

History Museum of Mobile
111 South Royal Street

Phoenix Fire Museum
203 South Claiborne Street

Historic Site at Fort Condé
150 South Royal Street



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historymuseumofmobile.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**HISTORY MUSEUM OF MOBILE TO OPEN NEW PERMANENT
EXHIBIT, *FACES OF MOBILE***

The History Museum of Mobile is proud to announce the opening of its newest permanent exhibition, *Faces of Mobile*, which features more than eighty portraits and photographs of the men and women who shaped the history of Mobile. *Faces of Mobile* is located on the walls of the museum's multi-functional auditorium on the second floor.

Although the exhibit includes many well-known figures in Mobile's history, such as the LeMoyné Brothers, Joe Cain, John LeFlore, and Octavia LeVert, it also introduces several lesser-known, but no less important, individuals, including Robert Farmar, an early British official in Colonial Mobile, A.N. Johnson, noted African American journalist and politician in the early twentieth century, businessman Leopold Hammell, novelist Mary Fenollosa, and Châteauguay, the youngest brother of Bienville, founder of the Mobile.

Among the portraits are several individuals who have a long association with the History Museum of Mobile's building, in its previous incarnation as the Old City Hall and Southern Market. Architect Thomas James, who designed the building, is featured, as is William Henry Redwood, the contractor who completed the structure. Several politicians who worked in the building are featured as well, including Pat Lyons, an early Mobile mayor and City Commissioner, prominent post-WWII commissioner Joseph Langan, and civil rights activist Wiley Bolden, the lead plaintiff in the lawsuit that changed Mobile's form of government in the 1980s.

Writers and artists occupy prominent positions in the gallery, as well, including novelist Augusta Jane Evans Wilson, historian Peter Joseph Hamilton, and literary and blues critic Albert Murray. Some of the artists featured in the gallery are Edmond de Celle, John Augustus Walker, the artist responsible for the beautiful murals in the museum's lobby, noted Mobile photographer Erik Overbey, Henri Rathle, whose family recently donated a self-portrait to the museum for the gallery, and Roderick D. MacKenzie, whose time in India is the subject of the History Museums fall exhibition.

An introductory text panel for the exhibit reads: "For over three centuries, people have come to Mobile. Many came seeking new opportunities, a fresh start, or a better life. Others

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came because they were forced. They were immigrants, political refugees, artists, merchants, builders, teachers, and slaves. These men and women made Mobile the city that it is today. They were Port City pioneers. This is their story . . .”

"I feel that in this room where we frequently gather to celebrate Mobile's rich historical legacy, it is very fitting that the walls are now adorned with striking images of some of those Mobilians of the past who forever changed our city in so many ways," said David E. Alsobrook, PhD, director of the History Museum of Mobile. "This beautiful gallery is a tribute not only to these citizens, but to their descendants who still strive to make Mobile a better place for all of us. I'm extremely proud of our entire staff who brought this gallery to life--particularly, History Curator Scotty Kirkland who first envisioned it and helped the rest of us see his dream, Collections Curator Holly Jansen and her staff who painstakingly located and brought many of these images out of storage, Senior Curator Jacob Laurence for his overall coordination of assembling, conserving, and mounting the exhibit, Museum Attendant Cheston Moore who hung many of the portraits from his precarious perch on our tall ladder, and Museum Relations Officer Jacqlyn Kirkland who has tirelessly promoted the new gallery utilizing all of the professional tools of her trade. Bringing this gallery to life was a labor of love for our staff, and we look forward to sharing these images with our patrons," said Alsobrook.

Enhancements to the gallery will begin in the next Fiscal Year. In 2015, through a partnership with the online Encyclopedia of Alabama, the History Museum will create an online component with access to biographical information of the men and women in the gallery, lesson plans, etc.

For more information about *Faces of Mobile*, contact the museum at (251) 208-7652 or e-mail museumrelations@cityofmobile.org.

Located in the Old City Hall/ Southern Market at 111 S. Royal Street in downtown Mobile, the History Museum of Mobile documents the 300-year history of Mobile and the surrounding region. The museum is open Tuesday through Saturday 9 a.m.- 5 p.m. and Sunday from 1 p.m. -5 p.m. Admission to the museum is \$7 for adults, \$6 for senior citizens, and \$5 for students.

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