



Photos by TOM KANE/News-Press

KEYS TO BONITA HISTORY:Richard Reahard sits by his new computer, which he uses to access the Internet. Reahard says he spends most of his time working on the computer.

Bonita man still pioneer

By ANDREA STETSON
News Press staff writer

Richard Reahard is a pioneer for the decades.

As a child, he was the youngest member of one of Bonita Springs' first families. As a 61-year-old retiree, he's on the cutting edge of computer technology.

Reahard and his wife Anne's four grandchildren see a very different Bonita Springs than the one Richard grew up in. There were no fast-food restaurants, discount stores or supermarkets when Reahard was a child. There wasn't even electricity. But Reahard believes those were the days when the community was at its best, when growing up here was "just plain fun."

See PIONEER / 2F

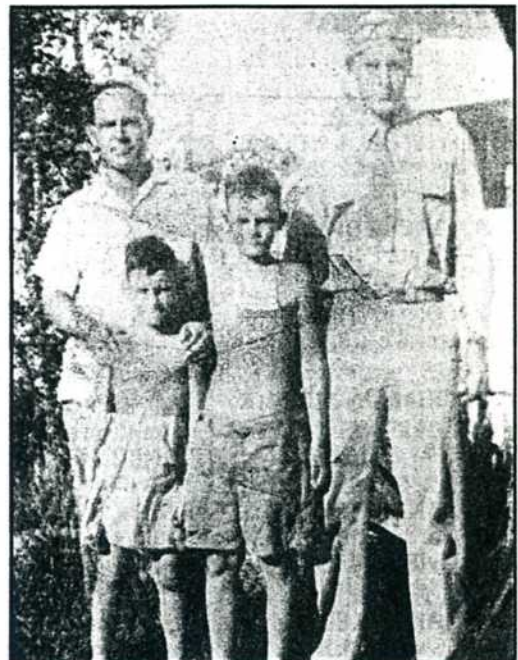
Profiles / 2F

ABOUT THIS SERIES

People who have moved to the Bonita Springs-Estero area as recently as five years ago have seen many changes — thick scrubland has been cleared for residential and business developments, fast-food restaurants have moved in, dozens of new roads have been built.

Just imagine the changes seen by those who were born in or moved to this area in the early part of the century. They lived in an area with one paved road, one general store and mile after mile of undeveloped subtropical terrain.

In coming Mondays, the News-Press Bonita section will feature our area's First Families. We'll share their stories of growing up in — and growing with — one of Southwest Florida's most rapidly developing communities.



FATHER AND SONS: This snapshot from the family album shows, from left, Gene F. Reahard with sons Richard, 7; David, 8; and Frank, 19.