	20,000.00
W. A. Obdyke	20,000.00
Thomas Newhall	20,000.00
Ed. Hopkinson	20,000.00
William Watson	5,000.00
W. H. Trotter	5,000.00
A. E. Peirce	5,000.00
N. Conderman	5,000.00
Toomey & Flynn	10,000.00
TOTAL.....	\$1,000,000.00

April 1, 1928.

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS
As of March 31, 1928

RECEIPTS:

Subscriptions from Syndicate Members \$1,000,000.00
Interest on Bank Balances 23.04

DISBURSEMENTS:

PROPERTY PURCHASED:

Real Property and Mortgages:

Direct Cost	\$ 510,433.79
Indirect Cost—Taxes Assumed	23,873.80
" " —Legal Expense	61,642.78
" " —Liens Purchased	38,228.30
" " —Miscellaneous Expense	21,336.41
	<hr/> 661,515.08

Property Purchased from Trustees in
Bankruptcy, including All Right, Title
and Interest to Lands

76,350.25

OTHER DISBURSEMENTS:

Salaries	8,097.40
Office Rent	5,604.65
Insurance	1,680.00
Traveling Expenses	4,787.14
Office Supplies, Expenses and Repairs	632.85
Telegraph, Telephone, Light and Water	363.30
Donations and Contributions	300.00
Miscellaneous Expense	7,981.73
	<hr/> 29,447.07

DISBURSEMENTS ACCOUNT OF

BOCA RATON CLUB

Per Analysis Attached 222,661.71

TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS: 989,974.11

BALANCES IN BANKS 10,085.09

PETTY CASH ON HAND 13.84

\$1,000,023.04 \$1,000,023.04

ANALYSIS OF DISBURSEMENTS ACCOUNT OF
BOCA RATON CLUB

As of March 31, 1928

IMPROVEMENTS TO REAL PROPERTY:

Repairs, Additions and Betterments to Cloister	\$23,760.56
Golf Course Construction and Clearing	90,303.87
Nursery Stock	7,500.00
Ground Improvements, including Payroll	7,615.60
Dredging and Bulkheading Lake	7,831.25
Club House Addition	5,000.00
	<hr/> \$142,011.28

PERSONAL PROPERTY PURCHASED:

Cloister Furniture and Furnishings	36,711.18
Automobiles	8,143.00
	<hr/> 44,854.18

OTHER DISBURSEMENTS:

Club Promotion	3,489.17
Cloister Maintenance	2,437.99
Cloister Salaries and Payroll	6,232.73
Cloister Insurance	12,411.00
Telegraph, Telephone, Light and Water	84.53
Stationery and Printing	887.08
Traveling Expenses	1,937.17
Miscellaneous Expense	8,316.58
	<hr/> 35,796.25

TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS \$222,661.71

BOCA RATON SYNDICATE

Syndicate Agreement

As Amended, April 1, 1928

CLARENCE H. GEIST,
Syndicate Manager and Trustee.

SILLCOCKS, GEDNEY & HOLMES
350 MADISON AVENUE
NEW YORK

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES BY C. G. BURGOYNE, INC., 107 LIBERTY STREET, NEW YORK

AGREEMENT made this first day of April, 1928, between Clarence H. Geist and the persons who became subscribers and parties to the Syndicate Agreement, bearing date January 3, 1928, a copy of which is hereto attached, made a part hereof, and designated Schedule A, which hereinafter will sometimes be referred to as "the Syndicate Agreement of January 3, 1928," and the persons who shall subscribe and contribute additional capital to the Syndicate:

WHEREAS, heretofore the sum of One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000.00), the same being the maximum amount contemplated to be contributed under and pursuant to the terms and provisions of the Syndicate Agreement of January 3, 1928, was subscribed and contributed by Clarence H. Geist and the other persons who became parties to said agreement, as shown and set forth on the statement hereto attached, made a part hereof, and designated Schedule B; and

WHEREAS, agreeable to the terms and provisions of the said the Syndicate Agreement of January 3, 1928, Clarence H. Geist, as Syndicate Manager, organized a corporation under the laws of the State of Florida, known as Spanish River Land Company, with an authorized capital stock consisting of one hundred thousand (100,000) shares without nominal or par value, and has disbursed, pursuant to the terms and provisions of the said the Syndicate Agreement of January 3, 1928, the entire sum of One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000.00) which was subscribed and contributed thereunder; and

WHEREAS, said Clarence H. Geist and the other persons who became parties to the said the Syndicate Agreement of January 3, 1928, desire to amend the said agreement so as to provide that the amount to be contributed thereunder shall be One Million Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$1,500,000.00) and to amend the said the Syndicate Agreement of January 3, 1928, in certain other respects:

WITNESSETH, That the parties hereto, in consideration of the premises and in consideration of the subscriptions to be made hereunder to the additional capital of the Syndicate, have agreed to and with each other as follows:

1. Paragraph 3 of the said Syndicate Agreement of January 3, 1928, be and the same is hereby amended to read as follows:

3. Clarence H. Geist agrees to transfer and convey all the real and personal property acquired by him under and pursuant to the terms and provisions of this agreement to Spanish River Land

Company in exchange for its entire authorized capital stock and its notes or other securities to the amount of One Million Six Hundred Ten Thousand Dollars (\$1,610,000.00); and for the consideration aforesaid Clarence H. Geist agrees to loan to Spanish River Land Company, to provide working capital for that corporation, such amount as remains in his hands as an unexpended balance of the sum of One Million Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$1,500,000.00) after the payment of all costs, charges and expenses incident to the acquisition of said property.

2. Paragraph 4 of the said the Syndicate Agreement of January 3, 1928, be and the same is hereby amended to read as follows:

4. The amount to be contributed by Clarence H. Geist and Group A hereunder shall be One Million Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$1,500,000.00).

3. Paragraph 5 of the said the Syndicate Agreement of January 3, 1928, be and the same is hereby amended to read as follows:

5. The persons constituting Group A hereunder shall include all of the persons who became parties to the said the Syndicate Agreement of January 3, 1928, as shown and set forth in Schedule B hereto attached, and the persons who shall become parties to this agreement by subscribing their names hereto, and each of said persons agrees to pay the amount set opposite his name to Clarence H. Geist, as Syndicate Manager, forthwith. Any person signing this agreement and failing to pay the amount of his subscription within thirty days from the date of such subscription, shall be deemed to have cancelled his subscription and thereupon all rights hereunder of any such person shall cease and determine.

4. Paragraph 6 of the said the Syndicate Agreement of January 3, 1928, be and the same is hereby amended to read as follows:

6. It is agreed by and between the parties hereto that the one hundred thousand (100,000) shares of the capital stock of Spanish River Land Company received by Clarence H. Geist, as Syndicate Manager hereunder, as part consideration for the real and personal property to be conveyed by him to Spanish River Land Company, shall be held, disposed of and distributed as follows:

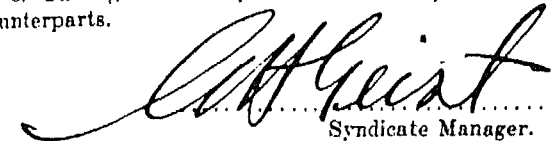
(A) Thirty-five thousand (35,000) shares of said stock shall be held by Clarence H. Geist, as Trustee, and he shall transfer and deliver to each of the first seven hundred (700) subscribers to membership in the Boca Raton Club fifty (50) shares of said stock; such transfers to be made only as and when such subscriptions to the Boca Raton Club are paid by the subscribers therefor, upon receipt of a letter or certificate from the Treasurer of the Boca Raton Club certifying to the fact of such payment.

(B) The remainder of the said shares of stock, to the number of sixty-five thousand (65,000) shares, shall belong to the persons who have contributed the aforesaid sum of One Million Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$1,500,000.00) for the use of the Syndicate in the same proportion as their respective contributions bear to the aforesaid total amount contributed; and the said shares of stock shall be distributed by Clarence H. Geist, as Syndicate Manager hereunder, to the persons entitled to receive the same as soon as reasonably possible after the same are received by him, unless the said shares of stock shall be held or otherwise disposed of by him pursuant to the provisions of this agreement.

(C) Instead of distributing the said shares of stock, Clarence H. Geist shall have the right to hold the same, as Trustee, for such length of time as he may deem advisable, and as may be permitted by law, in which case he shall issue trust receipts therefor to the several persons entitled thereto and, during the time the said shares of stock are held by him, said Clarence H. Geist shall have the exclusive right to vote the same as he shall deem best.

5. It is agreed by and between all the parties hereto that the said the Syndicate Agreement of January 3, 1928, and this Agreement, bearing date April 1, 1928, made for the purpose of increasing the capital of the Syndicate from One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000.00) to One Million Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$1,500,000.00) and to otherwise amend the said agreement, shall, and shall be deemed to, constitute a single instrument, and it shall be so construed in all courts and places; and it is also agreed by and between all the parties hereto that the said the Syndicate Agreement of January 3, 1928, except as amended hereby, be, and the same is hereby, ratified and confirmed.

6. This agreement may be executed in any number of counterparts.


Syndicate Manager.

Schedule A

AGREEMENT made this 3rd day of January, 1928, between CLARENCE H. GEIST and such other persons as may become parties to this agreement by subscribing their names hereto (hereinafter collectively referred to as GROUP A):

WHEREAS, CLARENCE H. GEIST has acquired the following real and personal property:

A. The right, title and interest of Mizner Development Corporation in all the lands owned by said corporation in the town of Boca Raton lying East of the Dixie Highway and embracing, among others, the lands upon which the Cloister Inn, the Administration Building and the Cloister golf course are situated;

B. The furniture and furnishings in the Cloister and the office furniture and fixtures in the Administration Building;

C. The purchase money mortgage given by South East Coast Land Company by Mizner Development Corporation covering lands in Plats I, II and IV;

D. The mortgage or vendor's lien held by Harry M. Chesebro covering the Cloister tract of thirty-two (32) acres;

E. The mortgage held by Frank H. Chesebro covering the Frank H. Chesebro tract of fifteen (15) acres situated in Plat IV;

F. Also certain other personal property of said Mizner Development Corporation including all accounts receivable, maps, engineering records and books of accounts; and

WHEREAS CLARENCE H. GEIST proposes to organize a corporation to take over the said real and personal property in exchange for all the authorized capital stock of such corporation; and

WHEREAS CLARENCE H. GEIST proposes to loan to such corporation a sum of money to provide it with sufficient working capital for its immediate needs; and

WHEREAS CLARENCE H. GEIST has been requested to form a Syndicate in order that others might be able to share in the said undertaking, contribute a portion of the cost and expense thereof, and receive their propor-

tionate share of the stock and securities of said corporation given in exchange for the said property;

WITNESSETH:

1. CLARENCE H. GEIST agrees to organize a corporation under the laws of the State of Florida under such name as may be selected by him with an authorized capital stock consisting of One hundred thousand (100,000) shares without nominal or par value.

2. Such corporation shall be organized to buy, sell and otherwise deal with and deal in real estate and to construct roads, sidewalks, works, buildings, houses or any other thing necessary or convenient to the development or improvement of any real estate and to buy, sell and otherwise deal in and with mortgages, bonds, stock and other securities and for such other purposes as CLARENCE H. GEIST may determine.

It is agreed by and between all parties hereto that the certificate of incorporation of such new corporation and all other details respecting its organization shall, consistent with the provisions of this agreement, be determined by CLARENCE H. GEIST.

3. CLARENCE H. GEIST agrees to transfer and convey all the above mentioned real and personal property to such corporation in exchange for its entire authorized capital stock and its notes or other securities to the amount of \$1,110,000.

4. The amount to be contributed by CLARENCE H. GEIST and GROUP A hereunder shall be One Million (\$1,000,000) Dollars, or such smaller amount as CLARENCE H. GEIST may determine to be sufficient.

CLARENCE H. GEIST shall contribute the difference between the sum of the contributions made by GROUP A and the total amount to be subscribed hereunder and if he shall determine that the total amount to be subscribed hereunder shall be less than One Million (\$1,000,000) Dollars then he shall give notice in writing of such determination to each of the persons constituting GROUP A.

5. The persons constituting GROUP A shall become parties to this agreement by subscribing their names hereto and each of said persons agrees to pay the amount set opposite his name to CLARENCE H. GEIST forthwith.

Any person signing this agreement and failing to pay the amount of his subscription to CLARENCE H. GEIST on or before the 15th day of January, 1928, shall be deemed to have cancelled his subscription and thereupon all the rights hereunder of any such person shall cease and determine.

6. CLARENCE H. GEIST agrees that the said shares of the capital stock of the said corporation (to be formed

as herein provided) received by him in exchange for said property shall be held, disposed of and distributed as follows:

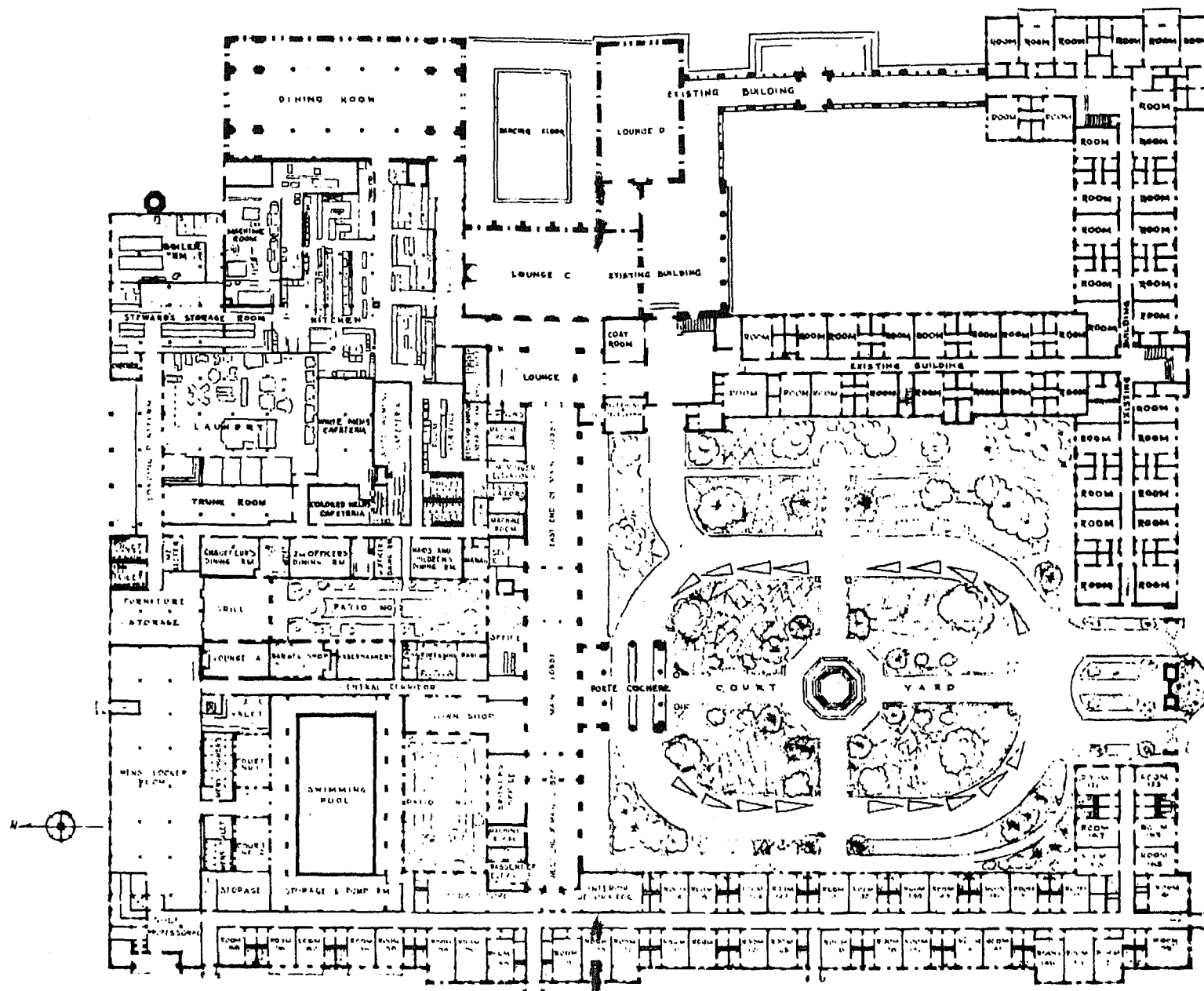
a. The said shares of stock shall be distributed to and among CLARENCE H. GEIST and the several persons constituting GROUP A in the same proportion as their respective contributions bear to the total amount contributed by all the parties hereto.

b. Instead of distributing the said shares of stock, CLARENCE H. GEIST shall have the right to hold the same, as trustee, for such length of time as he may deem advisable, and as may be permitted by law, in which case he shall issue trust receipts therefor to the several persons entitled thereto and, during the time the said shares of stock are held by him, said CLARENCE H. GEIST shall have the exclusive right to vote the same as he shall deem best.

7. CLARENCE H. GEIST agrees that the notes or other securities given to him by said corporation as security for the repayment of any and all monies loaned by him to it hereunder to provide working capital for said corporation or otherwise, except such notes or securities, to an amount not exceeding \$110,000, as he may use for the purpose of acquiring from Central Equities Corporation the lot contracts assigned to it by Mizner Development Corporation and other property, shall be held by him, in trust, for himself and the several persons constituting GROUP A in the same proportion as their respective contributions bear to the total amount contributed by all the parties hereto.

The said notes or other securities above mentioned may be distributed by the said CLARENCE H. GEIST whenever in his judgment it shall deem advisable so to do and until the same shall be distributed any and all monies received by the said CLARENCE H. GEIST in whole or partial payment of said notes or other securities, or for interest, shall be distributed from time to time by the said CLARENCE H. GEIST to the persons entitled thereto.

CLARENCE H. GEIST shall have the right to assign and deliver the said notes or other securities to any bank or trust company in the City of Philadelphia selected by him or to Central Farmers' Trust Company of West Palm Beach, Florida, in which event the same shall be held by such bank or trust company, in trust, for said CLARENCE H. GEIST and the several persons constituting GROUP A in the same proportion as their respective contributions bear to the total amount contributed hereunder.



Ground Plan, Boca Raton Club House

8. The decision of CLARENCE H. GEIST as to any question, matter or thing arising under this agreement, except as to the specified rights and interests of the parties hereto, shall be binding and conclusive upon all the parties hereto; and the decision of CLARENCE H. GEIST as to what further properties shall be acquired, if any, for the corporation to be formed hereunder and all matters connected therewith as to the price to be paid therefor and otherwise; and his decision as to what obligations, encumbrances, liens and expenses shall be assumed by said corporation in taking over the said property or otherwise shall be binding and conclusive upon all the parties hereto.

9. Should CLARENCE H. GEIST, the Syndicate Manager and Trustee hereunder, die, resign or become unable to serve as Syndicate Manager or as Trustee at any time before his duties hereunder as Syndicate Manager or as Trustee shall have been fully performed, then a majority in interest of the persons constituting GROUP A hereunder shall have the right to designate and appoint one of their own number or some other person as the successor of CLARENCE H. GEIST as Syndicate Manager and/or as Trustee hereunder. Such designation and appointment shall be evidenced by a writing subscribed to by a majority in interest of the persons constituting GROUP A and from the time of his appointment as aforesaid such successor shall have all the powers and duties herein conferred upon CLARENCE H. GEIST.

Should the successor so designated and appointed die, resign or become unable to serve before his duties hereunder have been fully performed then and in that case some other person may be designated and appointed to act in his place and stead by a majority in interest of the persons then constituting GROUP A in manner aforesaid and the person so designated and appointed to succeed the successor of said CLARENCE H. GEIST shall have all the powers and duties herein conferred upon the said CLARENCE H. GEIST.

10. This agreement may be executed in any number of counterparts.

From a brochure entitled **Boca Raton Club, Boca Raton, Florida, c. 1929:**

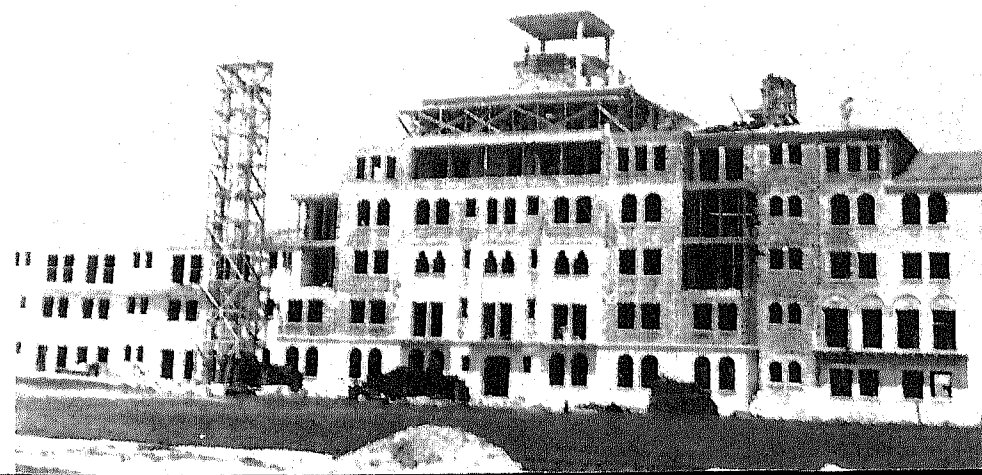
Prospectus

The town of Boca Raton is situated on the east coast of Florida about twenty-seven miles south of Palm Beach and about forty-four miles north of Miami.

During the season there is fast train service direct to Boca Raton from New York, Philadelphia and all central and western cities.

The principal motor highways, the Dixie, and the new Federal highway now under construction, pass through Boca Raton.

The Florida East Coast Canal, a part of the great Inland Waterway, traverses Lake Boca Raton and passes within two hundred feet of the Boca Raton Club House. Congress has provided by law for the improvement of this Canal by the Federal Government, and has appropriated more than four million dollars (\$4,000,000) for construction purposes. This work is to commence as soon as necessary rights of way are secured. The widening and deepening of the East Coast Canal by the Federal Government is believed to be one of the most important improvements ever undertaken in Florida. It will stimulate interest in yachting and motor boating and will afford ready means of inter-communication by water. Undoubtedly



the result will be to greatly enhance the value of property adjoining and adjacent to the East Coast Canal.

Amidst the Splendor of Spanish Architecture

The "Cloister," the Club House of the Boca Raton Club, is situated on the west bank of Lake Boca Raton. It was designed by Addison Mizner, well known architect of Palm Beach, is considered his masterpiece, and acknowledged to be one of the most beautiful buildings in existence. Upon the construction and furnishings of this building more than one million seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars (\$1,750,000) was spent by the Mizner Development Corporation. Since its acquisition by the Boca Raton Club, a very considerable sum of money has been expended in completing the building, in additional furnishings and improvements.

With Conveniences Superior to the Best Appointed Hotel

The "Cloister" now has 173 sleeping rooms and the Club will erect an extensive addition to this building with 425 additional sleeping rooms, an indoor salt water swimming pool, a Healthatorium for ladies and one for men, both with competent attendants, and commodious rooms for sun baths. On the ground floor, in addition to the main dining room, ball room, lounge and card rooms, will be large locker rooms, with a lounge and grill adjacent to the men's room. In the Arcade on this floor will be a barber shop, beauty parlor, rooms for the display of gowns and lingerie, a haberdasher's shop, drug store, jewelry shop, cigar and newsstand, brokers' office and telegraph and telephone offices.

Adjacent to the Club House will be an outdoor salt water swimming pool and a casino on the beach for ocean bathing.

Beautiful Patios that lend to Ease and Comfort

The Club will have five beautiful patios and a wide rocking-chair terrace facing the large patio, which is 350 feet square, with its fountain in the center. For the embellishment of these patios, the Club has purchased an entire nursery of trees, shrubs and flowers.

A children's dining room and a separate dining room for maids and chauffeurs will be provided. The kitchen is to be the best that can be built and the Club will install and operate its own electric light plant, laundry, and a garage with space for two hundred cars.

Golf for Convenience of Everyone

During the past season a new 18-hole golf course has been constructed by Toomey & Flynn of

Philadelphia, and is considered one of the best in the South. On the Club grounds adjoining the "Cloister," a miniature 9-hole golf course (9 greens and 9 tees) has been constructed which will afford excellent practice. This fall the Club will begin the construction of the second 18-hole golf course which will be completed before the opening of the Club House.

At the present time the Club has under way an extensive program of improvements, which includes the cutting of a channel from Lake Boca Raton to the ocean, the building of a jetty on the ocean side of the channel, the construction of a stone bulkhead and fill along the shore of the Lake, the removal of small islands and banks in the Lake and the improvement of the Club grounds by planting a large number of trees, shrubs and flowers.

Every Facility for Outdoor Life and Sports

The principle features of outdoor life at the Club will be golf, tennis, fishing and bathing and every facility will be provided for the thorough enjoyment of these sports. Trap shooting and riding will also be provided for. The deep sea fishing off the Florida coast is famous the world over and this at its best can be found off shore at Boca Raton. With the opening of the inlet to the Lake, it will be possible to reach the fishing grounds from the Club House with little effort and in a very short space of time, and we are informed that Captain Burham Knight, one of the most expert and reliable fishing guides in Florida, plans to move his fishing boats to Boca Raton next season. This will afford an unusual opportunity to those who enjoy fishing to indulge in this sport under the most favorable conditions.

The "Cloister," Administration Building, golf course and a considerable amount of additional land have been purchased by Mr. Geist, and his associates, in a syndicate formed to finance the undertaking.

The Spanish River Land Company, a Florida corporation organized by the Syndicate, purchased the "Cloister," Administration Building and a large tract of land, which includes practically all of the property owned by the Mizner Development Corporation between the Dixie Highway and Lake Boca Raton and in addition 112 acres of land situated on the ocean front. The Syndicate proposes to develop the land between the Dixie Highway and the ocean and expects to make this the finest residential section in Florida.

The Land Company has entered into an agreement with the Boca Raton Club under which the Club is to purchase the "Cloister" with its furniture and furnishings, land for two 18-hole golf courses, a 9-hole miniature golf course, tennis courts, a bathing

beach on the ocean, etc., for \$1,000,000. Under this contract the Club has possession as of April 1, 1928.

Properties Greatly Exceed their Cost to the Club

The property acquired by the Land Company were purchased at very advantageous prices and it is confidently believed that the value of these properties greatly exceeds their cost to the Club, and also that the sale of the land retained by the Land Company will be profitable, in which profits the members of the Club who own stock in the Land Company will be participants.

The Boca Raton Club has been incorporated under the Florida laws and is a proprietary club, hence each member is part owner of the Club's property and assets. Under the Club charter each member must own a proprietary certificate.

A membership in the Club costs \$5,000, which includes the cost of proprietary certificate as now fixed by the Board of Governors.

Dues will be \$100 a year commencing January 1, 1930.

Until further notice each Club member will receive as a bonus fifty shares of the stock of Spanish River Land Company, of which the total authorized capital is 100,000 shares without par value and non-assessable. The Club proposes to sell seven hundred memberships at \$5,000 each. This will produce \$3,500,000 and of this sum approximately \$1,000,000 will be required to pay the initial cost of the Club property and the balance will be used for additions, improvements and improvements to the Club House and grounds.

Under this plan the only profit to the Syndicate members will be such as is realized from the sale of land that is not required for and taken by the Boca Raton Club, and in these profits the Club members will participate through the shares of stock they receive as a bonus with their Club memberships.

To Provide Accommodations in Pleasing Surroundings

The object of the Club is to provide accommodations for its members and facilities for golf, fishing, bathing, tennis and other outdoor sports. The purpose of the Officers of this Club is to make these accommodations as comfortable as possible, to provide the best facilities for the enjoyment of outdoor sports and indoor social activities, so that the members and their families will be able to enjoy life to the fullest extent in a congenial atmosphere amid beautiful surroundings, at a very moderate cost, without the . . . [last page missing from brochure.]

CLOISTER INTERIOR DECORATOR SELECTED

Clarence H. Geist, Philadelphia capitalist, who is adding 600 rooms to The Cloister, Boca Raton, has appointed Olan S. Berberyan, Palm Beach and New York art dealer, as director of interior furnishings of the club.

Mr. Geist is adding to the Cloister six hundred bedrooms, outdoor dining and entertainment rooms and three swimming pools from plans prepared by Schultz & Weaver.

The furnishings of the club will be unique and will be unlike those of any other country club or resort hotel in America.

Mr. Berberyan came to Florida 12 years ago in connection with the furnishings of the Charles and James Deering estates at Miami and opened a branch establishment at Palm Beach.

Mr. Berberyan is working with L. Alavoine & Company, Charles of London, William Sloane Coffin and Paul Chalfin, authorities in their respective fields.

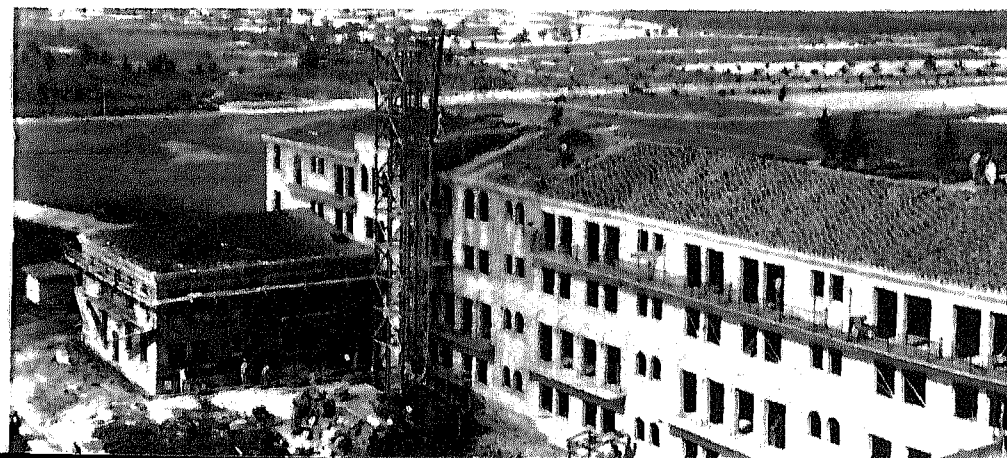
From the **Palm Beach Post**, (c. 5 January 1929):

ARRIVAL OF GEIST MARKS OPENING OF BOCA RATON CLUB Many Guests Already Present at Magnificent Clubhouse

With the arrival Saturday at Boca Raton of C.H. Geist, president of the Boca Raton Club, the new clubhouse, which will be one of the outstanding winter sports centers of the country, is unofficially open.

Guests are arriving and being received at the club, which will be officially open after January 7. There will be no formal affair to mark the opening, Mr. Geist said. The magnificent new \$5,000,000 clubhouse, which has evolved from the nucleus of the former Cloister Inn, with its extensive grounds will form the center of every type of winter sports this winter.

Mr. Geist arrived Saturday in his private car. He was accompanied by his daughter, Miss Elizabeth Geist, and nephew, Bradley Geist. The party went directly to Boca Raton, where Mr. Geist will occupy a large suite at the club, having leased his Palm Beach home for the season.



The following undated typescript in the archives of the Boca Raton Historical Society seems to be a speech which Clarence Geist planned to deliver to the citizens of Boca Raton. At the end are handwritten notes which he wished to add to his talk:

KEEPING THE CITY CLEAN

There are just two pests we have to contend with in Boca Raton. The first is politics. I want to see politics wiped out of the city completely. The thing to do is for the people living in this Town to get together and talk things over, just like a City of Brotherly Love. Don't have any enemies at all. People who have enemies usually make their own enemies. The politician that talks about anyone is not fit to be a politician. He would not make a good officer. There is a lot of good in everyone. Always see the good, and whatever bad qualities your neighbor has, help him cure them. It is a disease. Little politicians never get anywhere in the world. You want to remember that a politician has but one idea in view and that is to help himself. I don't know of any politicians that have any idea of helping anyone else but themselves. And you want to remember, when a man is going around soliciting your vote, he is soliciting your vote for the purpose of helping himself not to help you. That begins with the highest office in the United States and goes down to the smallest office in the United States. Especially a community of this size should get together and have a good, plain, straight talk among themselves and pick out a good representative man and elect him to the office of the town without any salary. The only ones in the town that should draw any salary should be the Town Clerk that keeps the books, the man who runs the Waterworks and the Policeman.

The second greatest pest you have to deal with in this community is the mosquito. I, personally, was on the Mosquito Commission in Jersey for 6 years. I have just resigned because I could not give it enough attention. We found that in Atlantic County, New Jersey, the mosquito is the greatest pest there and the Commission has a man who goes around from house to house in the different sections and looks out for rain barrels, tin cans and little pools, and gets the people to bury their tin cans, because one tin can can breed 1,000 mosquitoes every day and a small pool might breed 1,000,000 mosquitoes in a day, and if the people will get together and watch the colored population and persuade them to bury their tin cans and keep their rain barrels covered, and if the whole community will be inclined to watch the mosquito situation, I see no reason why this community should not be well rid of mosquitoes. If they don't do this, you are never going to make any money out of your town, because people are not going to



come down here and be pestered with mosquitoes. You want to remember that this community is not worth \$1.00 only as a resort and you are not going to make any money in this community except through people coming here in the Winter to get the benefit of the splendid climate that this City affords, and I am here to say that Boca Raton, in my estimation, has the finest climate of any spot in Florida. It is way beyond Palm Beach. I cannot say the reason why, but it is a fact just the same. This being practically a virgin community, we have an opportunity here to make it the finest spot in all Florida. I am anxious to have a town built here that everyone will be proud of. Where people will be proud to have their children in later years say that they were born and reared in Boca Raton, Fla., the cleanest, nicest city in the State of Florida, which can be done if the people here will work shoulder to shoulder to accomplish this fact. There is no community that can thrive where people disagree among themselves. Where you have a bad actor in your community and you find that you cannot make this bad actor a good citizen, if you all let him alone for a while, he will soon get out of your community. He wont want to live among people that dont like him. Anyone that is disliked in a community in 99 cases out of a hundred, brought the trouble on himself. I am anxious to see a strictly honest Government here, and the way to keep a Government strictly honest and straight is for the people of the community to watch the Government and see that it is kept strictly honest. Everyone should have to pay just as little taxes as possible. No money should be thrown away on any foolish improvements. The property here should be assessed at such a rate that it will pay everyone to pay their taxes each year and no delinquents, and if the property owners in the Town of Boca Raton find out that it is going to pay them to pay their taxes and keep their property, they are going to put their best foot forward to do so. Then everyone will be paying so much money into the Treasury of the City, and if the people will see that the money is properly expended, you will always have money in the Treasury and you will have a good credit, so that you can always be able to finance your City, so that you will have no trouble in building any improvements that you may want.

Bring the people here for the Winter, get their money while they are here and you wont have to do a lot of work throughout the hot weather of the Summer, except get ready to get their money next season when they come here. People who come here are willing to be liberal and spend their money, if the people who live here the year round as permanent residents are nice to them and take good care of them. They will

come back from year to year. You can always catch more flies with molasses than you can with vinegar.

I dont want to run your political situation here one minute. I want you to run it yourselves, but if I go ahead and build a splendid community of houses and homes, it is going to be necessary for the people who live here to cooperate with me. If I do not get this cooperation, then we will go ahead and run the Boca Raton Club as a club and pay very little attention to building homes or the building of a City. We can always run the Boca Raton Club regardless of what the political situation is and regardless of what the people have to say or do, but when it comes to building homes for the people to live in, that is a different proposition entirely, and I want you all to know that you can always come to me for any advice that I may be able to give you, and I will always give you the best advice I can, but it should be in every man's heart and every woman's heart to build up the community and assist in making it the best that there is in the State of Florida. This community can be made most beautiful. There is nothing in the North that can even have a "look-in" with Boca Raton as a beautiful city, because they do not have the climate to grow the flowers and the flowers are not good flowers unless the people who take care of them are good people.

My coming to Boca Raton does not mean that I came here to take anything away, because there is nothing here to take away. The sun, the ocean and the climate is something that no one can take away from this Town. They are here to stay. Everything that I do here must be bringing something to Boca Raton and leaving it here instead of taking it away.

But dont forget to get rid of the mosquito.

Another thing I want to mention is that my loaning the City of Boca Raton the money to build the waterworks is something that I take great pride in. Water is the foundation of every community, and without GOOD water, no one will ever come into this town. Now that we have the waterworks, we must all be interested in seeing that we keep good water. There is no City in the State of Florida or in the United States, in my estimation, that has a better water supply than we have here. In going through any town, if you will notice the houses that have been sprayed at the time of watering the flowers and lawn, if the water is bad water it will color the house brown, if the water is good water it will not effect the houses, and the same thing applies to the kidneys and stomach. There are three things that kill people--The first is bad water, the second bad whisky and the third good whisky.

In regard to the election of officers. There is one thing that is absolutely necessary if we get

people to come down here and make their home in Boca Raton and if we build houses, and that is that the election be held about the third Tuesday in February. In other words, I want this election held so that the people who make their home here have the right to vote. If the election is held as it is now on the first of June, or any other month except February, it is going to be a hardship on the people who are going to spend their money in this community during the Winter months, so that if I build homes for the people here, the election must be held during the months that they live here, so that they can be representatives of this community.

[Then following in script]:

Talk about Federal Highway

Beautify our city with flowers. Explain my new plan.

We want a new Depot
We must look Prosperous

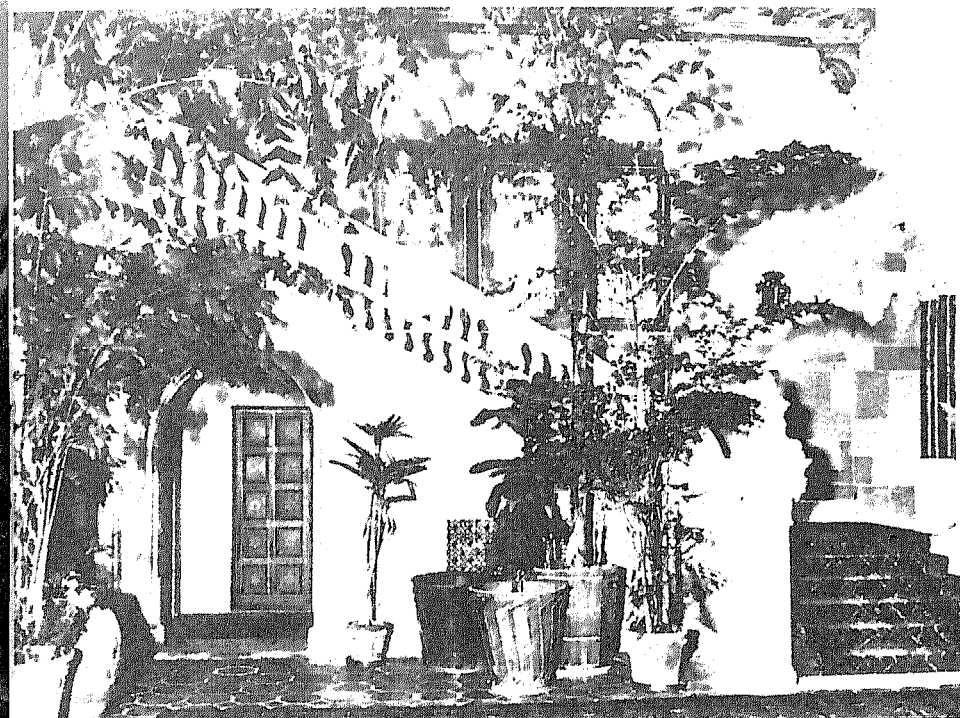
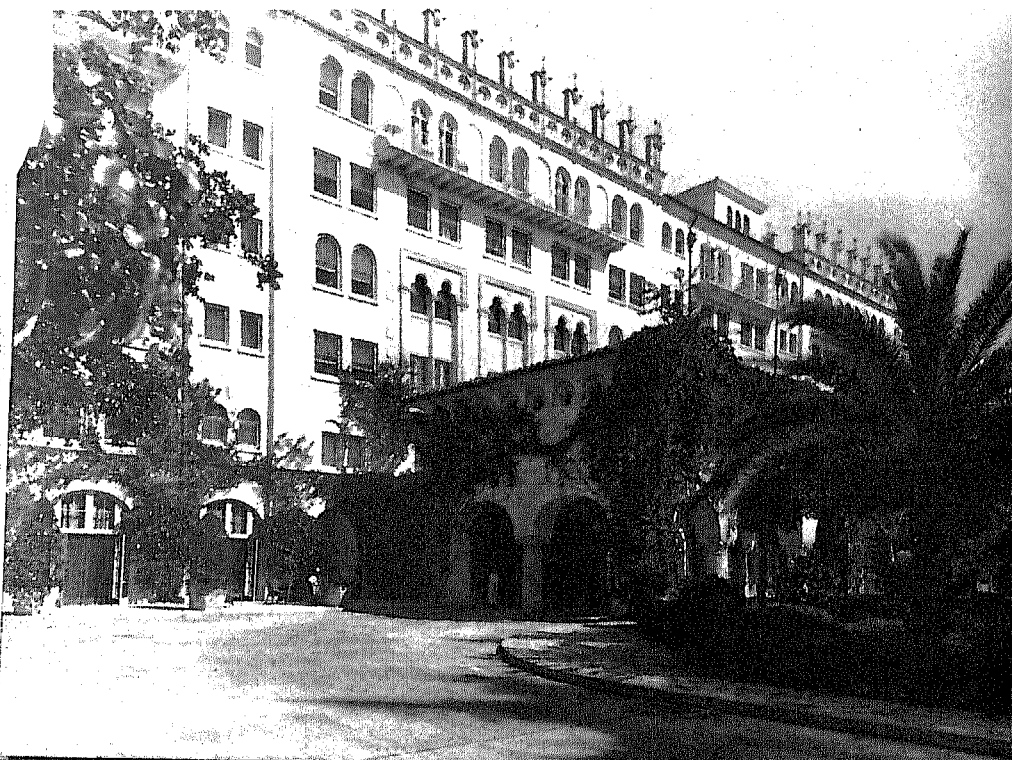
We are going to fill in
the Spanish River. And
all low places on our Land

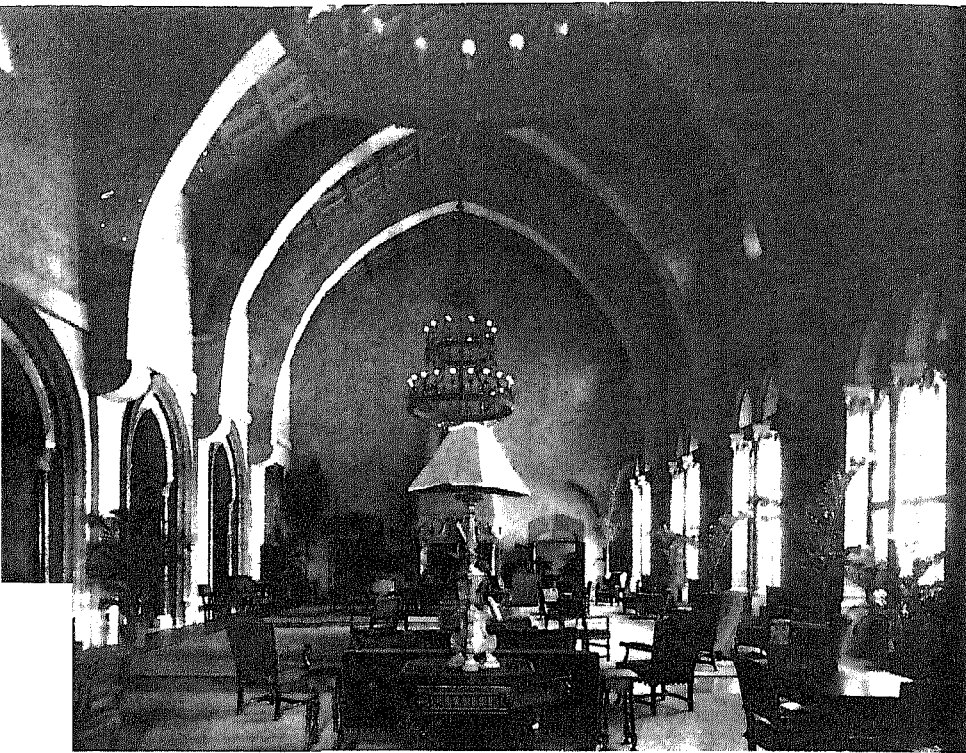
As he mentioned in his talk, Clarence Geist had been responsible for the town's new water treatment plant. The process by which the town decided to take on the burden of building the treatment plant can be traced from the minutes of the Town Commission.

Item from the Meeting of June 13th, 1928.

Mr. Clark L. Poole, representing Mr. Clarence H. Geist appeared before the Commission, speaking of Mr. Geist's desire to have a plant installed by the Town of Boca Raton, which would purify and soften the water. A general discussion by the citizens of Boca Raton followed. Their desire to have this plant installed was shown by a rising vote, which was unanimous. Mayor Brown made motion that the Commission confer with Mr. Geist and his Engineer, regarding the cost of erection of this plant and put the matter before the people again. Clerk Butler seconded this motion and same was carried by the following vote on Roll Call:

Butler, Yea; Godwin, Yea; Brown, Yea.





While awaiting the launching of construction of the clubhouse, work has been going forward on beautification and landscaping the grounds, it was announced at the office. Intensive landscaping, dredging of the lake and construction of an inlet and jetty are all under way. The new golf course, laid out by Toomey and Flynn, golf architects, has been completed.

Renovation of the former administration building for use as a club house during the coming season is going forward. Although there will be no living quarters in the building, it will be maintained as an up-to-date golf club house for use of members who play on the links. A restaurant will also be operated during the season.

A Special Meeting called for the purpose of considering having detailed plans and specifications drawn for a water softening and filtration plant, to be erected by the Town of Boca Raton in the Town of Boca Raton, Florida. This meeting is called on July 16th, 1928, realizing the necessity of haste in having plant installed, to co-operate with Mr. C.H. Geist of the Spanish River Land Company.

The Special Meeting was called to order at 5:30 P.M., June 16th, 1928. The following Commissioners were present on Roll Call:

Butler, Godwin and Brown

Commissioner Godwin offered the following motion. The Commission has this day investigated thoroughly the water softening and filtration plant, at Cocoa, Florida, owned and operated by the City of Cocoa, and in their minds, think it is a wise plan to have similar plans and specifications draw by the J.B. McCrary Engineering Corporation, the designers of said plant at Cocoa, Florida. This motion was seconded by Mayor Brown and carried by the following vote, on Roll Call:

Butler, Yea; Godwin, Yea; Brown, Yea.



Mayor Brown offered the Resolution as follows:

An ORDINANCE of the TOWN OF BOCA RATON declaring that a grave emergency exists in the Town of Boca Raton in which the public health and safety are involved, and to provide for the completion of the water works, the construction of a suitable pumping station and the installation of necessary pumps and otherwise equipping the same, and for the construction of a water softening and purification plant, and for the construction of an additional driven well, and to authorize the borrowing of the necessary moneys to make payment therefor.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE TOWN COMMISSION OF THE TOWN OF BOCA RATON AS FOLLOWS: --

Sec. 1 - That the Town Commission of the Town of Boca Raton does hereby determine and declare that a grave emergency exists in the Town of Boca Raton, in which the public health and safety are involved, and does hereby determine to provide for the construction of a suitable pumping station, for the installation of necessary pumps and otherwise equipping the same, and for the construction of a water softening and purification plant, and for the construction of an additional driven well, and does hereby appropriate the sum of \$55,000.00, Fifty Five Thousand Dollars, for the purpose of paying therefor.

Sec. 2 - That the Town Commission of the Town of Boca Raton does hereby determine to borrow the aforesaid sum of Fifty Five Thousand Dollars and to provide for the payment of such moneys by issuing to the person or corporation loaning the same notes or obligations of the Town aggregating said principal sum, bearing interest at the rate of six percent (6%) per annum, payable semi-annually July first and January first of each year; such notes shall be dated as of the date when said loan shall be actually made to the Town of Boca Raton, and shall be in such amounts so that one-fifth of the total amount of said loan shall be payable January first of each year, beginning with January 1, 1929, and each of such notes shall provide that in the event the Town of Boca Raton shall default in the payment of any interest on any date when the same is made payable, then, and in that case, at the option of the holder thereof, the entire principal sum shall then be and become due and payable, anything in such note to the contrary notwithstanding; and such notes shall be signed by the Commissioners of the Town of Boca Raton and shall be countersigned by the Treasurer; the moneys borrowed upon such notes shall be expended and used only for the purpose for which they were issued as herein provided.

Sec. 3 - That the Town Commission of the Town of Boca Raton does hereby authorize the Treasurer of the Town of Boca Raton, in its name and behalf, to borrow the said sum of Fifty Five Thousand Dollars and to issue and deliver notes of the Town of Boca Raton made and executed in accordance with this Ordinance.

Sec. 4 - This Ordinance shall take effect immediately upon its passage and, thereupon, it shall be signed and published or posted as required by law.

After said Resolution was read in full, Mayor Brown made motion that Resolution be adopted. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Godwin and passed by the following vote, on Roll Call:

Butler, Yea; Godwin, Yea; Brown, Yea.



An article by Ernie Prevatte in the Sun-Sentinel of 23 October 1963.

"Skids Are Greased For Boom Period Treatment Plant"

BOCA RATON--The walls of Boca Raton's old water treatment plant, a link with the boom-and-bust period of the 1920s for this south Palm Beach County city, will soon come tumbling down.

And no ordinary water plant was this facility, which was dedicated in 1926 to serve a permanent population of about a dozen plus the Boca Raton Hotel's winter guests.

Nothing comparable existed in the state of Florida for a city the size of Boca Raton and it's doubtful if there were many in America of the same standard.

Boca's lime-softening water treatment plant in fact, was about the second or third one in the Sunshine State. Others at the time were the ones at Miami and one at West Palm Beach.

But Boca's stood apart, even if for no other reason than it was housed in a frame designed in the classical Spanish style created here and in parts of Palm Beach by the Mizner brothers.

According to Bill Prendergast, director of public works in Boca Raton, it was not the Mizners, but their successor, Clarence Geist, who financed the building for the water treatment plant in the late 20s.

Which may be natural, in that Geist was a midwestern magnate in the utilities business. He purchased the hotel and club from the Mizners after the big bust.

When Geist came to Boca Raton, the city was served by several small wells which produced a hard water which wasn't the most desirable kind. This included a few for the hotel.

Geist wanted to keep all the municipal buildings in town designed in the Spanish motif of the Mizners, which accounts for the unusual structure that houses the plant.

The plant pumped up to 500,000 gallons per day, says Prendergast and was operated by Maurice Stokes, the city's first water plant operator. Stokes' home stood on what is now Federal Highway, and according to reports, he could see the water level table from his house. When it was down he'd walk across the tracks and pump it up enough to last a couple of days.

The water treatment plant outlasted others of its origin and up until 1956 still served the city of

Boca Raton.

Prendergast illustrates how antiquated the equipment was becoming before it was finally abandoned with this story:

"Early in 1950's," recalls Prendergast, "we needed a certain part replaced. We wrote the manufacturer in Chicago for a new part and listed the code number of the piece of equipment.

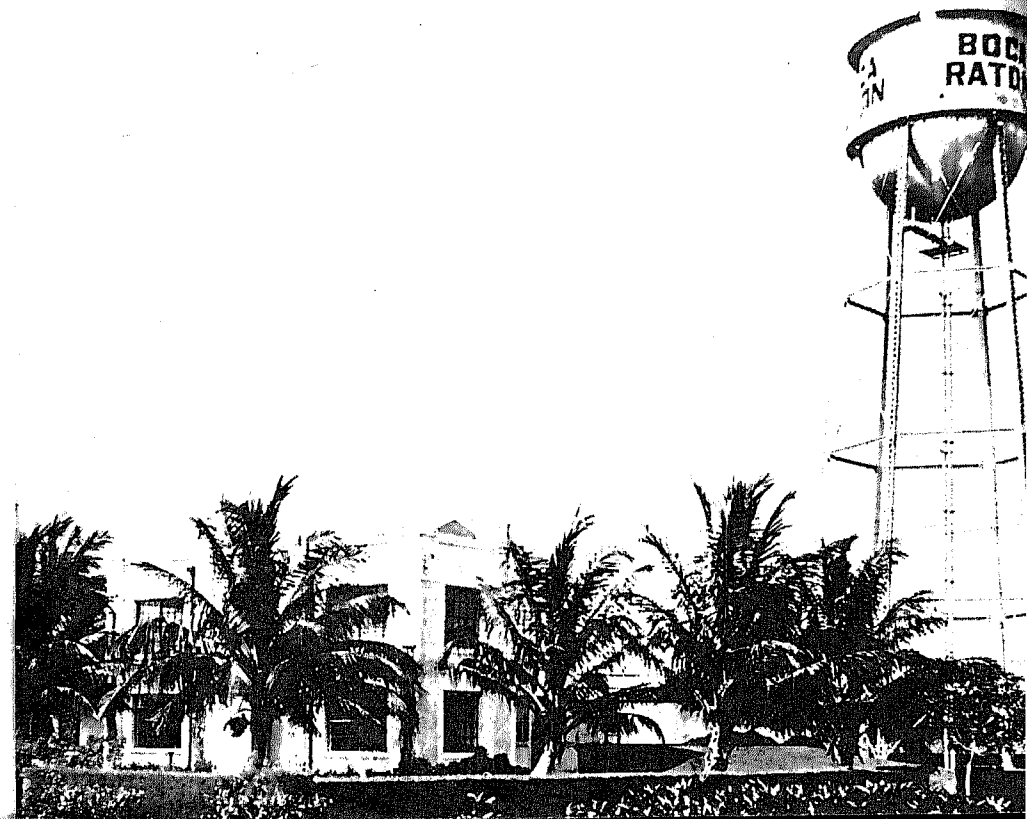
"A few days later an investigator came down here from Chicago to look at our plant because no one there even knew the company had ever made that piece of equipment.

"That's how old it was."

So, in 1956, the city was forced to expand the system here and an old Army plant was taken over and beefed up to pump up to 3 million gallons per day. The old plant was put on reserve status.

Now another expansion has been made that brings the city's capacity up to 8 million gallons per day and the old water treatment facility has to go to make way for progress.

Where the relic now stands a city hall complex will rise within a year and the Mizner model will crumble under the strain of a wrecking crew.



What Clarence Geist wanted from the Town of Boca Raton he most always got. The town commission passed a resolution on 26 March 1929 authorizing the town attorney to prepare notice of local legislation for introduction before the 1929 session of the Florida legislature for a new charter for the Town of Boca Raton. This action was successful, and on 15 June 1929 at a special meeting of the commission the following resolution was presented:

RESOLUTION CALLING FOR THE REGULAR MUNICIPAL ELECTION OF THE TOWN OF BOCA RATON, AS PROVIDED BY SECTION 2 OF ARTICLE 4 OF "AN ACT OF THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF FLORIDA, REGULAR SESSION 1929, CREATING THE NEW TOWN OF BOCA RATON, WHICH ACT WAS HOUSE BILL 927 OF SAID SESSION OF SAID LEGISLATURE AND WHICH ACT WAS APPROVED BY THE GOVERNOR MAY 24th, 1929 AND WHICH ACT WAS RATIFIED BY THE VOTERS OF THE TOWN OF BOCA RATON AT THE REFERENDUM ELECTION HELD PURSUANT TO THE TERMS OF SAID ACT, IN THE TOWN OF BOCA RATON ON JUNE 14th, A.D. 1929.

WHEREAS, the Legislature of the State of Florida, 1929 regular session, by House Bill 927, which Act was approved by the Governor of the State of Florida, May 24th, 1929 and which Act, pursuant to the terms thereof, was ratified at the Referendum Election of the voters of said Town, at election held in said Town on June 14th, 1929, and

WHEREAS, Section 2 of Article 4 of said Act provided, "It shall be the duty of the members composing the Town Commission of the Town hereby abolished, within sixty days after this Act shall become a law, to meet as a Town Commission and to take all steps necessary and proper to call and hold an election for the election of a Mayor, five members of the Council and a Town Clerk, such election to be called and held as provided by the ordinances of the Town hereby abolished" and

WHEREAS it is provided by the Ordinance of the Town of Boca Raton, by such Act abolished, that it shall be the duty of the Mayor to issue his Proclamation announcing any Annual or Special election, said Proclamation shall be published at least thirty days prior to said election by posting same at the door of the Council Chamber.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Town Commission of the Town of Boca Raton, Florida, that the first regular municipal election of the Town of Boca Raton, under the new Charter of the Town of Boca Raton as passed by the Legislature of the State of Florida, 1929 Regular Session, the same being House Bill #927, which Act was approved by the Governor, May 24th, 1929, which election shall be held for the purpose of electing a Mayor, five members of the

Addison Mizner's subdivision, which marked the climax of his artistic dreams, is destined to be transformed into a "sportsman's paradise," according to the plans of the new purchaser. Golfing, yachting, swimming, tennis and riding will all be included in the program of sports which Mr. Geist plans as the outstanding attractions of the club he proposes to operate.

Although under a new name, the Inn will be operated as a hotel this season and be added to and turned into a club during the 1929 season, he said. Plans for doubling the 150 room capacity of the Inn, with addition of swimming pavilions and other improvements were sketched for next year.

Accompanying Mr. Geist to Palm Beach in his private car were Toomey and Flynn, golf architects of national reputation; E.A. Belmont, of Philadelphia, interior decorator, and A.L. Baker, of New York, who is to be new manager of the Cloisters.

"I propose to run this new project along entirely different lines," he said; "no one connected with the old organization will have anything to do with it under the new regime. All property owners will be protected to the fullest, and will be able to obtain clear titles to their property."

Mr. Geist expects to spend today going over the Boca Raton property with the members of his staff on hand. The golf architects will begin work at once, he said, laying out and reconstructing the course so that it will be ready for the winter season. Early next week he expects to return to Philadelphia and will not come back to Palm Beach, he said, until January 9, just prior to the opening of the new club. He stated that he would continue to live in his winter home, "La Claridad," on Golf View road. He has been a winter resident in Palm Beach for the past 20 years.

"My purchase of the Mizner properties," he said, "is absolute proof of my belief in Florida and its future. As long as Florida sunshine continues to shine people will come to Florida."

Mr. Geist was also accompanied by J.D. Gedney, his attorney. Mr. Gedney entered a bid for the property some weeks ago, which was rejected as too low by L. Earl Curry, referee in bankruptcy. At that time the bid was made in Mr. Gedney's name and there was no mention of Mr. Geist.

Confirmation of yesterday's sale is expected to be made within the next 10 days by Mr. Curry. Owing to the fact that the sale has been approved unanimously by the trustees, no objection is expected. E.B. Halter, of Boca Raton; E.B. Davis and L.L. Ford, of West Palm Beach, trustees, conducted the sale yesterday. Eight or 10 additional bids were received, but the Geist offer was the only one considered, according to the trustees.

the respective offices to be voted upon by at least 25 qualified electors of the Town of Boca Raton.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that C.W. Brown, Margaret Young and C.S. Rushing shall serve as Inspectors and F.H. Arnold, John LaMont and Hattie Long Deyo shall serve as Clerks and I.L. Blackman shall serve as Deputy to conduct said election.

In case any of the above mentioned Inspectors or Clerks shall be unable to serve at such election, then it shall become the duty of the Town Commission to fill such vacancy.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that notices of said election shall be issued by the Proclamation of the Mayor, which Proclamation shall be published at least thirty days prior to said election, by posting same at the door of the Council chamber and three other conspicuous places within the limits of said Town, which notice shall be in the following words and figures, to wit:

Approved and Adopted this 15th day of June, A.D.
1929.

.....
Leo C. Godwin
Beulah Buttler
TOWN COMMISSION

From the Palm Beach Times, 18 July 1929:

NAME OFFICERS AT BOCA RATON

Fred Aiken Is Elected Mayor; Street Brawl Reported

Voters of the two of Boca Raton yesterday elected Fred C. Aiken, mayor; Mrs. Bulah Butler, clerk, named five commissioners and unanimously passed a bill authorizing the town government to settle and adjust all taxes due up to 1928.

Aiken, formerly of New York and Chicago, was elected mayor over A. Brenk, his only opponent. Aiken received 80 votes and Brenk 54.

Mrs. Butler defeated Louise Brenk in a two-sided race for the post of town clerk. Mrs. Butler received 90 votes to her opponent's 40.

In the commission race, Harry Chesebro was high man with 89 votes. Others elected were J.C. Mitchell with 85 votes, E. J. Bender with 82, Leo C. Godwin with 79 votes and W.C. Young with 67 votes. Seven others were in the race for the five commission posts.

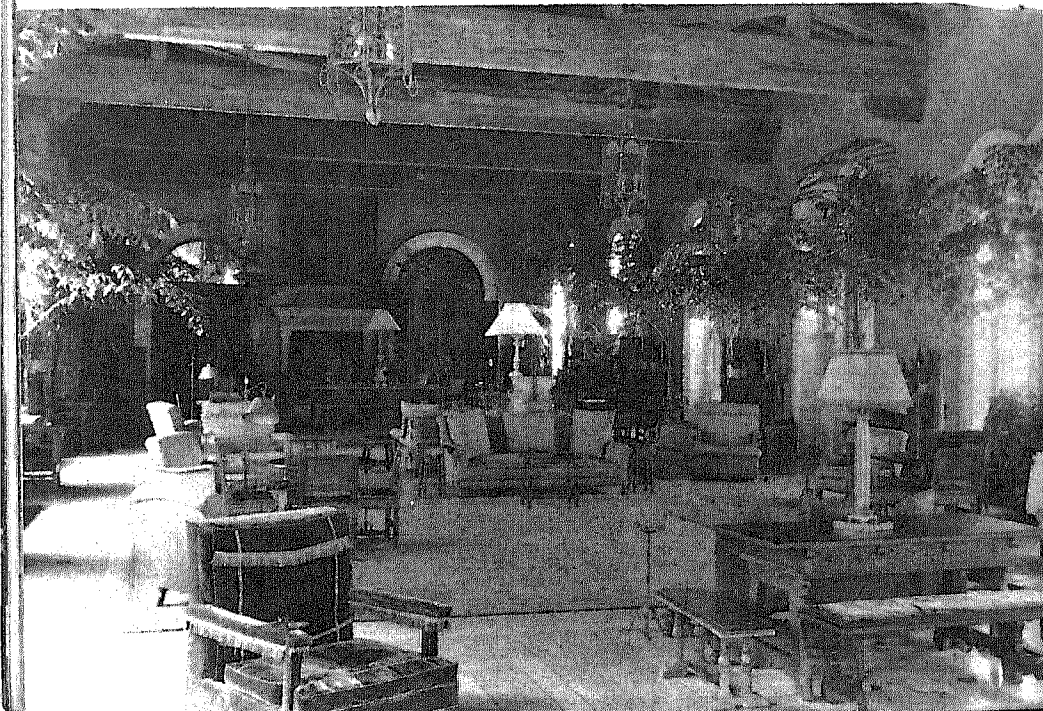
The bill authorizing the town governing body to settle and adjust taxes due up to 1928 was passed by unanimous vote with 75 voters casting "yes" ballots. The bill had been passed as law by the state legislature and needed yesterday's referendum approval to become effective.

The election was marked by a street altercation between Mayor J.E. Brown of Boca Raton and Commissioner Leo C. Godwin. The fracas began with arguments and ended when Police Chief I.L. Blackman disarmed the mayor as the latter brandished a gun. Fists flew for a time and deputy sheriffs from West Palm Beach were even called to the scene but no arrests were made and the matter was said to have been personal and political in nature. No one was hurt in the fracas.

The following article by C. O. Smith was written sometime in the late 1920s for the Southam chain of newspapers:

BOCA RATON CLUB, FLA.---Florida, internationally famous as a winter playground and health-giving resting place, has a new star in its constellation of beauty spots. It is Boca Raton Club. Unlike Palm Beach and Miami, Boca Raton Club has never advertised itself and has refrained from society-column publication of pictures of its guests. If Boca Raton is known only to the few this is by design, but the palatial and amazingly beautiful Boca Raton Club is admitted to be, by all who know it, the most complete and perfectly appointed establishment of its kind in the world. It is not a hotel but a private club. Its distinctive qualities quite set it apart from the great public caravanseraies of the South.

One speaks of Boca Raton only in association with the name of Clarence H. Geist. He is its



president and creator. Here is a man who exhibits that not common combination--the man of large affairs with the poet's vision and love of the beautiful. Today he is one of America's outstanding capitalists. Not so many years ago he was an Indiana farm boy. The story of farmer distress heard so much these times is no new story to Mr. Geist. The elations and anxieties of farm life are old experiences for him. Eventually, he declares, he asked himself, after several years spent in the Western States: "How can a man make any money where there isn't any money?" He went to Chicago, arrived there with \$12 in his pocket, worked one happy year as a collector for the Rock Island Railway, got into the real estate business and thereupon began his fabulously successful climb up the hill of high finance.

"I am often asked," he says, "how a man can build up a fortune. Well, the first money I ever made was as a boy of 14 trading horses and I am still trading horses. Hard work, some luck and a watchful eye open for the right opportunity, explain most fortunes. Opportunities usually do not come with bells and whistles. You have to discover them without signals."

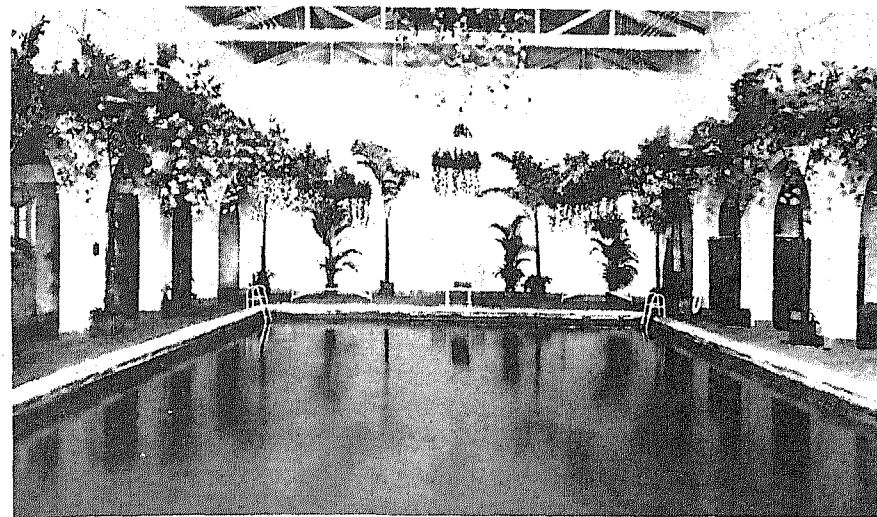
This seems delightfully simple but the process of piling up one of the big estates of the country was probably not so easy as it sounds from Mr. Geist's description of it.

The forestalling of an established public utility corporation in Illinois was his first big coup. The corporation began gathering in suburban franchises near Chicago. If such franchises would make money for other capitalists, the young financier reasoned, they might make money for him. So he beat them to it in several instances and as time rolled on found himself owner or in control of utilities in several hundred municipalities in Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Tennessee, Alabama, Virginia, Delaware, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and New York. No man in the United States has ever controlled or owned all the stocks of so many enterprises of this type.

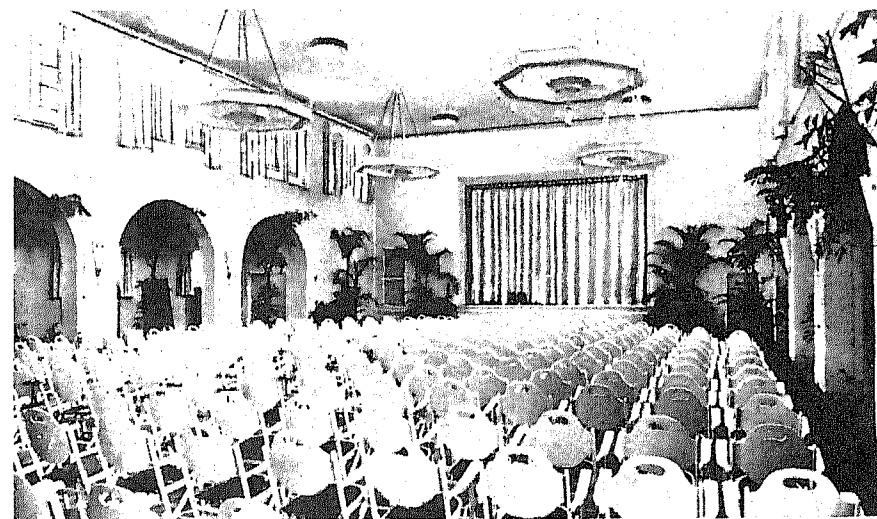
Many of these he sold in the expansion period prior to 1929; others he converted into mergers; he is still sole owner of utilities in several American communities, including the Indianapolis Water Company, the largest privately owned utility of its kind in the United States, the Philadelphia Suburban Water Company, and the American Pipe and Construction Company.

So much for the financial route along which one of America's most forceful characters travelled in amassing millions. Now for two examples of how he has spent some of them.

Mr. Geist personally built the Sea View Golf Club near Atlantic City. That this is the finest golf centre in America is uniformly admitted. That is, in its classification--the luxury country club--



Geist later had Palm Beach architect Maurice Fatio convert the indoor swimming pool into an auditorium.



the most successful, is as freely conceded. Its 1800 members come from all parts of the United States, from Canada, England and France. This semi-northern success inspired Mr. Geist to embark upon a somewhat like venture, but on a more elaborate scale, in Florida. Boca Raton Club is the fruit of that decision.

The late lamented Florida land boom burnt many fingers but not those of Clarence H. Geist. He surveyed the scene with extreme care. He got exactly the location he wanted, with land high and dry, lying midway between Miami and Palm Beach. It is faced by an exceptional sand beach. A natural lake separates it from the Atlantic Ocean. He bought it from the original development company after the latter had sold \$31,000,000 worth of lots, most of which got back to the first owners.

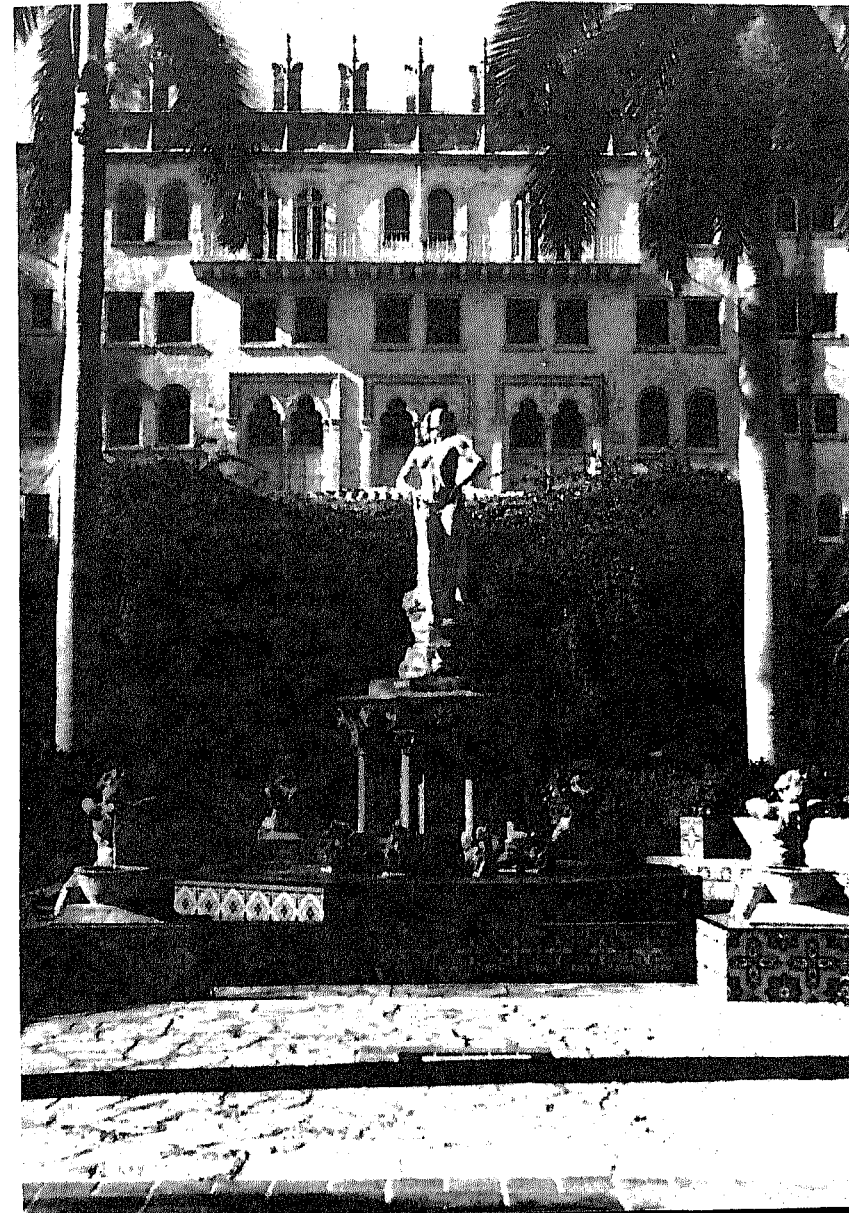
Mr. Geist's ideal in building Boca Raton Club was to provide for residential members the most beautiful place in the world that could be used as a winter home, with more than the comforts and none of the responsibilities of private home management, to give to them, indeed infinitely more than private home ownership could possibly supply. On this ideal he has already spent more than seven and a half million dollars.

"I never went into this to make money," he states. "Indeed, one of the reasons why the club has been such a success, and will be a much greater success, is that from the beginning I was not much concerned about whether it would pay its way or not."

In so brief an article, to describe Boca Raton Club at all adequately would not be possible. It is primarily an exquisite home built to accommodate several hundred members. Being in Florida its architecture naturally is of Spanish style and all the growth that adorns its landscaping is tropical or semi-tropical. To picture the main lobby, the various lounges, the dining room, its inner and outer dancing patios, its courts with their fountains, palms and shrubs, I would be compelled to employ adjectives that would seem sheer exaggeration. Yet there would be no exaggeration. One can only make comparisons with things seen, not with those of which one has read or heard. But put simply, this is regarded as the loveliest structure, in construction and equipment, utilized for such purposes, ever erected in the world.

The outer features are on the most extensive scale. If the ocean is not enough for swimming, there are three salt-water pools. There are tennis courts, a solarium, two wonderful golf courses. Experts declare that Boca Raton's south course is one of the three best golf courses in the world. Tommy Armour, Canadian Open Champion, who is pro here, positively asserts that it is the finest course he knows anywhere.

So we come back to the combination required for the creation of a place so beautiful and so complete, the combination of exceptional business ability and vision found in Clarence H. Geist, who had the imagination to conceive and the resources and courage to construct this architectural gem set by the sea that washes the Florida shore.



Letter from Clarence H. Geist to Mrs. H. M. Chesebro
26 April 1937

My dear Mrs. Chesebro:

Mrs. Geist has referred to me your letter of April 17th, and it give me great pleasure to enclose herewith my check to the order of the Boca Raton M.E. Church, in the amount of \$150.00.

I am sorry I did not have a chance to have a visit with Mr. Chesebro and you at Boca Raton this season but the fact is I was not well all winter. When I first arrived in Florida, I had an attack of Colitis, which is inflammation of the large Colon, and the last two week I was at the Club I had the Gout, so I came home much earlier than I expected. I am feeling much better now.

With best regards to Mr. Chesebro and you, I am
Sincerely yours, C.H. Geist

From The New York Times, 13 June 1938:

CLARENCE H. GEIST,
UTILITY LEADER, 72
Philadelphia Financier, Once Associated
With Charles G. Dawes in Chicago, Dies
Founded Two Golf Clubs
Seaview at Atlantic City and
Boca Raton in Florida--On
Bryn Mawr College Board

Philadelphia, June 12--Clarence H. Geist, public utility leader and one of Philadelphia's leading financiers, died today at his home, Launfal, in Villanova, after a short illness.

Mr. Geist was president of C.H. Geist Company, Inc., with offices in the Packard Building. He was also president and director of the American Pipe and Construction Company, the Philadelphia Suburban Water Company, the Spanish River Land Company and a number of other concerns.

He was a director of the United Gas Improvement Company, a member of the board of trustees of Jefferson Medical College, the board of directors of Bryn Mawr College and vice president and director of Bryn Mawr Horse Show and County Fair.

A Native of Indiana

Mr. Geist was 72 years old last Jan. 19. Born in 1866 on a farm near LaPorte, Ind., Mr. Geist was educated at Valparaiso Normal School and worked on his father's farm until he was 18.

At that time he decided to go West and for the next four or five years he roamed the country, dealing in live stock, principally horses, and living largely in the saddle.

Speaking of his early life, Mr. Geist said he returned to Chicago at that time because "no one in the West had any money, and I discovered the fact that I could not make any money where there wasn't any."

He worked for the Rock Island Railroad for about a year before entering the real estate business.

After spending about seven years in the real estate business, Mr. Geist became associated with former Vice President Charles G. Dawes and the latter's brother, Rufus, in the development of gas and electric utility companies.

His interests in this field continued to increase for many years until in 1930 he was looked upon as the largest individual holder of public utility stocks in the country. Mr. Geist and the Dawes brothers finally sold their Midwest holdings to the Insull interests.

A Follower of Golf

Mr. Geist continued to increase his holdings in utility companies in the eastern part of the country. One of these was the Philadelphia Suburban Water Company, which supplies forty-nine towns in the vicinity of the city. He was believed to be the largest U.G.I. stockholder, at one time being reported to own 400,000 shares of the company's stock.

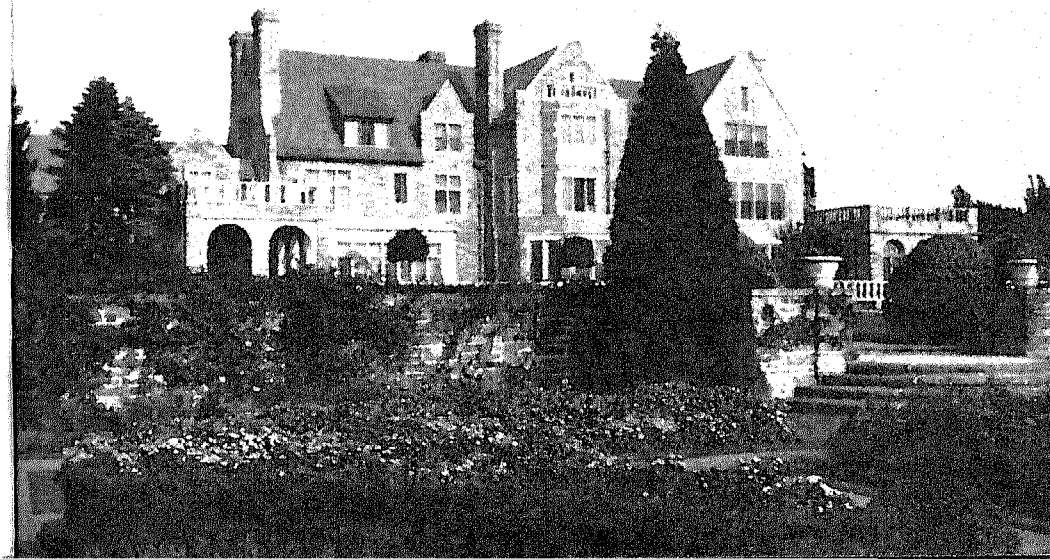
In addition to his utility interests, Mr. Geist was the head of two of the best-known clubs in the country, the Seaview Golf Club at Absecon, near Atlantic City, and the Boca Raton Club at Boca Raton, Fla.

Golf was the financier's favorite sport and he developed courses at the two clubs until they became nationally known. Mr. Geist founded Seaview in 1914 and Boca Raton in 1928.

He was a member of the Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church and of the following clubs: Union League, Merion Cricket, Racquet, Germantown, Philadelphia Cricket, Radnor Hunt, Art, Acorn and Wilmington Country.

In 1905 he married the former Florence Hewitt of this city and came here to live. Surviving are his widow and three daughters, Mrs. Theodore C. Sheaffer of Devon, Mrs. Van Horn Ely Jr. of Bryn Mawr and Mrs. Alfred Zantzinger of Ithaca.

Funeral services will be held at his home at 4 P.M. Tuesday. Burial will be private.



From the Palm Beach Daily News, 19 February 1941:

ARCHDUKES DUCK BEING LIONIZED IN PALM BEACH
by Nancy Randolph

Palm Beach, Feb. 18--For all there've been plenty of social lions coming in and out of Palm Beach, they haven't so far permitted themselves to be lionized.

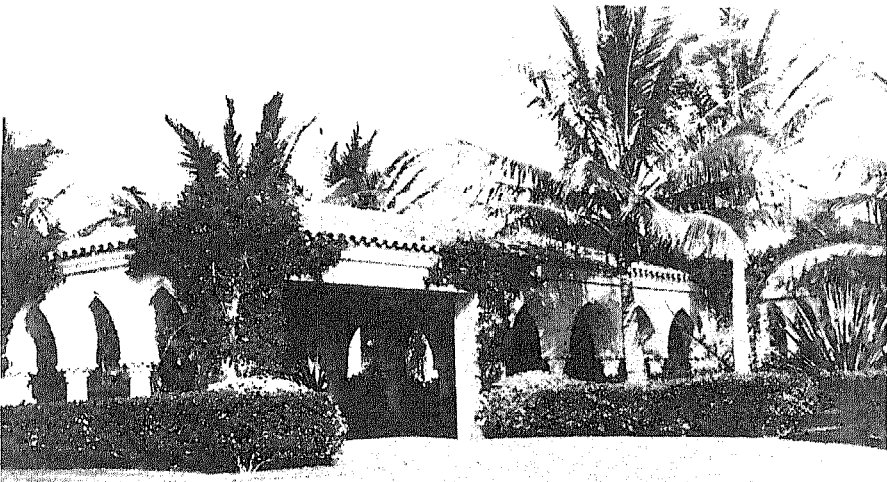
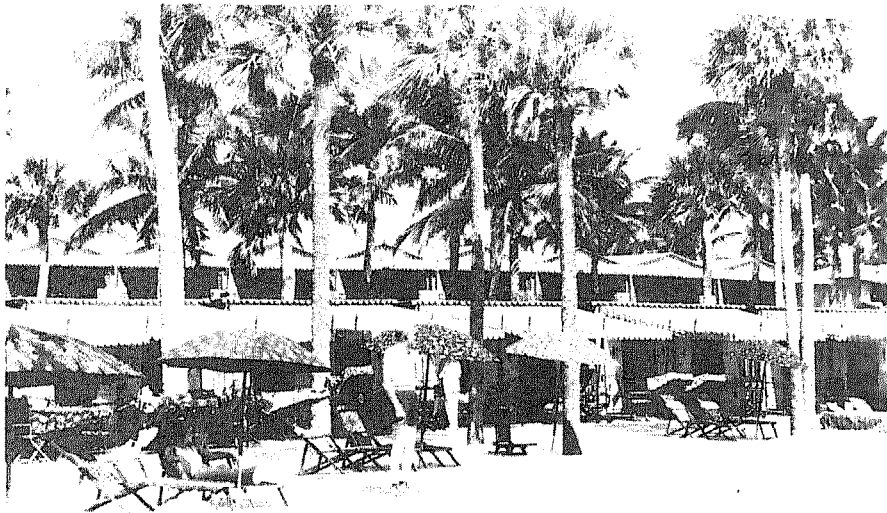
Archduke Felix, who's in Miami today to give a lecture, went around a little bit, but only a little. His brother, Archduke Otto, pretender to the non-existent throne of Austria-Hungary, was in and out of Palm Beach before his presence was known by more than a handful of people.

Otto at the moment is staying at the snorty Boca Raton Club where he's as safe from autograph hunters as a hermit at the North Pole. The Boca Raton Club is harder to gatecrash than Tuxedo Park. You drive up a beautifully landscaped road which starts at a gate marked "Private." There isn't a soul to stop your progress until you come to another gate. At this gate can be found about a half a dozen guards who jump out in front of the car like a defending army. And that's all brother. If you're not a member and you have no invitation from a member, you will please turn around and go back where you came from. It does no good to bluff things and say you've come to see Mrs. Van Visscichoisse. They'll telephone Mrs. Van Visscichoisse from the gate house to see if she's expecting you.

If you have the proper credentials, the guards step back and let you enter. You drive up to the door of the club and step inside to find a super-luxury hotel-like club done in heavy Spanish style where the lights are soft, the voices hushed and an eminently correct sense of gloom pervades all.

The interior walls of the club are literally banked with tropical foliage. It's quite a little city. There are expensive fur shops, linen booths, jewelry stores, etc. on the ground floor for the convenience of the members. There's a fair-sized auditorium where movies or concerts or lectures can be given. There's a place for yachts to tie up. And needless to say there are super-duper swimming facilities.

That's the place that Otto is staying. Although it has not been announced, it is understood that the royal pretender will return later to Palm Beach to lecture. His brother, Felix gave a lecture here last Winter, but it will be Otto's first appearance as a speaker in this flighty resort. . . .



And finally, from the **Palm Beach Daily News** of 14 January 1945:

BOCA RATON CLUB TO OPEN TOMORROW

After two years of Army occupation the Boca Raton Club will reopen tomorrow, Mr. Gordon B. Anderson, vice president and general manager, announced last night.

Mr. Marcel Gotschi, who is well known in hotel circles, will be the resident manager and the club for the first time in its history will be operated as an American plan hotel.

Tommy Armour, nationally known golf pro, will again be in charge of all golfing activities, while tennis play will be under the direction of Valerin Yavorsky.

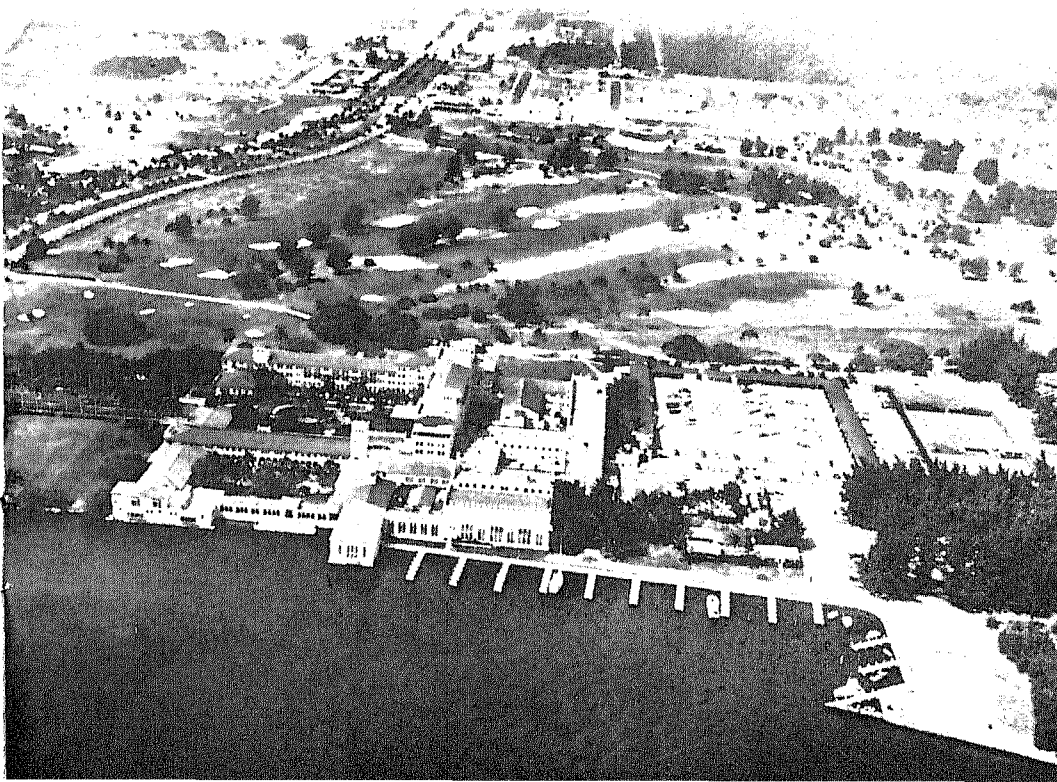
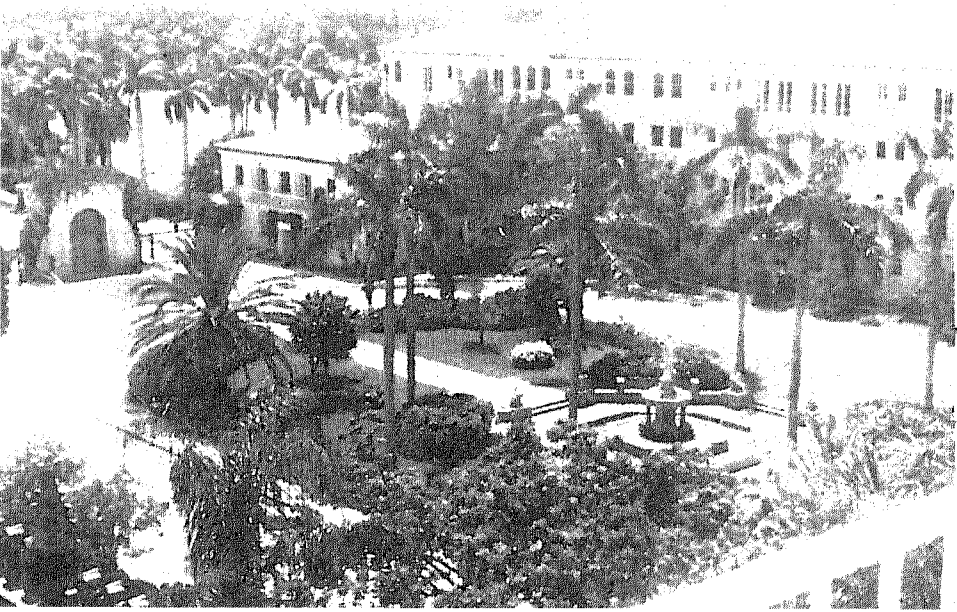
An innovation this year will be a tea dance daily at the Beach Club from 4 to 6 P.M. Nick D'Amico's orchestra will play for the dancing.

Indications that the club will enjoy its largest season are shown by the great number of former members who are returning.

The first guests to register at the club were Mr. and Mrs. Norman Armour, Washington. Mr. Armour is the newly appointed ambassador to Spain.

Among those who are expected in the near future are: Mr. and Mrs. Cornelius H. K. Kelly, New York; Mr. and Mrs. J. Howard Pew, Ardmore, Pa.; Mr. and Mrs. R.C. Hollis, Bronxville, N.Y.; Mrs. and Mrs. Carl D. Kelly, Winnetka, Ill.; Mr. and Mrs. Fred W. Ludwig, New Canaan, Conn.; Mr. and Mrs. Richard Harris, Rochester, N.Y.; Mr. and Mrs. W.F. Jennings, Bound Brook, N.Y.; Mr. and Mrs. William J. Brewster, Bogota, N.J.; Mr. and Mrs. Lucius Boomer and Mr. and Mrs. Hughston M. McBain. Mr. Boomer is president of the Waldorf Astoria, while Mr. McBain is president of Marshall Field and Co.

Those occupying their homes on the Boca Raton Club grounds are Mr. and Mrs. James H. Howe, St. Louis, Mr. and Mrs. F.B. Rentschler, Hartford, Conn.; Mr. and Mrs. Russell McIntosh, Darien, Conn., and Mr. and Mrs. William P. McGrail, New York.



Letter to Anne Merrill of the Boca Raton Historical Society from Bradley Lockwood Geist, 8 April 1982.

I just received the book--mailed March fourth--it must have come by a manatee.

There never will be a better book written about Boca Raton--what a wonderful lot of research.

As to the section about my uncle--it is well done but I will pass on to the society a few bits of information of interest just to keep the record as I know it.

(1) As a conductor on that railroad (not a Brakeman)--he got to know well Charles and Rufas Dawes.--Charles liked him so much that he brought him to Chicago to take charge of his banks buying up all Gas, water, electric co's in sight--and that is how he got his start--making many millions (more than 54 million mentioned in your excellent book.--on money--he never bought a share of stock in his life. But did take 640,000 sh's of U.G.I. plus all their pfd. for some of his company bonds.

As to the flap on the Everglades Club--Singer [Paris Singer founded the Everglades Club and was its sole owner until the late 1920s when it was sold to its membership. During this period he retained a right to veto prospective members] was one of his best friends and he was a member from the very start--his house, just off Worth Ave, the one with the tower--opposite the Tennis Club--he lived in--we all did--until Boca was completed.

I lived with this great man for eleven happy years. He was a genius--he went thru life doing just what he wished to do--generous to a fault--loved by many and hated by those who got in his way.--He was not course--but did love to joke--kid those that he called "tin horns"--and had a merry time with his many friends.

When I have the pleasure of meeting you--we will have a laugh together over some of the many fun stories I can tell you about this most delightful man.

My very best to you and thank you for the book. With kindest regards. Brad.

P.S. My arm is all bound up--so this letter is the best I can do for now. Brad.

In 1986 the historical society received a photograph of Clarence Geist and a very well dressed lady standing on the station platform of the Florida East Coast Railway depot. When the photo was published by the Boca Raton News, the lady was identified, as was suggested by the historical society, as Mr. Geist's secretary. This photograph produced the following amusing article by News columnist Skip Sheffield:

Who was that lady with Clarence Geist?

According to longtime Boca Raton resident Ann Cassady, the photo published on Page 6B of last week's Sunday Punch section of The News was of Clarence Geist and his wife Florence, not his secretary [see cover of Spanish River Papers].

"That's definitely Mrs. Geist," declares Cassady, "She was very attractive and had beautiful, creamy skin. Look at her clothes. Those are not what a secretary would wear. Anyone who lived in Boca prior to 1940 would recognize her in a minute."

The problem is, there weren't many people in Boca Raton before 1940, and very few of them remain here today. Cassady was 6-year-old Ann Rentschler when she first met the Geists in 1934. Her father founded United Technologies Inc., whose holdings include Pratt & Whitney Aircraft Corp. in West Palm Beach, and he was a staunch member of the Boca Raton Hotel and Club.

Cassady had the run of the very exclusive club as a child. She lives to this day in a Camino Real mansion originally commissioned by Geist to house his grandchildren.

"He never did get any of his grandchildren to live here," she reveals. "When we bought the house, we had to knock out walls and make new doorways. Geist was so security conscious, you couldn't get from the bedrooms above the kitchen to the main house without going outside."

Cassady has fond memories of bombing around Boca on an Italian motorbike, despite the admonition of the town's police chief, for her to stay off public streets. It was a simpler time, but in its own way no less elegant than modern Boca Raton.

Cassady says that Mrs. Geist went on to run the Boca Raton Club herself after the death of her husband in 1938. She remained the "First Lady of the Club" until it was commandeered by the Army to be turned into officers' barracks in 1942.

If any other readers have memories of Geist or the FEC railway depot he had built in 1930, the Boca Raton Historical Society would like to hear from you.

Donald W. Curl
Editor

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