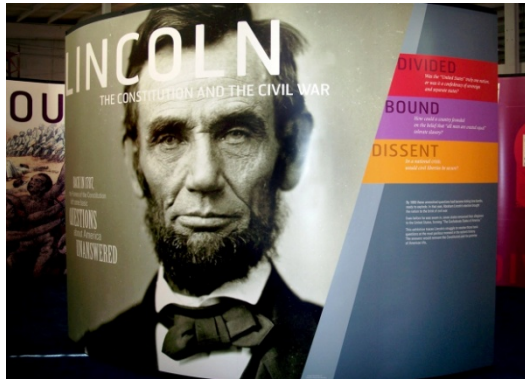


"Changing America" -- New Traveling Exhibition Tells a Story of Liberty and the American Experience



The Caswell County Historical Association (CCHA) presents - "Changing America: The Emancipation Proclamation, 1863, and the March on Washington, 1963," a traveling exhibition opening at the Yanceyville (North Carolina) Town Hall on January 31, 2014, examines the relationship between two great people's movements that resulted in the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, and the March on Washington in 1963. Both grew out of decades of bold actions, resistance, organization, and vision. One hundred years separate them, yet they are linked in a larger story of liberty and the American experience - one that has had a profound impact on the generations that followed.

"We are pleased to have been selected as one of only 50 sites in the United States for this exhibition." said Rhonda H. Griffin, Library Director and CCHA board member. "The exhibition tells the story of the struggles of the Emancipation Proclamation and the March on Washington and their impact on American history. It is truly an honor for our community to be selected to host this national exhibit."

"Changing America: The Emancipation Proclamation, 1863 and the March on Washington, 1963" is presented by the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture and the National Museum of American History in collaboration with the American Library Association Public Programs Office. The tour of the exhibition is made possible by the National Endowment for the Humanities: Exploring the Human Endeavor. The Danville Regional Foundation is providing matching funds to cover program, staffing, and insurance expenses.

The pictorial exhibit "walls" will travel to 50 venues across the nation, accompanied by public programming that will help audiences understand and discuss the relationship between these two people's movements.

The CCHA is partnering with the Caswell County Public Library, Piedmont Community College, and the Town of Yanceyville to sponsor free programs and other public events in connection with the exhibition. "Changing America" will be on display in the Yanceyville Town Hall Art Gallery beginning January 31 until March 2, 2014. The following programs will be presented:

Jan 27th - Exhibit Opens to Public. The exhibit will be open to the public 7 days a week from 12:00 - 5:00.

Jan 31st - Ribbon Cutting - at Yanceyville Town Hall

Feb 14st - Emancipation Proclamation presentation - 6:30pm at Historic Caswell County Courthouse (Dr. Omar Ali presenting (UNCG))

Feb 21st - March on Washington - 6:30pm at Historic Caswell County Courthouse - Professor Wayne Cohan presenting (PCC)

March 2nd - "Black History as American History" - 3:00 -5:00pm at Civic Center - Dr. Omar Ali presenting. This will be the closing ceremony for the exhibit. The exhibit at Town Hall will close at 3:00 March 2nd.

Emancipation from slavery was not the product of one act but of many. In the 19th century, enslaved and free Americans chipped away at slavery through daily acts of resistance, organized rebellions, and political pressure on politicians, generals, and the U.S. government. Finally, on September 22, 1862, Abraham Lincoln issued the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, which ordered that as of January 1, 1863, all enslaved individuals "henceforward shall be free."

The Emancipation Proclamation was limited in scope and revolutionary in impact. It committed the nation to ending slavery. The U.S. Congress responded with Constitutional amendments abolishing slavery, expanding citizenship rights, and giving black men the right to vote. These acts changed the political landscape, but the new freedoms were stripped away in the following years. However, on each Emancipation Day anniversary, Black Americans organized parades and speeches reminding the black community and the entire nation of a commitment that remained unfulfilled.

These local Emancipation Day celebrations and many other actions set the stage for the national push for freedom in the 20th century. On August 28, 1963, an estimated 250,000 Americans gathered at the Lincoln Memorial in the District of Columbia to mark the 100th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation. People traveled from every state, united across race, class, and ideological lines, and representing organizations, unions, churches or simply themselves. The prayers, electrifying speeches, and stirring music of that day served to remind Americans of the nation's commitment to fulfill its founding principles of liberty and equality for all.

In the months following the march, demonstrations and violence continued to pressure political leaders to act. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 were turning points in the struggle for equality. The bills outlawed segregated public facilities and prohibited discrimination in employment and voting. The success of the March on Washington and the achievements of the modern struggle for civil rights have provided a lasting model for social change.

National Museum of American History

The National Museum of American History collects, preserves and displays American heritage through exhibitions and public programs about social, political, cultural, scientific, and military history. Documenting the American experience from Colonial times to the present, the museum looks at growth and change in the United States. For more information, visit www.americanhistory.si.edu.

National Museum of African American History and Culture

The National Museum of African American History and Culture was established as a Smithsonian museum by an Act of Congress in 2003. It is the only national museum devoted exclusively to the documentation of African American life, art, history and culture. Ground-breaking for the \$500 million museum took place in February 2013 in a ceremony featuring remarks by President Barack Obama; former First Lady Laura Bush, a member of the museum's advisory council; and Rep. John Lewis (D-Ga.) who submitted the legislation that created the museum. It is now under construction on Washington's National Mall, on a five-acre site adjacent to the Washington Monument. It is scheduled to open in winter 2015. For more information, visit www.nmaahc.si.edu.

National Endowment for the Humanities

Created in 1965 as an independent federal agency, the National Endowment for the Humanities supports learning in history, literature, philosophy and other areas of the humanities. NEH grants enrich classroom learning, create and preserve knowledge and bring ideas to life through public television, radio, new technologies, exhibitions and programs in libraries, museums and other community places. Additional information about the National Endowment for the Humanities and its grant programs is available at www.neh.gov.