



Venice
MUSEUM
& ARCHIVES

Museum News

The mission of the Venice Museum and Archives is to collect and preserve historical and archaeological material relating to Venice and the communities of Laurel, Nokomis and Osprey, whose histories have all been interwoven from 1867 to the present time.

Spring 2015



Spring is
here



In This Issue

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-------|--------------------|--------|
| • Current and Upcoming Exhibits | 2 | • News and Events | 8 - 10 |
| • Education and Outreach | 3 | • Volunteer Corner | 11 |
| • Collections | 4 | • Contact Us | 12 |
| • Venice Heritage, Inc. | 5 - 7 | | |

Current:

Making Waves ***Venice Area Beaches Then and Now*** On exhibit through July 29th



Come check out this attendance-breaking exhibit that's fun for all ages

A few visitor comments about VMA & *Making Waves* exhibit:

"Totally cool"

"Another winner exhibit-- close to my heart"

"Thanks for sharing--very cool!"

"Awesome history! Love our town"

"Strong exhibit for local wave riders"

"So glad to come here to this beautiful museum"

"Brought our grandkids to learn about history of Venice"

"Love this place"

"Great museum! I stop by every year"

"Friendly, informative, fun"

"Want to learn the history of Venice? Come to this museum!"

"Great job, beautiful pics, informative tidbits-- LOVED IT!"

"I'll be back!"



In February, James Hagler gave Dr. Bruce Stephenson's Rollins College class a tour of the apartment district and spoke about the efforts made to help preserve the 1920s apartment complex at 504 Armada.



Dr. Bruce Stephenson (far right) gives his Rollins College students a walking tour to give them first-hand experience of John Nolen's plan for Venice. His students will be working with VMA curator, Michelle Harm, on an upcoming Nolen exhibit scheduled to open this fall.

Upcoming:

September 1, 2015-April 27, 2016

Design for Living: John Nolen and the Renaissance of New Urbanism

The exhibit will be in collaboration with **Dr. Bruce Stephenson** of Rollins College and students in his Traditional Town Planning course.

Spring 2016

Plans are in the works for an exhibit partnering with residents of the **Eagle Point Club** to highlight the 100th anniversary of EPC, originally developed in 1916 as a winter resort with clubhouse and cottages.

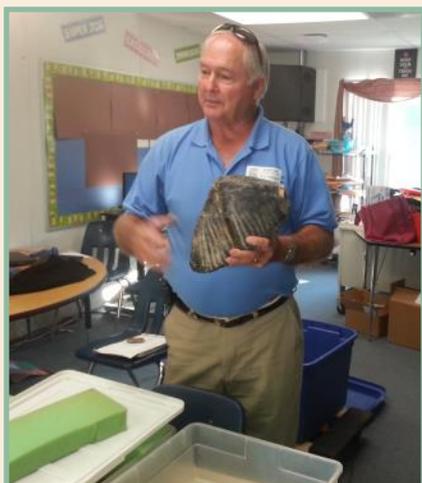
By Susan Ionescu, VMA Education Coordinator

It has been a busy few months as I ease into my role as the Education Coordinator and develop outreach programs for our Venice area. My goal has been to educate the community about the relevance and importance of the Venice Museum & Archives as a repository for our area's history while encouraging visits to our exhibits.

Attendees at VMA's educational programs held at the **Venice Yacht Club Power Squadron, Aston Gardens, Pelican Pointe Ladies Club**, and the **Venice Veteran's Gala** have expressed their pleasure in learning more about Venice history with presentations like "Venice: Boom and Bust" and "Homesteaders and Early Schools." We have received so many comments from VMA outreach program attendees: "So nice to learn about an area I did not grow up in"; "I never knew about the lumber and turpentine industry"; "Now I can connect families to names and locations in the area!" A big thank you to **Julia Cousins Laning** who shared her experiences as a young child growing up in the Triangle Inn during a VMA presentation at **Aston Gardens**.



Susan doing a VMA outreach program for the **Pelican Pointe Ladies Club**



Left:
Dean Calamaras
shares his fossil
knowledge with **Garden
Elementary Students**

Right:
Dean and Susan pass
around fossils for
hands-on connections



As a former teacher, the most exciting museum outreach programs for me have been at the local schools. Seeing the fascination and surprise in the faces of young children as they make discoveries supports the value of our Museum. Viewing a variety of primary sources that include photographs, letters, oral history, newspapers, maps and census forms, students have learned to interpret and evaluate the importance of these documents while demonstrating their newfound knowledge as they make their very own presentations. How amazing for them to discover that life existed before computers, video games and cell phones! Upon viewing an early photo of the Curry family, one student at Englewood Elementary School said, "My friend has that photo in his house. His last name is Curry!"

With the wonderful support of **Dean Calamaras**, students at **Garden Elementary School** have learned that marine and animal life reigned galore in this area during the Miocene and Pleistocene periods. Dean presented an amazing array of fossils from mammoths, mastodons, Megalodons, many shark teeth and whale vertebrae from local sites, including Venice Beach, Taylor Ranch and even Center Road. The students were in awe. It has been an eye-opening experience for me as I observe the talent of our young students plus the invaluable knowledge from our museum volunteers. I am proud to be a part of this unique organization.

Outreach Programs

To schedule a program for your club, organization, or school contact Susan at the VMA
Mondays, Thursdays, Fridays at 941-486-2487, sionescu@venicegov.com

Additions to the Collections

Each month new donations of historical material are given to the museum. After a review of whether or not the items support the VMA's mission, accepted items are added to the collections through a process called accessioning. Here are the recent donors and accessions for January through March:

Thank you, donors!

City of Venice (transfers from other departments): Venice Municipal Airport- 4 animal training shackles from Gunther Gebel-Williams Octagon Building; Venice Fire Department- 2 VPD jackets circa 1990-2000

Adele Cohill- scanned pages from Sjoblom family scrapbook of Venice from 1930s to 1950s

Doreen Crawford- book *Venice Friendship Center Yearbook 2013-2014*

Amy Elder- book *Images of America: Sarasota 1940-2005*

Wanda Erickson- 5 circus posters from 1983

Larry Evans- photos of 2015 beach renourishment project in Venice

Don Gaunt - Oak bed, two chests of drawers, circa 1910, owned by early Venice settler Frank Higel

Ronald Higel- photo album of relocation of historic Higel home on Madrid Ave.

Susan Ionescu- photo, circa 1960s of Venice train depot showing train # 681 (Seaboard Coast Line Railroad, SCL); photocopy of aerial photograph of Venice Circus Arena

Lucy Jacobs- Kentucky Military Institute (KMI) pin from 1934 that belonged to Raymond N. Cheser

J. Terry Lee- poster of Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus winter season performance in Venice, January 1975

Patricia Levesque- sepia photograph of the original Venice Post Office and a horse drawn wagon

Robert Lodge- assorted documents pertaining to beach preservation and management from 1987-1988 including the Florida Shore & Beach Preservation Association Charter for Venice

Earl Midlam- assorted documents, photos and memorabilia relating to Venice and the Dick Taylor Family of Osprey who operated the drawbridge

Ola Montgomery (Estate of)- photos of Venice from 1910 to 1939

Dr. Bruce Stephenson- book *New Ideals in the Planning of Cities, Towns and Villages*, republished in 2014

Betty Kay Utley- 98 film reels by N. Cromwell Hammack of the Kentucky Military Institute from the 1940s to 1950s; KMI trophies, photographs, ephemera

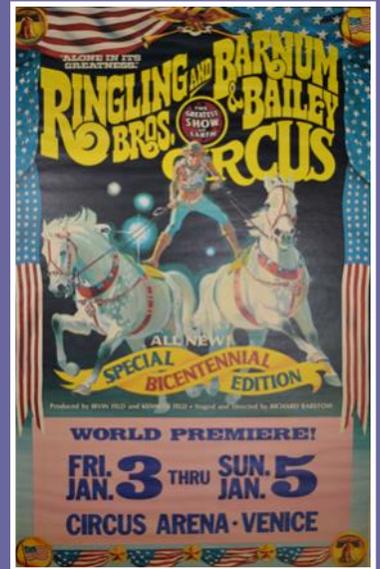
Venice Area Chamber of Commerce- contents of 1988 Venice time capsule

Venice Heritage, Inc.-book *Venice Fire Department 1926-2011: 85 Years of Service* by Jack Mersereau, 2014

Donation Spotlight

This original 1975 circus poster for a performance at the Circus Arena in Venice was recently donated to the VMA by J. Terry Lee.

Each winter season in Venice, new acts were developed and rehearsed by the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus. Performances at Venice's Circus Arena were a highpoint of the season for both locals and snowbirds.



2015.06.01

Search Collections Online

A portion of the VMA's collections is available for viewing online. New records are added each month.

1. Visit www.VeniceMuseum.org
2. On the homepage, scroll to "To access the collection Online." Select "click here."
3. Enter your keyword(s) and select one or more of the content types: All Content, Objects, Library, Archives, Photos.

For assistance with your research, please contact
Michelle Harm, Curator at 941-486-2487
mharm@venicemuseum.com



Tim's Pic(k)



Each week, volunteer **Tim Leach** catalogs one of the VMA's largest photo collections--the Woody Thayer Collection. Thayer was a photographer for the *Gondolier* and other local newspapers during the 1950s and 1960s. Tim's eyes are always peeled for fun or interesting photographs to share in the VMA's newsletter and Facebook page. Tim's top pick this time is of a hydroplane race at Dona Bay, circa 1955. The grand structure in the background was the Villa Nokomis, originally called the Pollyanna Inn and built by Dr. Fred Albee and Ellis Nash in 1921 (razed in 1971.)



Venice Heritage

Florida

A Message from Larry Humes

Annual VHI Meeting a Time for Celebration

There was nothing to fear of this Ides of March for the weather was perfect and the mood jubilant as dozens gathered for Venice Heritage's annual meeting and to celebrate the progress made to the Lord-Higel House.

VHI's outgoing president, **Jean Trammell**, welcomed the audience and cited the restoration work that has been done thus far to the 119-year-old building. After members voted to approve the Minutes of last year's meeting as well as to accept the Treasurer's report, Trammel gave thanks to those members rotating off the board, **John Moore** and **Barbara Dein**. She also paid homage to **David Sherman** who died at the beginning of the year. She spoke not only of Dave's many contributions to VHI and historic preservation, but also his passion for the community at large. "He truly loved this community," she said, and he will be sorely missed.

Trammell introduced the incoming officers of the organization: **Larry Humes**, president; **Judith Ann Keeler**, vice president; **Susan Hanks**, treasurer, and **Sue Vedder**, secretary. Before handing over the gavel, however, she took the opportunity to present VHI's first annual Community Service Award to **Dorothy Korwek** for her many years of outstanding volunteer service as the organization's office manager.

Humes thanked **Trammell** for her leadership as a founding member and president of VHI since its inception three years ago. "The more I have had the opportunity to work with Jean, the more I have come to appreciate and admire her wisdom and experience," he said. "She may be stepping down as president, but I still have her on speed dial and know that I will be counting on her for advice in the future."



L to R: Dorothy Korwek and Jean Trammell, March 15, 2015



L to R: VHI members in the shade at Lord-Higel House; Jim Middleton (right) talks to VHI members; Julia Cousins Laning; Brenda Carlisimo and Carol Bailey

Venice Heritage, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) organization, whose mission includes providing financial and organizational support for the Venice Museum & Archives, which includes the Lord-Higel House



Humes then called **Jack and Judie Bauer** to the porch for a special presentation. “As we thought about ways we might honor your many years of service to this community, it seemed a plaque just wasn’t enough,” he said. “We wanted something that would remind citizens of your generosity each and every time they walk by this historic house.” The Bauers then removed the cover to a rocking chair that bears their name and will eventually find a place of honor on the porch. Jack has been instrumental in the Lord-Higel House’s restoration. And among her many other contributions, Judie serves on the City’s Historic Preservation Board.

Local architect **Jon Barrick** was introduced to the audience as the newest member of the LHI team. A graduate of the University of Florida and someone passionate about historic preservation (he and his wife restored one of Venice’s original homes), Jon has agreed to serve on the committee overseeing the house’s complete restoration. In addition to his role with VHI, Jon also serves on the City’s Architectural Review Board.



Larry Humes presents a rocking chair to Jack and Judie Bauer



Jack Mersereau

And finally, author **Jack Mersereau** spoke to the audience for a few minutes, sharing anecdotes from his recently-published book about the history of the Venice Fire Department.

Following the meeting, visitors were invited to walk around the house and peek inside. Volunteer **Earl Midlam** was also on hand with Old Betsy and provided lots of information about its history as the City’s first fire engine. **Humes** said VHI is currently finalizing plans with the City of Venice, which owns the Lord-Higel House, about its eventual use. Work is expected to begin soon on completing restoration of the building’s interior.



Visit VeniceHeritage.org to find out how you can help support restoration efforts



History Channel's *Museum Men* host featured at VHI Dinner May 28th

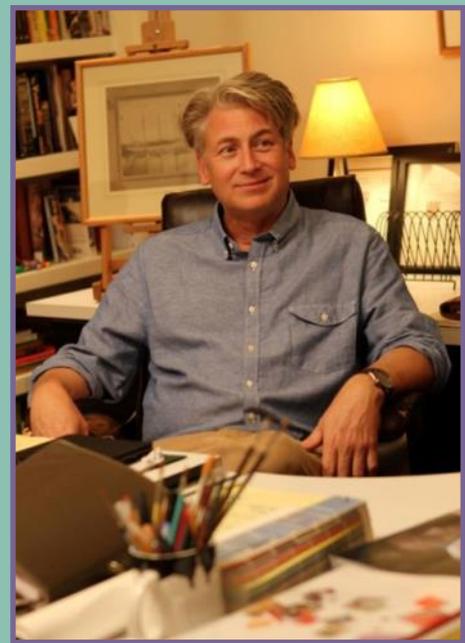
Nationally known exhibit designer and history buff **Roger Barganier** will be the featured speaker at the third annual **Venice Heritage Dinner** on Thursday, May 28 at the **Venice Yacht Club** beginning at 5:30pm.

As featured on the History Channel's popular new television series, *Museum Men* Barganier will provide an inside look at how museums are re-inventing themselves and drawing new visitors through interactive exhibits and experiential learning. He also will share his thoughts on how the Venice community can capitalize on these new trends in telling its own story.

Barganier has overseen St. Petersburg based Creative Arts Unlimited, Inc. as its co-founder, president, and creative director since 1991. He is a graduate of the Ringling College of Art and Design.

Tickets are \$55 and may be purchased by sending a check to the Venice Heritage office at P.O. Box 1190, Venice, Florida 34284-1190.

For additional information call the VHI office at 941-237-0478. Proceeds from the evening will be used to help complete restoration of the historic Lord-Higel House.



Roger Barganier





The **Venice Newcomers Club** celebrated St. Patrick's Day in style at the museum in all their green glory. This is the second year in a row this lively club has used the VMA as home base before setting off on a trolley tour of Venice.

Museum Assessment Program (MAP)



MAP museum peer reviewer, **Kimberly Camp**, traveled from New Jersey to visit the VMA in mid-March to do a museum assessment. It will result in a report in the next few months.

Kimberly's site visit is part of a national grant the VMA received from the **American Alliance of Museums**.

Through guided self-study and on-site consultation with a museum professional, participation in MAP will empower the VMA to better serve the citizens of Venice by facilitating its meeting and exceeding the highest professional standards of the museum field.

Kimberly shared her expertise from more than 30 years of experience in the arts and cultural field at institutions such as The Barnes Foundation, Museum of African American History, National Endowment of the Arts, and the Smithsonian Institution.

Venice Book Fair



A **Student Writing Presentation** at the **Venice Book Fair** on March 28th was part of a VMA outreach program involving students from **Venice Elementary** and **Garden Elementary**. As published writers presented their books for sale at booths, 2nd and 5th grade students made a dazzling presentation of their potential as future writers with a variety of fiction and historical stories.



Top row left to right: February 12th exhibit reception; (seated) **Stephen Bell** of the **Nokomis Drum Circle**



Surfing legend **Juan Rodriguez** of **One World Surf Designs** poses next to two skimboards he made in the 1970s



Left to right: Local surfers and photographers **Steve Williams** and **Aubrietia Patrick** with their daughter

Making Waves Exhibit Reception

Our best attended reception to date, this event brought out local surfers, beach lovers and history buffs alike. A special thanks to the **Nokomis Drum Circle** for adding the perfect party-vibe outside and to VMA volunteer, **Toni Minnick**, for coordinating the food for the event.



Left to right: Local surfers and photographers **Joseph Broz** (VeniceJetty.com) and **Lindsey Broz** pose with **Steven Wrightler**, who is featured in an exhibit photo

Top Facebook Posts



1,602 people reached: After 66 years in business, the **Shrode Jewelry** store on West Venice Avenue closed. We asked owners **Mike and Carol Shrode** for old photos, and they kindly provided images showing the 300 block of West Venice Ave. as it appeared in 1962.

1,432 people reached: **Venice High School** images from 1975 featured swim team, cheerleaders, and football teams from the VMA's *Venice Gondolier* photograph collection.

VMA Now on Trip Advisor

You can rate and comment on the VMA at www.tripadvisor.com. At the time of this publication, the museum has 4 out of 5 stars and six reviews.



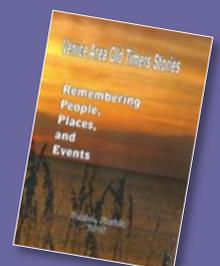
Museum gift shop

The VMA gift shop features a variety of books and videos on local history and nature, as well as novels by local authors. Fossil-related books, gifts, and jewelry are also available.

NEW- available now

Venice Area Old Timers Stories, Remembering People, Places and Events
Editor **Dorothy Korwek**, 2015, published by Venice Heritage, Inc.

VMA volunteer **Mary Charles** proofread the booklet and VMA volunteer **Peg Kapustiak** wrote an article on the **Spadaro** brothers, Joe and Tony, who developed the Golden Beach neighborhood in Venice.





Making Waves Family Day, March 21st

We hope that everyone who came out to the Making Waves Festival & Family Day had a great time. This event was made possible thanks to the support of the following clubs, organizations and businesses: **Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast; Eastern Surfing Association; Historic Spanish Point; Mote Marine; Nokomis Drum Circle; Peace, Love & Hoopiness; Sarasota Shell Club; Science and Environment Council; VeniceJetty.com; and Venice Segway.** A special thank you to surfers **Joseph and Lindsey Broz, Brian Fischer, Aubrietia Patrick, Steve Williams, and Owen Weaver** for giving surfing demonstrations to the kids!

Thank you **Venice Heritage, Inc.**, for sponsoring the **Mote Marine** mobile exhibit!



Volunteer appreciation luncheon

2,497 hours of volunteer time were donated in 2014!

The Venice Museum & Archives would not exist without the tireless and dedicated efforts of an amazing group of volunteers. It takes 31 volunteers to help the paid staff keep things running here. Greeters and docents for our public hours make up the majority of the volunteer crew and the rest donate their time to help with research requests, photo orders, cataloging the collection, photographing events, and staffing special events.

On April 9, a volunteer appreciation luncheon was held in honor of this fantastic group of people. Thank you VMA volunteers, **Peggy and John Roethel**, for helping to find sponsors for the food for this event and to **Luna, Marker 4**, and **Sharky's** for sponsoring the food.

Welcome new volunteer



Deborah Thompson

Deborah greets visitors with her warm smile and bubbly personality. She retired in 2002 after working 32 years for the State of Massachusetts and eventually moved from Haverhill, MA to Nokomis in 2013. She enjoys crafting, flea markets, exploring new places and she just joined a book club.

Little known Deborah fact: She has the world's most OCD rat terrier dog named Rudy.



Grande Dame of the VMA

Meet Mary Charles

VMA volunteer for 20+ years
By Peg Kapustiak

Mary Charles, one of our curatorial volunteers, first worked with the archives and objects in our collection over 20 years ago when they were stored at City Hall. At the time, the collection was only a fraction of what it is today. Mary has watched it grow through the decades.

For over 20 years she was employed as a clerk for the City of Venice Planning Commission and the Building Department, then as Deputy City Clerk/Administrative Assistant in the City Clerk's Office. She served as secretary for several mayors and the city council.



Mary and Peg Kapustiak inventoring

After retirement, she devoted the next 20+ years to volunteer at the VMA and continued to serve the City of Venice. Twice weekly, she comes to the museum to inventory and process new donations, as well as does the bookkeeping of donations and gift shop sales. With a quiet smile, she helps history researchers and museum volunteers locate the answers to their questions.

She and her husband were natives of Nyack, New York on the Hudson River. With their young family, they built a home in Venice. Most of her children and their families, including grandchildren and great-grandchildren, still reside in the area.





Free to the public and open Mondays,
Tuesdays and Wednesdays from
10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

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Like us on Facebook
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Visit us on the web at
VeniceMuseum.org



The Venice Museum & Archives, a municipal museum governed by the City of Venice, is located in the historic 1927 Triangle Inn building listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It is within walking distance of downtown Venice and is situated within the Venice Cultural Campus that includes the Venice Library, Venice Art Center, and Venice Community Center.