



CITY OF DELRAY BEACH

MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release:

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AMERICAN FAMILY SERIES BOOKS HIGHLIGHT DELRAY BEACH HISTORY

In celebration of the Black History Month and the American Family, the West Atlantic Redevelopment Coalition (WARC), and the Delray Beach Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) bring you the American Family Series. The series highlights three books depicting prominent Delray Beach Families.

The first in our series of books is called the **“La France Hotel and the Charles Patrick Family.”** The book chronicles the lives of the Patrick Family from slavery until the end of the era of the segregated hotel. The family born into poverty built the La France Hotel in 1947. It was one of the few hotels open to blacks during segregation. It served as a seasonal residence for waiters, chauffeurs, and as a resort for celebrity guests. The book was written after the hotel had fallen into disrepair and was purchased by the Delray Beach Community Redevelopment Agency. The site will be redeveloped into housing for low income senior citizens.

A grant was received from the Florida Humanities Council to publish this book and offer it free to residents of Delray Beach. The panel will consist of the following persons: Dottie Patterson, (co-author), who is the archivist and manager for the Delray Beach Historical Society, Jocelyn Patrick (descendent), Nancy Stein – cultural and visual anthropologist, Richard Robinson, who is a certified genealogist, one of the few in the state of Florida and Vera Rolle Farrington, a local historian, who founded of Expanding and Preserving Our Cultural Heritage, which operates the Spady Cultural Arts Museum and is a contributor to the book. **(more)**

The book will be reviewed and discussed on **Sunday, February 19, 2006, 2:00 pm**. Limited free copies of the book will be available to the public because of generous sponsorship from the Florida Humanities Council. The West Atlantic Redevelopment Coalition received a grant to publish this book.

The second book in the series is written by C. Spencer Pompey. **“More Rivers to Cross,”** is a forty year look at the American Dream through the eyes of a black man. It is written by a remarkable Floridian who was an educator, mentor and civil rights advocate. He is an icon in S. Florida and Delray Beach in the fight for social justice that included integrating the beach in Delray Beach, insuring that black teachers received the same pay as white teachers and that black children would receive the same number of day of education as white students. During segregation, black students had school for fewer days because they worked the fields.

His widow, Hattie Ruth Pompey will lead the discussion. The book provides a perspective of the segregated south and what ordinary people did to change the course of the mighty river of segregation. **The book discussion and lecture take place on Sunday March 12, 2006 , 2:00 pm.**

The final book is called **“Letters from Linton,”** written by Charles Hoffman, grandson of the Delray pioneer family. The book showcases the life of the early pioneers. What is depicted is how they lived, and survived to make this the thriving community that it became though letters back and forth to Germany their home land. The discussion takes place on **Tuesday, April 4, 2006 , 6:30 pm.**

This series is provided in collaboration with the following fine institutions; The Delray Beach Public Library, Florida Humanities Council, the Delray Beach Historical Society, and The Spady Cultural Heritage Museum.

All events take place in the Delray Beach Library located at 100 West Atlantic Ave. All events are free and open to the public. The number for more information is 561-266-0194.

For more information contact: Rosalind Murray: (561) 276-8640 or Dottie Patterson: (561) 274-9578.

