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Lee Community History Related For Men's Club

MADISON — Lee Men's Club celebrated ladies night Tuesday featuring an address on "The History of Lee Community" by Edward B. Browning, president of Madison County Historical Association. The invocation at the dinner meeting was given by the Rev. Chatman Hicks.

Introduced by Bobby Williams, president, Browning pointed out that the Lee Community "has made a very real contribution to Madison County culture through the development of the small, self contained farm."

The speaker paid trubute to the early leaders George F. Drew; Thomas L. Boone, first postmaster; J. C. Black, county Commissioner and cotton processor; the Rev. J. L. Rutherford, founder of the First Baptist Church; Drs. Walter Mickler, C. W. Johnston, and B. W. Hamrick, early physicians; and S. E. Whitty, druggist and member of the Board of Public Instruction.

He told of the banks established in cotton's hey-day which folded when the boll weevil marched devastatingly across the landscape.

Browning concluded by paying a tribute to the people of Lee. "The glory of Lee," he said, "is its people and the work they have done all through the years, to keep alive the values of cooperation, neighborliness and love."

In Georgia

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completed that year and was dedicated on Sunday, October 21, 1876. The Sunday School rooms of the present Church is the building, which stood at that time, between the present building and the highway.

The new part of the main sanctuary of the present building was constructed in 1927 and 1928 and dedicated on January 26, 1930. This building was made possible through the benevolence of the late W.C. Wells of Madison, whose memory will always be cherished. The Williams Family and E. E. West donated the land for the Church and cemetery. Later, Mrs. C. M. Ragans gave two acres. The pastorium now occupies part of that land. The pastorium consists of seven rooms and was dedicated April 4, 1954. It was constructed during the pastorate of Rev. P.O. Elrod.

As previously stated, Brother H. M. Frier was the first Pastor. He served Macedonia faithfully for more than 20 years. Brother Frier also served as Moderator of the Florida Association for seven years and was a Charter Member of three different churches. (Redland Baptist Church in Lowndes County, GA., Pine Grove (Piney) Baptist Church and Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church, both churches are in Madison County.)

Other Pastors include:

T. P. Webb	A. M. Parker	A. L. Croy
F. M. Wells	A. N. Woodard	C. W. Crim
O. J. Revels	A. H. Townsend	E. L. Gurr
John Farnell	J. A. Nichols	A. C. McLain
J. L. Rutherford	Ed. McCullum	R. A. Kelly
S. S. Proctor	R. L. Williams	R. B. Reynolds
R. L. Hacker	M. T. Fowler	Lamar Harris
I. R. Clements	E. A. Milton	Travis English
J. J. Simmons	Ben Perry	Dozier Sapp
S. A. Cross	P. G. Elrod	Ray Etherton
M. T. Fowler	DeWitt Cox	Charles Clemons
S. G. Ward	L. F. Lafferty	Glenn Luttrell
A. R. Powell	Ralph Beasley	Michael Turner
A, W. Smith	John Hutcherson	David Johns

Some 42 Pastors have faithfully served the Macedonians. In January 2006, after a few months of supply. David Johns arrived from Clewiston, Fl as the 43rd Pastor, and is currently serving.

HISTORY OF FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, LEE, FLORIDA

The church was organized in the year 1904.

The Charter Members were: Rev. J. L. Rutherford, Mrs. J. L. Rutherford, Frank Stroud, George Brown, Hugh Davis, Dr. Johnston and Mrs. Johnston, Sallie Frier, Leila Stroud, Vanny Stroud, Nora Frier, Mable Frier, Charlie Frier and Ben Ponder.

The First Deacons were: Ben Ponder, Leon Frier and Frank Stroud.

The First Trustees were: Rev. J. L. Rutherford, Mr. Ben Ponder, and Mrs. Sallie Frier.

From the organization of the church in 1904 to the year 1948 the church had twenty pastors Rev. J. L. Rutherford was the first pastor. The other pastors were as following:

H. F. Hacker,
John Clemons
S. B. Cole,
H. A. Jordan
James Anderson,
D. F. Berry
S. A. Cross
W. L. Overstreet
W. R. Ivey
N. A. Nichols
M. J. Fowler
S. G. Ward
F. W. Branch
Tom Allen
J. L. Odom
Russell Williams
John Collins
Butler Horton
Paul Hendry.

The first building was built by donated labor and the lumber was hauled to the site by J. R. Rutherford on a wagon. This material was donated also. The steeple was built by C. M. Frier. The same building still stands just west of the brick building.

F. B. Rutherford, Tom Kent, W. N. Webb, Frank Stroud and S. A. Kinsey served as deacons of the church for many years.

F. B. Rutherhford became trustee in 1932 succeeding his father J. L. Rutherford and the present trustees are: F. B. Rutherford, J. H. Phillips and Edgar Barrs.

In the year 1948 I. T. Carter was called as pastor and is still serving.

In the year 1953 we constructed a new brick building, and since that time have added until we now have a church plant valued at between $75 and $100,000.00. The largest ingathering of members in the last twenty seven years was 79 in one year.

The income of the church has grown from about $1,000.00 per year in 1948 to over $20,-000.00 per year.

We are proud to be the first and second place church in the Florida State Baptist Convention percentage wise in World Missions through the Cooperative Program.

Color contrast being absent on the steeple against the sky, this beautiful part of the Church does not show in picture.

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Edward O. Rutherford

MADISON – Edward O. Rutherford, 82, of Madison, died there Monday.

Funeral services are scheduled for 3 p.m. Wednesday at Macedonia Baptist Church in Madison, where he was a member. Burial will be in the church cemetery.

A lifelong resident of Madison County, he was a retired farmer and a member of Woodmen of the World. He was the son of the late Rev. and Mrs. J.L. Rutherford.

Survivors include his wife, Cordie Rutherford of Madison; three sons, J.W. Rutherford of Lee, Leroy Rutherford of Madison and Donnie Rutherford of Brandon; two stepsons, Burton and Billy Welch, both of Birmingham, Ala.; one daughter, Leona Powers of Winter Haven; two brothers, Brantley Rutherford of Perry and Frank Rutherford of Lee; three sisters, Eula Grimes and Ruby Jones, both of Lake Wales, and Lizzie Hayward of Haines City; 19 grandchildren; and 18 great-grandchildren.

T.J. Beggs Jr. & Sons Funeral Home of Madison is in charge of the arrangements.