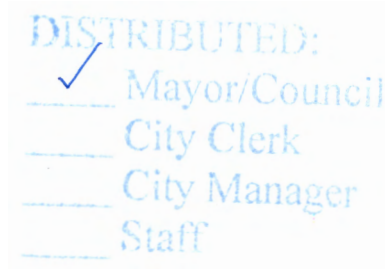


John Holic, Mayor
City of Venice
401 W. Venice Avenue
Venice, Florida 34285



8503 Cheltenham Circle
Louisville, Kentucky 40222-5338

July 23, 2018

Dear Mayor Holic:

I am writing to encourage you and members of the Venice City Council to transform the former Hamilton Building into a historical museum more capable of sharing the City's unique legacy. As a graduate and former administrator of the Kentucky Military Institute, I join my fellow alumni in urging you to take advantage of this wonderful opportunity to create a more spacious facility to tell Venice's story.

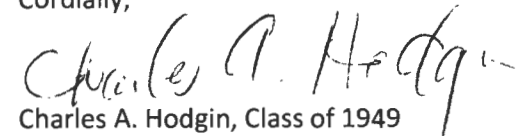
I first came to Venice as a very young child when my father and Colonel Charles Richmond brought KMI to the area in the early 1930s. KMI did not come to Venice to rescue the City, but rather to find a healthy, warm environment where cadets could participate in athletics and recreational activities during the harsh winter months. By the time the school arrived in 1932, the glory days of prosperity and rapid growth was a thing of the past. Venice had once again become a sleepy coastal village with paved streets and sidewalks meandering off into the palmetto thickets. The sudden presence of the military school had a dramatic impact on Venice's economy in those early years.

The City's growth remained moderate until after the war years when expansion really took off. That spectacular growth continues to this day. While Venice has become more than just that sleepy little "City by the Gulf," the community still lacks a historical museum to adequately preserve, organize and display its fascinating story.

The KMI Alumni Association supports the idea of a larger, more comprehensive history museum. That is the reason we established two funds (one encumbered) several years ago at the Gulf Coast Community Foundation. To date, more than \$150,000 has been donated to support such an endeavor. Generous citizens and admirers of Venice who have made donations and pledges in support of a new museum will not wait forever! There may never again be such an opportune time as this to create such a legacy.

We, the graduates of Kentucky Military Institute, sincerely hope that you community leaders will see fit to transform the Hamilton Building into a historical museum that will entertain, educate and engage both residents and visitors for generations to come. Thank you for your consideration.

Cordially,


Charles A. Hodgin, Class of 1949
Former Commandant of Cadets

Cc: Mr. Edward Lavalley, Venice City Manager