

PASTFINDER PRESS
Newsletter from the Southwest Florida Historical Society
April 17, 2015

Attorney and Civil War expert **Hank Hendry** was the April speaker at the Historical Society's monthly program held at the Southwest Florida Museum of History. Mr. Hendry presented an interesting history of early residents' participation in the Civil War. He also shared historical research including maps, photos and records from the Hendry family files. The Museum continues its special exhibit on local Civil War history and its recognition of the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Fort Myers.

Current Exhibit – In a wonderful follow up to last month's talk by Bruce Strayhorn on the early years of the cattle industry in Lee County, volunteer Joanne Iwinski-Miller has curated an exhibit filled with artifacts and memorabilia on cowboys and cattle raising. Many items are from the Historical Society but additional artifacts are on temporary loan from Pat Mann from the Barbara B Mann Estate and from the late Rod Heitman on temporary loan from the Gilmer Heitman Estate. Board member Robert Ballard also contributed photos, documents and memorabilia from his personal collection.

Gulf Coast Bookstore opened on April 1st next to the fudge shop at the Butterfly Estates on Fowler St. Owned by Historical Society volunteer Tim Jacobs with partner Patti Brassard Jefferson, Gulf Coast Bookstore features local authors and is open Tues – Sat. Tim is also the owner of Jacobs Writing Consultants in Fort Myers. <http://www.news-press.com/story/entertainment/2015/04/09/new-fort-myers-bookstore-puts-local-authors-top-shelf/25535483/>

More Lee County History! The **Lee County Courthouse turns 100** and events are being planned for later this year. Historical Society Vice President and Florida Weekly correspondent Glenn Miller wrote an article, "Born by bonfire and a shotgun, Lee County Courthouse turns 100". http://fortmyers.floridaweekly.com/news/2015-04-01/Top_News/Born_by_bonfire_and_a_shotgun_Lee_County_Courthous_001.html

Last month, we shared the sad news that Historical Society volunteer, **Rod Heitman** passed away unexpectedly March 10. He worked closely with Joanne Iwinski-Miller to share and donate to the Society years of Heitman family photos, records, and memorabilia. The following brief obituary was published in the News-Press:

Roderick M. Heitman of Fort Myers, FL passed away on March 10, 2015. He was born in Fort Myers and grew up there. He graduated from Lagrange College. He was a pilot and was very active in the Southwest Florida Historical Society. He is survived by his brothers Gilmer (Martha) Heitman and Steve (Diane) Heitman; niece Grace Barnes and nephew Mike Heitman. Services will be at a later date. The family request in lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Southwest Florida Historical Society. Please visit www.harvey-engelhardt.com to leave a condolence. - See more at: <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/news-press/obituary.aspx?pid=174435786#sthash.fBPO0h8m.dpuf>

Support the Historical Society through these **Upcoming Events. Please keep this list and stick it on your fridge!** As the Board transitions, it may be some time before another newsletter is written or reminders sent. The following programs will be held at the Southwest Florida Museum of History on Jackson Street starting at 7 pm. The Historical Society has a benefactor membership at the Museum in small recognition of their support of our monthly programs. Please support the Historical Society and the Museum!

May 14th – Membership Annual Meeting to elect new officers and conduct other business presented by the Board.

Once the business meeting concludes, Board member and fifth generation Florida native **Robert Ballard** will talk about his mother's family history on Cayo Costa in the early 1900's. This talk was presented on Cayo Costa on March 5th as part of the Captiva Cruises Lecture Series.

June 11th – Lin Bochette is from an old Fort Myers family. His property, near the Edison Estates has an astounding palm tree collection. Mr. Bochette is a past Olympic competitor and he worked for many years for the World Olympians Association and has had offices across the world.

July 9th- Artis Henderson is a Fort Myers High grade and the author of a highly regarded memoir, "Unremarried Widow". Artis has lived in New York City and spent lots of time in France. Yet, she has returned to Fort Myers and purchased a home in Dean Park. What brought her "home"?

August 13th – It's hurricane season!

September 10th – pending. We're considering something related to the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II.

Contact Information

- Website: www.swflhistoricalsociety.org.
- Email: swflhs@gmail.com
- Phone: 239-939-4044
- Hours: Wednesday 9am – noon and 4-7 pm, Saturday 9 am-noon