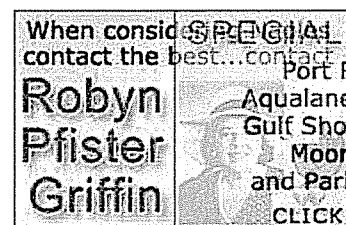


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Looking Back at 2004: Boomer land purchase nears end

By CHAD GILLIS, cegillis@naplesnews.com
 December 30, 2004

Editor's note: This is one of a series of stories to be published through the end of the year, bringing readers up to date on topics and people who were in the news during the past year.

A property that was once part of a vast south Lee County communal settlement could be in public hands again soon if state land managers are able to complete a deal with the Boomer family.

Representatives of the family agreed to sell the 100 acres on the southwest corner of U.S. 41 and Broadway in Estero for \$14.5 million. Both Lee County and state officials expressed interest in acquiring the land, and an agreement between the two government entities was reached in July.

Now it seems the only public purchase hurdle left is completing contracts.

"It's moving forward and, last I heard it, was pretty much a done deal," said Koreshan State Historic Site manager Bob Baker.

The current plan is to have the county and state divide the purchase cost and the land itself. Most of the property is undeveloped and will be added to the Estero Bay State Buffer if acquired. The house and related structures are going to become a part of the Koreshan historic settlement.

Called Mirosal by the Boomer family, the home is the only Koreshan-built residential structure still in existence.

Members of the Estero Historical Society as well as other civic groups have said they'd like to see the Boomer land in public hands. A government purchase also would mean that the 100 acres won't be developed or add more traffic woes to an already-saturated south Lee road system.

Society president Mimi Straub knows the Boomer family well and said they expect the deal to be finished by the summer of 2005.

"I think it's logical," Straub said of adding the home to the Koreshan settlement. "That house was built from lumber from the Sanitorium and George Boomer's grandmother is the one who brought the Koreshans here in the first place."

The Sanitorium was the Koreshan equivalent of a hospital.

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Although the Koreshan religion was based on celibacy, Lucius and Berthaldine Boomer had four children near the turn of the 20th century. A son, also named Lucius, built the Boomer home in 1917 for Berthaldine, who lived at the estate until her death in 1935.

The younger Lucius was also a successful businessman and was famous for his tenure as president of the luxurious Waldorf-Astoria in New York. His son, George Boomer, lived in the home until his death in 1999 at the age of 77.

Baker said the purchase would add a new dimension to the historic settlement as well as provide further protection for the Estero River. The river flows through the park and the Boomer land.

"Adding the land to buffer the runoff from Estero River would help a lot," Baker said. "(The home) is in good condition, and it's well-maintained."

The Boomer family already has promised the Garcia home, a guest house on the property, to the Estero Historical Society. The group hopes to relocate the home to a county park planned for lands near the Estero High School.

There, the Garcia home would function as a meeting headquarters for the historical group.

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Obituaries

July 1999

George Dupont Boomer

George Dupont Boomer, 77, of Chocorua and Estero, Fla., died on July 1, 1999 at his home on Fowlers Mill Road. The only son of Lucius Messenger and Jorgine Slettede Boomer, he was born in Boston on October 31, 1921.

He attended Principia in St. Louis, Mo., the Browning School in New York, class of 1938, and Yale University, class of 1942. He left Yale University in mid-year to join Pan American Airways (Africa) for one year, at which time it was the largest airline in the world, with 36 DC-3s in support of the British in the Middle East.

George's father was president and chairman of the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York, and George grew up in Waldorf Towers and was known as the "male equivalent of Eloise," a fictional character who lived in the Plaza Hotel. He liked to tell people that he learned how to cook from Oscar of the Waldorf.

When World War II ended, George was a lieutenant of the U.S. Naval Reserve. He then worked for two years for Horace Work, and then joined Hodges International, Inc., an import-export company specializing in textiles. Later, they started to supply parts and machinery to Italian licensees of important American firms, like General Electric, FMC, and Electric Boat.

When George retired in 1992, he was owner and president of Hodges International, Inc., and the company was then sold. Everyone who worked for and with him loved him for his fairness, his kindness, and his unfailing good humor.

He belonged to the Union Club in New York City, and was the oldest charter member of the Stamford Yacht Club. He served on the board of the Sheltering Arms Children's Service, where he was chairman of the board for 12 years.

His family includes his current wife, Nola; a son, John, of Maine; and a daughter, Jorgine, of Manhattan.

He was predeceased by two wives, Joan McMaster and Clarina Scudder.

A memorial service will be held at 2 p.m. Wednesday, July 7 at Runnells Hall, Rt. 113, Chocorua. Donations in Mr. Boomer's memory, in lieu of flowers, may be made to the Chocorua Lake Association and Chocorua Lake Foundation, P.O. Box 105, Chocorua, NH 03817.

Arrangements are by the Baker-Gagne Funeral Home and Cremation Service, Rt. 16, West Ossipee.

Beulah M. Boulter

Beulah M. Boulter, 89, of North Conway, died July 24, 1999 at her home, after a brief illness. She was born in Cambridge, Mass., the daughter of Jacob and Susanna Penney Moore. Mrs. Boulter had lived in New Boston for ten years and in Millinocket, Maine for 11 years, prior to moving to North Conway in 1970.

She graduated from Cambridge (Mass.) Latin School in 1929.

Mrs. Boulter had been a medical secretary at the Lahey Clinic, in Boston, for ten years and worked for five years as a medical secretary to the director of the Concord State Hospital. Before retiring in 1970, she had been a record librarian at the Millinocket (Maine) Regional Hospital, in the medical records department, for ten years.

Her family includes her husband of 58 years, Clarence F. Boulter of North Conway; two sons, Richard A. Boulter of Happy Valley, Ore., and Stephen R. Boulter of Acton, Mass.; three grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Funeral services will be held at the convenience of the family. Burial will be in the North Conway Cemetery.

<http://www.conway.lib.nh.us/history/obits1999/july1999.htm>

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