



THE DEPOT MUSEUM

& HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AVON PARK

"Your Ticket to the Past"

September 2026

Depot Museum gets help from the City



A city crew brought in the heavy equipment needed to remove a casualty from the freeze that damaged many gardens earlier this year. Our beautiful jatropha had blooms one day, but did not survive the cold spell, the next. When it was clear that it would not "come back", our resident horticulturist Rosie Longanecker, made arrangements for a replacement. The garden bed now features a bottle tree, a variety that is cold resistant and will thrive regardless of what Mother Nature sends our way.

The August and September *Heartland Living* magazine contained wonderful articles about our museum. There is also a story about the three Avon Park youth teams that represented Florida in a World Series tournament in Alabama this past summer.

Heartland Living does a great job of highlighting people, places and activities in our county and neighboring counties. We appreciate the beautiful photography and the well-written articles that have helped to promote us.

Be sure to pick up a copy and see for yourself!



❖ UP-COMING PROGRAMMING ❖

Presented in partnership with the Heartland Cultural Alliance,
Florida Talks in the Avon Park Community Center

September 27– 3 pm Craig Pittman



Craig Pittman is a native Floridian.

Born in Pensacola, he graduated from Troy State University in Alabama, where his muckraking work for the student paper prompted an agitated dean to label him "the most destructive force on campus". After 31 years at the Tampa Bay Times, he now writes a weekly column on environmental issues for the Florida Phoenix and co-hosts the podcast "Welcome to Florida". He has written six non-fiction books about Florida and lives in St. Petersburg.

October 25 - 2 pm

Making a Way Out of No Way



Martha Bireda is the Director of the Blanchard House Museum of African American History and Culture of Charlotte County. For over twenty-five years, she was a consultant and trainer for issues related to race, ethnicity, gender, and class for school districts, law enforcement agencies, and other organizations. Her most recent publication is *Reflections of A Colored Girl* describing her experiences during the Jim Crow Era.



November 22 -3 pm

Outpost to Statehood: the Florida Territory
Rodney Kite-Powell

is the Director of the Touchton Map Library at the Tampa Bay History Center. He received a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Florida and a Master of Arts from the University of South

Florida, both in U.S. history. He is the author of three books: *History of Davis Islands: David P. Davis, and the Story of a Landmark Tampa Neighborhood*, *The Governors of Florida*, and *Tampa Bay's Waterfront: Its History and Development*.

Funding is being provided by Florida Humanities and sponsored in part by the State of Florida, Department of State, the Division of Arts & Culture, and the Florida Council on Arts & Culture.





Highlands County Garden Week at the Avon Park Depot Museum.

The museum will be open for tours from 10 to 3 pm. Sample a variety of tasty dishes in the dining car from 10:30 until. Recipes feature vegetables roasted, 'souped' and in combination with other healthy ingredients. If cauliflower has never been your favorite vegetable, you may just change your mind after tasting our roasted version.

Saturday, September 12
Roots, Rails, and Recipes

SAMPLER MENU

Choose 4

- _____ Roasted Cauliflower
- _____ Horse-radish Carrots
- _____ Carrots Lyonnaise
- _____ Creamed Brussel Sprouts
- _____ Cabbage n Cheese
- _____ Mixed veggie Quinoa
- _____ Black Bean Soup
- _____ Tomato Bisque

Choose 1

- _____ Cornbread
- _____ Blueberry Cornbread
- _____ Pumpkin Bread

The cost is

\$10 per person



Beginning at 1 pm, experts from **Floral Art Company** will share decorating ideas using caladiums, flowers, other plant material and small containers. Participants will be able to make an arrangement featuring caladiums. A limited number of small containers will be available. Bring your own and fill it with an arrangement to take home. This activity takes place under the tents in front of the dining car and is being presented by *Keep Avon Park Beautiful*

Avon Park Garden Stroll - Sept. 9

Meet on the grounds of the Avon Park Depot Museum at 9:30 to begin.

Stroll Historic Downtown Avon Park with a local guide while discovering its trees, flowers, landscaping, and gardening history.

❖ MUSEUM HAPPENINGS ❖

The Historical Society is taking a road trip to Okeechobee.

Trip includes bus fare, lunch at the Brown Cow, a tour of the 3 sites managed by the Okeechobee Historical Society, as well as, the privately owned Yellow Bank building.

There might even be an opportunity to meet up with Mayor Dowling Watford, giving an interpretation of the life-size bronze cattle drive sculptures on the mall.

Visit all 3 Museums:

Raulerson Log Cabin
Primitive Baptist Church
Tantie Schoolhouse



Oct 30th Tickets are \$100

Reserve your space by calling: 863-453-3525 or 813-482-4868

The bus leaves the parking lot of the Avon Park Community Center at 9 am arriving back at 4:30



October 1st 11:30 - 1 pm

Guest Speaker: Dr. Vivian Sifontes

***The Hope Initiative - A Benefit Luncheon
to promote Breast Cancer Awareness***

\$40 (813-833-7891 for tickets) Join us at Camp Wingmann to raise awareness, and support for families in our community impacted by breast cancer.

Presented by *Floral Art Company*

in partnership with *the Keep Avon Park Beautiful Foundation*

Our VOLUNTEERS are the BEST!!

Murder on the Highlands Express was a huge success. Creator and director of the play, Sharon Seymour is shown here (red dress) thanking the full house crowd. Cast members are in the background.

Conductor, Larry Hedley welcomed guests aboard and punched tickets. Barry Foster, seated, narrated and acted as sound technician.

The newly formed Historical Society Drama Guild is already meeting to plan the next murder mystery dinner show scheduled for November 7 & 8.

Tickets will go on sale in October.



Servers, Kamla and Rosie, saw the drama from the kitchen and were ever-ready to provide drink refills and serve the 3-course meal between acts.

A very special thank you to these volunteers for sharing their talents to provide valuable assistance and expertise.

- Brian Hendrickson donated materials and made repairs to the dining car ramp making it safe for visitors and allowing us more time to work on a more durable replacement.
- Tom Tullo (Special T's Services) replaced track lights and hung posters, among other handy-man tasks.
- Laura Austin, Clifford Godfrey and Shirley Johnson provided background information to identify South Side heroes for the Centennial History Stroll displayed in the Hotel Jacaranda on July 4th.

New Exhibits - Always something new to learn!

It has been a busy summer at the Depot Museum. Our "Baseball City" exhibits have attracted a lot of visitors. The Pitch Zone is manned by Conner Seigny on Saturdays. Athletes of all ages try out their pitching arm attempting to get the ball into the strike zone. Photo opportunities abound. By standing on second



base and photographing the cut-out of Ty Cobb, an optical illusion is created. The ball seems to be coming right at you.

There is something new to see in every room. Curator Elaine Levey and volunteers Sharon Seymour and Ashley Ramsey have been busy cataloging donations and mounting exhibits.



In the main room, a new exhibit honors leaders in the citrus industry - just in time for Highlands County Garden Week!

A new supply of T-shirts, including youth sizes of the Head Field shirts, are now available. T-shirts in a variety of colors, featuring the Depot Museum, are on order and will be available soon. Another good reason to stop by the museum.

Recent donations to the museum have come from the family of Peggy Caraberis. Peggy was a long time resident of Avon Park and a faithful member of the Historical Society. She stopped by the museum frequently and entertained museum visitors as she shared memories. Demos Mandis, her father, operated a dairy in Avon Park. His office desk is on display along with milk bottles and documents from that era. Vintage clothing, luggage, documents and photos have been donated by the family and some are already on display.



Dining car volunteers participated in the Food Safety class in August. We are taking reservations for groups for luncheons. We are considering adding a brunch option to our menu if there is interest. Guests would enjoy a brunch starting at 9:30 or so and then tour the museum. This option would also allow plenty of time for a visit to the Peter Powell Roberts Museum across the street. Good food and 2 Museums for the price of 1. Call 813-482-4868 to make a reservation.

Thank you to our Corporate members

These businesses and organizations support your museum!!

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 Wells Family Partnership

THANK YOU, WE APPRECIATE YOU

**Please consider a gift to the Historical Society in lieu of flowers
to honor the passing of a loved one.**

Names of those honored are recorded on a plaque in the museum

We gratefully acknowledge Avon Park Main Street for generously allowing
us to print our newsletters in their office.

Historical Society of Avon Park, Inc

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Elaine Levey, Curator

Sharon Seymour, Volunteer Coordinator

Nancy Fisk, Newsletter Editor



MUSEUM HOURS

Wed., Thur, Friday & Sat

10 am to 3 pm



CALENDAR of EVENTS

Sept 5, Oct 3, & Nov 7

Gardening on the Grounds

September 12

Garden Week Sampler

September 27

FL Talks - *Oh! Florida*

October 30

Okeechobee Trip