

## Celebrating Black History Month at the Lake Wales Museum



*Freedom Riders exhibit*

LAKE WALES, Florida – The Lake Wales Museum will celebrate Black History Month with three programs throughout February 2019. Join us for a unique exhibit, non-fiction book discussion and stirring speaker series.

### **Featured Exhibit - "Freedom Riders"**

**February 20 thru March 20**

This exhibition was created in partnership with WGBH Boston / The American Experience. The self-proclaimed "Freedom Riders" challenged the habits of a racially segregated society by performing a disarmingly simple act—traveling together in small interracial groups, and sitting where they pleased on buses and trains. Demanding unrestricted access to terminal restaurants and waiting rooms, they were met with bitter racism, mob violence, and imprisonment along the way. But their courage and sacrifice over eight months in 1961 changed America forever.



*The first African American schoolhouse in Lake Wales, Florida.*



*Dr. Tameka Hobbs*

### **Featured Humanities Speaker**

**Dr. Tameka Hobbs - "Strange Fruit In Florida"**

**February 21 @ 6 pm**

Despite its reputation as the "Sunshine State" and a tourist destination, Florida harbors a lengthy and painful history of racial violence. Dr. Tameka Hobbs examines the history of lynching and racial violence in Florida, outlining the overall arc of the "lynching era" in the United States, normal dated between 1882 and 1930, as these instances of extralegal violence became more sporadic in the 1940s. She also highlights the role of Harry T. Moore's advocacy against lynching and in favor of civil rights for African

Americans in Florida. Tameka Bradley Hobbs is an Assistant Professor of History and University Historian for Florida Memorial University. Dr. Hobbs is founding president of the South Florida Branch of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History, Inc. (ASALH).

## **Featured Book Club Book - Notes of a Native Son by James Baldwin**

**February 27 @ 12 pm**

Dedicated to non-fiction, you'll discover the truth can be much stranger than fiction. Join us every month to discuss new book! Read the book and come ready to discuss the best non-fiction books. Free to the public and all the books are available to check out free of charge at the Museum while supplies last.

"We are pleased to include the history of African Americans in the museum and with special programming. The museum strives to practice the inclusion of all Lake Walesans in our programs and history – to fill in important gaps where we are lacking ethnic history – we can continue to infuse diversity in our collective history," said Jennifer D'hollander, director for the Lake Wales Museum.

"We hope this presentation will help our community and visitors gain a deeper understanding of the African-American experience in the U.S. Lake Wales has a diverse population including 35% African-American residents. Many events from the past century's civil rights experience were playing out right here in Lake Wales. It's important to discuss these events, even though the talk by Dr. Hobbs will include some unsettling topics, we must remember how far we've come."

These programs are made possible through the City of Lake Wales, Visit Central Florida, and the Florida Humanities Council with funds from the Florida Department State, Division of Cultural Affairs, the Florida Council on Arts and Culture. These programs are free to the public. To RSVP, please visit the museum website at [www.lakewalesfl.gov](http://www.lakewalesfl.gov).

### **About the Florida's Humanities Council**

The Florida Humanities Council sponsors community based projects, facilitates important conversations among Floridians, and shines a spotlight on Florida's history, art, and culture. Established in 1973, we are an independent, nonprofit affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. For over forty years we have developed and funded public programs that tell the stories of both Florida and those unique individuals that call this state their home. For more information, visit [www.floridahumanities.org](http://www.floridahumanities.org).

### **About the Lake Wales Museum**

The Lake Wales Museum features historical exhibits, train cars, educational programs and group tours, and is open Tuesday – Saturday from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. Admission is free. Parking is free and the first floor is accessible for persons with disabilities, wheelchairs and strollers. For more information contact the Lake Wales Museum, 325 S Scenic Highway, Lake Wales, Florida 33853; 863-676-1759 or visit [www.lakewalesfl.gov](http://www.lakewalesfl.gov).