

Friends equipping Englewood Archives

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ENGLEWOOD — The Friends of the Englewood Archives is living up to its promises.

The friends members promised Charlotte County they would help equip the archives, located in the Englewood-Charlotte Public Library — and that's what they are doing. The latest donation is \$2,649 for a scanner that allows the county's staff to scan photographs and other historical materials.

"The importance of digitalization saves on handling (materials)," said Lynn Harrell, county archives assistant. "We are trying to digitalize all of our collections."

Once materials are scanned, they can be then posted on the county's website. Digitization also protects historical materials from excessive handling.

A special donation for the scanner of \$500 came from the Key Agency Community Foundation, which has made prior donations to the archives. Dave Dignam, whose grandfather George Dignam founded Key Agency, has a personal interest in the archives' success.

"My grandfather saved contracts and pictures for the Intracoastal Waterway," Dignam said. He wants to donate all those historical materials and other materials to the archives before they are lost or destroyed.

In 2011, Charlotte County commissioners voted to allocate 1,000 square feet for the archives as part of the Englewood-Charlotte Public Library expansion. The archives was envisioned to serve as archives for both sides of the Sarasota-Charlotte county line in Englewood. When it came to equipping, commissioners expected the Englewood community to support the archives.

The friends group soon after formed with Englewood residents from both sides of the county line serving on its board. To date, the friends group includes 34 members, plus 11 additional donors. The Manasota Beach Club recently joined as a major sponsor for the friends group.

The nonprofit, tax- exempt group has raised and spent more than \$4,200 on equipment for the archives, including a specialty refrigerator to preserve photos, negatives and other fragile materials.

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Caption: SUN PHOTO BY STEVE REILLY Friends of the Englewood Archives treasurer Herb Stephens and secretary Carol Leonard, Key Agency president Dave Dignam, Charlotte County libraries and historical manager Lanette Hart, Friends board member Diane Harris and Friends president Bart Tracy check out the new scanner the Friends group donated to the archives at the Englewood-Charlotte Public Library. The Key Agency Community Foundation made a special donation to ensure the archives would be equipped with the scanner. SUN PHOTO BY STEVE REILLY Friends of the Englewood Archives treasurer Herb Stephens and secretary Carol Leonard, Key Agency president Dave Dignam, Charlotte County libraries and historical manager Lanette Hart, Friends board member Diane Harris and Friends president Bart Tracy check out the new scanner the Friends group donated to the archives at the Englewood-Charlotte Public Library. The Key Agency Community Foundation made a special donation to ensure the archives would be equipped with the scanner.

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