

Estero Historical Society, Inc.

P.O. Box 1314 * Estero, FL 33929

www.esterohistoricalsociety.com

October 2013

Editor Beverly MacNellis

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- Brick Sale ends Oct.15
- "Bling, Buttons & Bows" Annual Tea at Shadow Wood, Feb. 6. Thurs.

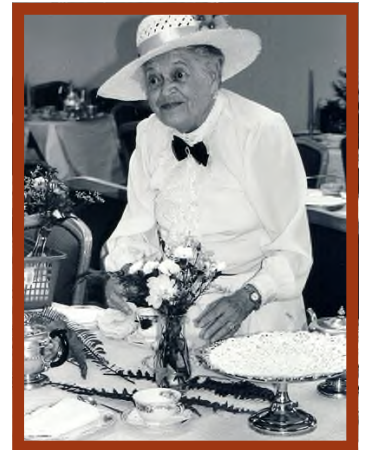
A Celebration of Mimi Straub's Life



A celebration of our founders life, Mimi Straub, was held at the restored Hall-Hanson home on Sept 15, 2013. Many came and spoke of what a visionary and mover she was to Estero. Shortly after the homes were moved to the park, we celebrated Mimi's 97th birthday there. She sat on a rocker on the front porch. She was so pleased that the two building had finally made it and became ours that she said, "Now that I have sat in a rocker on the front porch, I know all will be accomplished".

Her two daughters were able to come for the celebration of her life from out of state.

Furnishings from Mimi's home from an older time were donated to us by her daughters. The Cottage is becoming more and more of the period of when it was built and lived in back in the early 1900's.



Jean Pryal, Mimi's daughters, Suzanne Currey and Kristina Straub with Eileen Galvin.

Belk's Sale

Nov 9th—Saturday

Help support our Society and do yourself a favor.
Buy coupons worth \$5 and spend at Belk's.
On Sale Wed., Fri. and Sat. from 1 to 3 PM
Call Jean Pryal for more information 498-5296

Evelyn Luettich Horne



Classic Recipes and Memories of
AN ESTERO LEGEND
by Darlene Horne Johnson

Sample food from early Estero by the famous pioneer Evelyn Horne.

Tickets are \$10

Time will be 5-7 PM instead of our usual 2 PM meeting time

Monday, October 14
Taste of Early Estero

By Evelyn Horne' Cook Book

For tickets call
Jean Pryal 239-498-5296



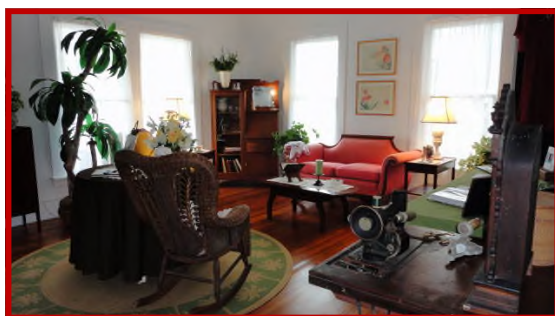
For general information call Directors
Marlene Fernandez at 992-3178 or
Jean Pryal at 498-5296

A Celebration of Mimi Straub's Life

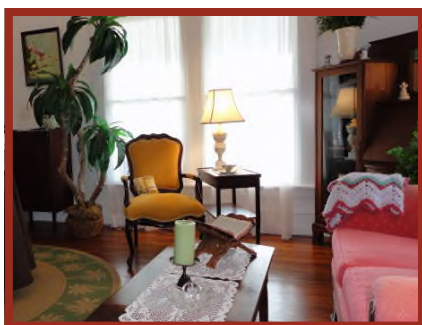
1912—2013



Helen May "Mimi" Straub, 100, died quietly in her sleep on August 29, 2013 in her home at Emeritus Assisted Living in Bonita Springs, Florida. "Mimi" Straub was born Helen May Voglesonger on November 5, 1912 in Rochester, Minnesota to Annette DeBeer Voglesonger and the Reverend Henry Voglesonger. She is survived by her daughters, Suzanne Currey and Kristina Straub, grandchildren Laura Currey-Taseva, Brownlee Currey, Bailey Clark, and Evie Clark, and by great-grand children Sofia Taseva and William Tasev.



At the age of five, she moved from Minnesota to Pennsylvania, where Rev. Voglesonger took up the post of minister at a Presbyterian church in Carlyle. Later, he became a minister in Newport, Pennsylvania, where Mimi Straub grew up. She attended Beaver College for two years, and worked for the Work Progress Administration before she married Harrison David "Bud" Straub in 1942. The couple lived together in five different southern states until 1992 when Bud passed away in Estero, Florida. During her life, Mimi worked in several different positions as secretary and office manager, ending her career as building manager for Casa Bonita on Bonita Beach. She loved music and began playing piano at her father's church at the age of 11. She was still playing piano for church services held at Emeritus Assisted Living during the last year of her life.



Mimi was deeply interested in history and very active in her community of Estero, where she worked as a docent for Koreshan State Park. In doing this work, she discovered her ability as a public speaker, and is remembered for speaking eloquently for environmental and social causes in Estero. In 1999 she founded the Estero Historical Society, and to the time of her death remained a passionate speaker about and advocate for the study of local history. Donations in her memory can be sent to the Estero Historical Society, PO Box 1314, Estero, FL 33929.



Ken & Dave

Below: Diane Wisen, Margaret Antonier, Eileen Galvin, Jean Pryal, Beverly MacNellis.



MaryAnn Weenen, Marlene Fernandez, Eileen Galvin and Carla Morris.



Sunny Molle and Lourdes Price



Judy Fultz and Jean Pryal, Chair

A Celebration of Mimi Straub's Life



Above: JoAnne Luce and Ken Wisen
Center: Bob & Carla Morris
Right: Simone Abramson & Rosina Gaité



MaryAnn Weenen, Jeff Stainer and Bob Morris



Veronica and Romeo Antoniazzi

Trail Blazing the Tamiami Trail



Russell Kay (1892-1977) was the business manager of the *Florida Grower* and a member of the Fort Myers Motorcade. Kay organized the Tamiami Trail Blazers Expedition in April 1923 to publicize the need for a cross-state highway in the Everglades. He gathered twenty-one other west coast business men and decided to trek from Ft. Myers to Miami in an caravan comprised of one commissary truck, seven Model T Fords, and an Elcar.

Besides Russell Kay, the members of the expedition were: Ora E. Chapin, Frank Whitman, E. P. Green, L. A. Whitney, John E. Morris, George E. Hosmer, George W. Dunham, Henry Colquit, F. C. Garmon, Fred B. Hough, Amos Bolich, L. J. Van Duyle, Joe W. Hill, Maurice Ayer, Clark Taylor, C. Shawcross, Hilton D. Thompson, and H. Andrews. In addition, some notable individuals who partook in the expedition were Conopatchee, known as Little Billie, a sixty-year-old Indian guide and Seminole leader; and Stanley Hanson, a local Fort Myers expert on the Everglades and long-time friend to various Seminole families.

The automobile manufacturer Henry Ford gave the expedition a bottle of grape juice to be delivered to William Jennings Bryan when the caravan arrived in Miami. Unfortunately, the grape juice never reached Bryan, since it could not escape the grasp of an exhausted and thirsty Trail Blazer.



When rumors circulated that the trail blazers were hopelessly lost in the Everglades, and probably dead, the expedition drew national news attention and rescue parties were dispatched to find them. The news proved false, however, and the trail blazers continued to pick their way across southern Florida following Indian trails. After nineteen days of trekking, they were welcomed into Miami as heroes. Soon after the Trail Blazers Expedition, the Florida legislature endorsed the construction project for the Tamiami Trail. In 1943, the Trail Blazers Association reassembled to mark the death of Conopatchee, their guide.

Russell Kay's memoir of the trek, published in the *Florida Historical Quarterly*, provides great insight on the hardships the Trail Blazers encountered in the Everglades. Kay also assembled a log of photos and newspaper clippings about the expedition, which is partially reproduced here.

Citation: "Tamiami Trail Blazers: A Personal Memoir" by Russell Kay, *The Florida Historical Quarterly* (January 1971):278-287

Tommy Fernandez a true Estero pioneer leaves us.



Tom was born June 29, 1935 in the Soto home at the corner of Highlands Avenue and East Broadway in Estero Florida into a commercial fishing family.

Thomas Antonio Fernandez passed from our world on June 24, 2013

after a long fight with cancer. He was truly one of the early pioneers of Estero. His parents, when they came here in 1898, settled on Mound Key. Tommy was part Portuguese, Cherokee Indian and English. He is survived by his wife Marlene and his son Timothy.

Tommy and Marlene were married in 1957 in the old Estero United Methodist Church. Their wedding reception was held in the old 1927 empty school house on East Broadway.

They built a home on what is now Trailside Dr. on lots given to them by Marlene's parents. After Tommy's time in the military they raised their son Timothy in this home. They eventually moved next door into her parents home and lived there the rest of Tommy's life.

He was very active in the church and the Volunteer Fire Department. Tom enjoyed fishing and gardening for as long as he was able.

He was proud of his heritage of Portuguese (Paternal; Cherokee Indian and English (Maternal) descendants.

His family came to Mound Key in 1898 and then moved to Estero about 1913. He went to school at Estero Elementary School for six years and graduated from the 6th grade. Then went to school for three years at Fort Myers Jr. High and then to Fort Myers High School for another three years and graduated the twelfth grade in 1933.

He bought his first boat when he was 14 years old. It was a 16 foot cypress boat with an in-board Briggs & Stratton engine. He would fish with his dad in the summer and by himself on the weekends during the school year. He never learnt to swim.

He fished until February 1955 at which time he went to work for the Lee County Roofing and Sheet metal Company. He worked there for three years and then was drafted into the Army. He served 13 months in Korea with the 58th Ammunition Ordnance Company. He drove a five ton wrecker and was on call 24 hours a day seven days a week. One time he worked from Sunday morning to Wednesday night with only eight hours of sleep. He had to have a secret clearance because he had to go on Convoys carrying secret ammunition. He would have to load and unload some of the materials. The wrecker had a hydraulic boom on it. The convoys they went on had a M.P. escort at the front and the end. They traveled down the middle of the highway, never stopped for anything of let any vehicle pass or get into the convoy. One

time he was the last vehicle going through Soul City. He looked in his right mirror and a Korean bus was going to pass. I pulled to the right and the last thing I saw was the bus going upon the sidewalk. The Convoy Company Commander was a witness from the front of the convoy. When he got to the section where the material was stored, the

Commander came up to him and told him that he saw what happened and said "Job well done. You did what you were suppose to do."

After Tommy got out of the Army he worked for three years for Richard's Roofing Service in Naples Florida. He worked one year for B & B Builders Lumber Yard and Millwork Shop in Naples and twelve years and two weeks for Whitaker and Nicholas Builders of Naples. They did everything except roofing, ceramic tile, plaster and some kitchen cabinets. He worked six months for Toppina Builders and then went to work for himself from April 1976 until February of 2001 when he became ill.



Over Oct. 15th

Our walk way is filling up and soon we will be adding to the other side of the ramp. Get your reduced price now!

Contact Bev MacNellis for your personally designed brick.

Brick Sale over Oct. 15th
239-498-0678



EHS Annual Tea



Bling, Buttons & Bows

Feb. 6, 2014 Noon
Shadow Wood Country Club
Information: Bev MacNellis
239-498-0678



Estero Historical Society

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES

Due January 1, to get the advantage of the full year.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____

EMAIL: _____

* Your acceptance of e-mails allows us to keep you up-to-date on events and saves the Society a great deal in mailing costs.

- ☐ Individual \$20.00 ☐ Family \$35.00
☐ Supporter \$50.00 ☐ Patron \$500.00
☐ Lifetime \$1,000.00
☐ Business \$50.00 ☐ Business Patron \$500.00
☐ Donation to building fund \$ _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

Please check your personal volunteer interests below.

In order to function well, the Society NEEDS the help of its members.

☐ Docent-Office: Hall/Collier Home

☐ Care of Hall/Collier Home:
☐ Inside ☐ Yard

Activities at the Hall/Collier Home: ☐ Exhibits

- ☐ Tea/Lunches ☐ Work Special Events ☐ Picnic
☐ Lectures (Getting speakers, set up, food etc.)
☐ Fundraising Events (Tea, Tours, Dance, etc.)
☐ Children activities ☐ Mailings ☐ Take Pictures
☐ Phone calling ☐ Office ☐ School Projects
☐ Oral Histories ☐ Product Sales ☐ Publicity
☐ Newsletter ☐ Planning Committee
☐ Other

Please make checks payable to:

"ESTERO HISTORICAL SOCIETY"
PO BOX 1314, Estero, FL 33929

Annual dues are an important revenue source to cover our operating expenses. Many thanks for your membership.

For more information please call:

Jean Pryal at 239—498-5296

Visit our web site at

<http://www.esterohistoricalsociety.com>

Calendar of Estero Historical Society Events

Please mark your calendars with information on the following dates:

Most meetings are held the second Monday of the month (September to April at 2:00 PM) at our cottage in the Estero Community Park. Watch for time changes in the Banner or on our website at:

www.esterohistoricalsociety.com.

October 14, Monday -- at **5:00 PM** Recipes from the book "An Estero Legend" Evelyn Luettich Horne. The Society will prepare food based on recipes in the book. We will offer samples for tasting--- Donations \$10. Limited to 50 people call Jean at 498-5296 for tickets.

November 9, Saturday-- Belk's Charity Sale starts at 6:00 AM at Gulf Coast Mall. Buy a \$5 coupon from the Society and redeem it at Belks on Nov. 9th; Society keeps the proceeds from sale of coupons. Jean Pryal Chair 498-5296

November 11, Monday—at 2:00 PM General Membership meeting honoring Mimi Straub, Founder and First President of the Estero Historical Society. Speaker Bill Grace.

December 13, Friday —Noon to 2 PM -- Annual Christmas Holiday Luncheon (TBA)

2014 Programs & Events

January 13, Monday—at 2:00 PM General Membership Meeting. Speakers are Marlene Fernandez and Tom Smoot—Topics: Fernandez family history and fishing industry will be discussed.

February 6, Thursday—**Annual Spring Tea-Luncheon** at Shadow Wood, Noon: Tickets \$35. Theme: "*Bling, Buttons & Bows*". **Ten hats decorated with buttons and bows will be picked. Ten Outfits will be picked with "Bling"** Beverly Mac-Nellis, Chair, 239-498-0678

February 10, Monday—at 2:00 PM General Membership Meeting: Honoring President's Month - Our guest speaker, Arthur Steir, Historian. Mr Steir will discuss "The Early Years of George Washington".

March 10, Monday —at 2:00 PM General Membership Meeting. Ruth (Campbell) Mason will present her Campbell Family History in Estero.

TBA April , 2014 Private Tour to Mound Key. Win a trip from our raffle at the tea on Feb. 6th

April 19—Annual Pioneer Picnic on the deck between the two historic houses. More information will be posted on our new information center in front of the buildings. Darlene (Horne) Johnson (992-0799) and Dorothy (Horne) Evrard (273-7140) will coordinate this event.

Tours and Field trips will be planned by Carolyn Fischer. Look for information on e-mail or our web site at www.esterohistoricalsociety.com.

June - Making Chutney and Jam - volunteers welcome. Jill Keene-Lucas, Chair. 390-2392

July 4th - Reading of the Declaration of Independence- 10 AM -Very popular event.

For information call Dave & Jean Pryal 239-498-5296 or e-mail dpryal@comcast.net

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