



South Brevard Historical Society, Inc.

Founded 1966

E Newsletter

MARCH 2021

DEAR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS,

In lieu of the pre Covid normal distractions of everyday life, my mind creates diversion by directing me to try to think of novel ways to describe this “pandemic era”, such as comparing it to existing in a 1950’s film noir which includes a Godzilla villain. I also hear words and phrases as double entendre or with a comic twist. “A mouse meeting up with the neighbor’s Siamese cat can lead to a catastrophic event.....” for example.

An example of hearing an alternative meaning occurred as I prepared to receive a Covid 19 shot. It occurred to me that the words “the shot heard round the world”, first referring to the first gun shot of the Battle of Lexington and Concord, might apply to the new RNA based vaccines. The discovery, study and application of genetics in our lifetime are akin to witnessing the achievement of Louis Pasteur in the Nineteenth Century. That puts a bit of a positive spin on life as we currently experience it.

“Science knows no country, because knowledge belongs to humanity, and is the torch which illuminates the world.”Louis Pasteur

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

Stay Well... Carol

THE COLLECTION

Our search for a new work/storage facility continues. We are contacting individuals and businesses in the South Brevard community who may have a facility or know of a possible contact that may be able to help. The space needs to be large enough to store and organize our archive of photos, documents and other printed records of the community as well as artifacts that can be transformed into meaningful exhibits. We also retain official documents and memorabilia of the organization.

Archive Chairman, Diane Newman, is already evaluating and organizing the archival material. We’ll be able to sort other items as we move and organize the new space.

We need at least 400 square feet, air conditioned and with access to parking and bathroom facilities. We hope for either donated, low cost or a free space with utility payment.

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

THINGS TO DO

SUPPORT GREEN GABLES

Participate in a “VIRTUAL MYSTERY EVENT

MARCH 27 7 PM TO 9 PM

The Green Gables crew will be hosting an original mystery and you can guess "who dunnit" from the safety and comfort of your living room. **Go to: <https://greengables.org/> for more information and to register. Your \$10 donation will help support the work to SAVE GREEN GABLES!!**

VISIT GREEN GABLES

SATURDAY TOURS

10 – 2 OPEN HOUSE

1501 South Harbor City Boulevard, Melbourne,

EXPLORE the ORAL HISTORIES of the Brevard County Historical Commission
<https://www.brevardfl.gov/HistoricalCommission/Home>

Read our Special Feature Article and Plan a Trip to the.....

LIBERTY BELL MEMORIAL MUSEUM

1601 Oak Street Melbourne

(321) 373-2311

**Open Tuesdays from 10 – 2 (good idea to phone ahead)
and by appointment**

<http://honoramerica.org/liberty-bell-memorial-museum-2/>

March Special Feature:

Honor America, Inc

The Liberty Bell Memorial Museum

Contributed by Brenda Hoffman

Board Director and Past President

(Photos by Carl Andren)

Honor America operates the Liberty Bell Memorial Museum and the Melbourne Military Memorial Park to the south of the building. Honor America, Inc. is a patriotic, non-profit organization. The idea for Honor America came from a call to Americans by Bob Hope, the Reverend Billy Graham, J. Willard Marriott and Hobart Lewis to gather at the Reflecting Pool on the Washington Mall on July 4, 1970 and remember the traditions and principles upon which the founding fathers established this great nation.

A few years later, some Melbourne businessmen liked the idea of having a local site to remind our community of America's great heritage and history; and to provide a place for families to remember loved ones and commemorate our veterans. Honor America Inc. was chartered on October 18, 1974, and was located at the Henegar Center.

In 1976, during the year of our nation's Bicentennial Celebration, the children of South Brevard elementary and secondary schools were challenged to collect the funds necessary to purchase an un-cracked replica of the Liberty Bell. They met that challenge and the bell was purchased for \$14,000. The bell weighs 2,080 pounds and was cast by the Whitechapel Bell Foundry in London, England, where the original Liberty Bell was cast in 1751. One hundred bells were cast during 1976, one for every state capital and an additional one for another city in each state. The mold was then broken and the company has since closed. When we purchased the bell there wasn't a museum ready for it to be displayed, so it was housed in the garage of an Honor America board member on a flat-bed truck. The Liberty Bell was brought out for parades and events at that time and during the last parade in which it was exhibited, the truck jack-knifed turning a corner and the bell fell off into the street. The only damage incurred was a small dent at the bottom. In

October 1985, Honor America moved to its current location at 1601 Hickory /Street in what was the old water storage tank for the City of Melbourne. Today, the old water tank still houses the Rotunda of American History portion of the museum, the anchor for Honor America's focus on education. Entry to the museum is free. The Museum consists of:

The Rotunda of American History, Heritage Hall where the major milestones in American history are depicted in a timeline fashion. This portion of the museum also has displays of Florida history and local Melbourne and Brevard history. The history of the American Flag hangs from the ceiling The Liberty Bell serves as the focal point of the museum directly in the center of the Rotunda under a skylight in the roof. We also encourage our visitors to "Ring Our Bell" as part of their visit. Courtesy of the Exchange Club of Melbourne there are thirty two full scale reproductions of documents important to our nation's freedom. They range from the Mayflower Compact, America's first hand written constitution, and Thomas Jefferson's rough draft of the Declaration of Independence to John F. Kennedy's inspirational address. A short Paul Harvey video in which he describes the fate of the signers of the Declaration of Independence is also available for viewing. The latest addition is a 911 memorial that includes a piece of steel from the World Trade Center South Tower.



Freedom Hall, an annex to the museum, was added in 2005 through the efforts of many volunteer individuals, business and financial organizations. It contains an area that displays Military Awards and Decorations, a display of each of the major wars in which America has been involved, and a display honoring each branch of the armed forces. Included are artifacts, photos, uniforms, weapons and models representing the various historic periods. An Indian display donated by the Southern Band of the Cherokee and a replica of the Tomb of the Unknown are the most recent additions to Freedom Hall.



The Boardroom/Library is an 800 square foot multi-purpose room housing an interactive area with a military cot, clothing, helmets and boots for school children to try on and “play dress-up”. The room is a presentation/recognition area, meeting and classroom facility and is available for community functions and classes for a donation. A computerized cataloging system is in place that provides access to library and display items.

Melbourne Military and Memorial Park contains a monument for each branch of the military organizations, a civil war monument, and ten monuments with descriptions of the ten major wars. The park was designed as a place to honor our service men and women and to celebrate our freedom preserved through their sacrifices.

The museum also hosts several field trips for schools, including home school, in and around the area that could include scavenger hunts and educational activities. There are also Senior Centers, Scout programs and other area organizations and businesses that visit the museum regularly. Honor America is host to Memorial Day, Flag Day, and Veteran’s Day Ceremonies complete with guest speakers and music as well as various fundraisers during the year.

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.

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Visit us on:

www.southbrevardhistory.org

YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC8HAaqqBGAbz_GHMC3TZe-Q