

Spring LAB Meeting Minutes 2015

On Friday, April 3, 2015 Library Association of Brevard held its' Spring Meeting at the Central Brevard Public Library in Cocoa, Florida.

The meeting was held in the Genealogy and Local History area of Central Library starting at 2:30 p.m. LAB President Barbara Alderman welcomed everyone and introduced the speakers Erin Mahaney and Michael Boonstra.

Erin , from Florida Institute of Technology, spoke of the special collections and archives available at Fla. Tech. She explained about the history of the collections, digital and otherwise. These include the Edwin Link collection, the oral history collection, the Skellings poetry collection, and Dr.Keuper's collection. Erin, archivist at Fla. Tech, talked about the Link collection of engineering research in aviation, and the oral history that has stories from the early students and pioneers of the campus. Also Dr. Keuper's collection includes the newspaper clippings about Fla. Tech. from the beginning of its' founding. She mentioned how the relationship between local businesses such as Radiation (now Harris Corp.) and the school became important. Businesses would send their engineers to school at FL. Tech., and pay for their classes, allowing them to get an advanced degree at company expense. Today, there is a group of former workers that gather together to record their memories from Radiation, to help keep alive the history of both the company, and the links to Florida Tech. Erin also mentioned the Fla. Tech. radio station that will celebrate its' 40th anniversary on April 18th this year. She showed the posters from the events on campus during that time, and older pictures of buildings that are in the archives there. She encouraged people to look at the state wide archive grid for information: the web address is: <http://beta.worldcat.org/archivegrid>.

Next, Michael spoke on the genealogy and local history resources available at Central Library. Recently, the Brevard County Historical Commission ended its' lease in Byrd Plaza, and moved the collection to the 2nd floor of Central Library. (The commission has 15 members, and meets monthly to discuss historical matters, including the handling of historical markers for buildings through the county.) It publishes a Historical Landmark Buildings booklet, and the twice yearly Indian River Journal, full of articles about local history and buildings around the area. They have also published a 3 volume set of Brevard County history, available for sale from them. Newer publications he mentioned include two books on Cocoa and Rockledge history, with personal recollections and studies in building architecture. Michael is also supervising work on projects. One includes the oral history project. It is a project that converts early resident's recordings to DVD, uploading them to Youtube and a link on the library website. Other projects involve organizing the donated Florida Today newspaper pictures from the 1960's. Also there is a collection of original NASA press and memorabilia collection to be organized as well.

Regarding genealogy, it is best to make an appointment for help, so that resources can be gathered beforehand. Beginning in July, there will be classes to help educate patrons how to do family history research. The Ancestry.com database subscription is available only through Brevard County library computers, as well as the HeritageQuest database, and American Ancestors (New England) database, both available at Central library. There are local city directories from 1925 available, as well as

microfilm of local newspapers in the area. Obituary searches can be done, requested in writing, and prepaid for \$3.00 each. Michael then concluded his talk; please contact him if you have questions.

Refreshments were served around 4 p.m. A short business meeting for LAB was conducted. Items discussed were the vice-presidency vacancy, polling members of what do they want, where LAB is headed in the next year, should changes be made in the meetings, and what attracts people to LAB. Since Ashley Huser has volunteered to become President this next year, the vice presidency is to be left vacant at this time, the executive board decided. President Barbara will send out an email asking for help and volunteers. Discussion followed on how LAB is to continue, i.e. limit the number of meetings, go into an inactive mode, etc. No decisions were made on this topic. In another matter, the summer banquet will be offered again in June, 2015, with the date to be determined. The location will be The Mansion in Melbourne, for a dinner meal and meeting afterwards. Meeting was adjourned at 5 p.m. as the library closed for the evening.

Submitted respectfully,

From Lynn Bennett, Secretary