



## *South Brevard Historical Society, Inc.*

*Founded 1966*

*E Newsletter*

*FEBRUARY 2021*

### **DEAR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS,**

Happy Valentine's Day! I look forward to the time we can safely get together once a month for at least ten months out of the year. We do have some programs lined up so we'll be ready for our social and "educational" gathering. In the mean time.....

Have you noticed that the ordinary has become the extraordinary? For example, being sure to acknowledge neighbors, even strangers who may pass by you, with a smile and a wave as you walk in your neighborhood. It feels good. For some of us, it is even a good feeling when we are inconvenienced by road work crews because it means that those folks have jobs during this difficult economic time. Media news reports of special acts of kindness are inspiring.

This valentine wish is that we may be HEARTENED by the most ordinary events of our lives and inspired to perform simple acts of kindness.

February is celebrated as Black History Month and so we present the dramatic and inspiring story of Harry T. and Harriette V. Moore for our special feature. Both the 2005 Historical Commission interview of the Moore's daughter and the material provided by Sonya Mallard, Cultural Center Coordinator of the Memorial Park and Museum in Mims founded in the Moore's honor offer insight into the ongoing struggle for justice and equality in our country.

Please feel free to contact the Society or myself via the internet: [contact@southbrevardhistory.org](mailto:contact@southbrevardhistory.org), or phone me at 725.4115. Your comments are welcome.

*Stay Well... Carol*

### **The Collection**

For several years the collection of artifacts, document and photo archive and the administrative archive have been housed in a facility located at Prospect Avenue in Melbourne. That location was part of a plan to obtain a larger, store front like facility to house the SBHS. Personal and other events intervened and as we struggled through the pandemic, plus the distraction of social and political unrest, the Board of the SBHS has found that the cost of maintaining this storage is not feasible. Certainly, during this difficult time fund raising is more than challenging for non profit organizations.

The total cost of the rental unit plus a required liability insurance policy for 2020 was \$5,140. We were able to meet that cost thanks to a residual balance of funds from 2019 plus some generous sponsor donations.

The lease will terminate at the end of April and we are in the process of searching for either donated, low cost or free space with utility payment at a new new location. At minimum, we seek 400 square feet that would accommodate both storage and work space. We require air conditioning, access to parking and bathroom facilities and easy access.

We have wonderful artifacts and historic archival materials for creating displays as well as conducting research on local historical subjects. Our resources, plus working in cooperation and collaboration with other organizations in the Brevard area, offer opportunities to carry out our mission in the Twenty First Century. In addition, we have an informative website, monthly programs (to be resumed when safe), and will be able to organize committees to address special activities or areas of interest such as recording oral histories.

Please contact Wiley Elliott at 321-536-1487 if you are able to help with a suggestion or a place.

## Things to Do

### **\*The Florida Historical Society**

You can access the Radio Programs and articles of the FHS:

go to: <https://myfloridahistory.org/frontiers>

or just go to your search engine and type in [myfloridahistory.org](https://myfloridahistory.org)

### **\*Check out Diane Barile's February article in *Senior Scene Magazine***

GO TO <https://seniorscenemag.com/current/>

Go to page 19 to read about the history of Melbourne High School.

(you may have to be patient as you turn the pages)

### **\*BREVARD COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

Explore the resources of the Commission

GO TO: <https://www.brevardfl.gov/HistoricalCommission/Home>

### **INTERVIEW OF THE MONTH:**

**Evangeline Moore, Daughter of Civil Rights pioneers Harriette V. and Harry T. Moore.**

**GO TO: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Arde1I\\_KJNs&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Arde1I_KJNs&feature=youtu.be)**

The Brevard County Historical Commission Oral History Interview for February, Juanita Evangeline Moore, is the daughter of Civil Rights activist and martyr Harry T. Moore and his wife Harriette Moore. Conducted in 2005, the interviewee discusses "her father's important work within the local community" and the region.

From the Historical Commission Website:

Mr. Moore, a teacher, was "known for his dedication to getting members of the Black Community registered to vote with his formation of the Florida Progressive Voters League, as well as his efforts to educate his local community". "Harry T. Moore and his wife Harriette were killed on Christmas night of 1951 when a bomb exploded under their Mims home."

"Evangeline discusses this deeply tragic event, considered by many to be the nation's first Civil Rights assassination, and its public and personal repercussions. While this interview features audience questions that drive at the heart of Mr. Moore's influence in his community and on the Civil Rights Movement as a whole, there are also many personal questions that seek to illuminate Evangeline's personal experiences. This includes discussing her close relationship with her parents and her struggles as a young woman growing up in a time of segregation and racial tensions in the South. Evangeline describes her parents' efforts to shelter her from racial hatred as a child and the struggles she continued to face as a young woman working in Washington D.C. This interview is a valuable testament to the struggles of the Black Community in Mims, and serves as a reflection of the nation's racial struggles at this time. Evangeline Moore passed away on October 26, 2015 at the age of 85."

## **February special feature:**

### **Highlights and time line of Harry T. & Harriette V. Moore**

Harry T. & Harriette V. Moore were the first true civil rights activist of the modern civil rights era in the state of Florida.

Christmas night 1951 on the Moore's twenty fifth wedding anniversary, a bomb exploded under their Mims home killing Mr. Moore and fatally injuring Mrs. Moore. Mr. Moore died on the way to the hospital and Mrs. Moore died January 3, 1952, two days after the funeral for Mr. Moore. It was the first killing of a prominent civil rights leader, and is believed to be the spark that ignited the American civil rights movement.

The Moore's were concerned parents and educators and became leading local and national civil rights activists. Mr. Moore organized the first Brevard County branch of the NAACP in 1934. He organized this branch focusing initially on social and educational activities. This built the NAACP's visibility without scaring off local blacks or upsetting whites.

In 1941, he established the Florida State Conference of NAACP serving as President and later becoming its first paid Executive Secretary. They remained instrumental in the NAACP and the fight for equality and justice until their untimely deaths.

In 1944, Mr. Moore co-founded the Progressive Voting League, and through the efforts of this organization over 116,000 black citizens were registered to vote.

The location of the original Moore family home site was purchased by Brevard County in 1994, and the Cultural Center was dedicated in April 2004.

The Harry T. & Harriette V. Moore Cultural Complex, Inc., was organized in 2002 as a non-profit support organization for the park. It is through their efforts that \$100,000 grant funding was secured from the Florida Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs, to assist in the construction of the replica house. A grant in the amount of \$500,000 from the Florida Department of State Bureau of Historic Preservation was received for the reflecting pool, fountain, meditation garden, and gazebo, heritage walking trail and community pavilion.

In 2007, the Florida Humanities Council recognized Harry T. Moore as one of the "Great Floridians" Ribbon cutting ceremonies were held: Home Replica November 22, 2009; Reflecting Pool, fountain, meditation garden and gazebo August 20, 2011; Community pavilion/heritage walking trail and dedication of a portion of Hwy 46 as the Harry T. & Harriette V. Moore Memorial Highway by an act of the Florida Legislature August 24, 2012.

In 2013, the Cocoa Village Post Office was renamed the Harry T. & Harriette V. Moore Post Office.

In 2013, Moore family artifacts were transferred to the Smithsonian Museum to become part of the new Harry T. Moore exhibit on display in the new Smithsonian National Museum of African American History & Culture, scheduled to open in 2015 in Washington, D.C.

April 24, 2013, The Moore's were inducted into the Florida Civil Rights Hall of Fame in Tallahassee.

**“Freedom is not free. If we want our complete emancipation, we must be willing to pay the price.”**

**Harry T. Moore, December 1951**



**Harry T. and Harriett V. Moore**



Home of Harry T. and Harriet V. Moore after a bomb exploded December 1951. (Photo from Florida State Archives.)

**YOU MAY VISIT:**

**The Harry T. & Harriette V. Moore Memorial Park and Museum**

**2180 Freedom Avenue, Mims, FL, 32754**

**Monday through Friday: 9 AM – 5 PM**

**(Closed for Lunch: 12PM – 1PM (varies))**

**(321) 264-6595**

The South Brevard Historical Society, Inc., is a non-profit corporation and an IRS 501 (C) 3 organization. All contributions are tax-deductible by limits of law. A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Florida Division of Consumer Services by calling 1-800-HELP FLA.

**P.O. Box 1064, Melbourne, Florida, 32902-1064**

**Visit us on:**

**[www.southbrevardhistory.org](http://www.southbrevardhistory.org)**

**YouTube: [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC8HAaqqBGAbz\\_GHMC3TZe-Q](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC8HAaqqBGAbz_GHMC3TZe-Q)**