

Reflections of Manatee

Fall Update



The President's Corner



Dear Members and Friends,

We have a lot to be proud of at the museum this year. We restored the roofs and the yards after last year's hurricanes, finished another round of conserving our buildings with fresh paint, added inviting archways to connect the museum and the park, and started new plantings to beautify our yards.

We have confronted challenges such as the withdrawal of State museum funding for two consecutive years and the withdrawal of national support for the humanities. These things directly impact what we can afford to do in regards to staffing, exhibits, and programming. Despite that, the museum still remains open three days a week, and the volunteer board is committed to a new exhibit and slate of programs for the United States Semiquincentennial commemoration in 2026. There may not have been any Revolutionary War battles in Manatee, but this region of the Manatee River was a place of freedom. All groups who settled here came for a better life.

The Manatee Mineral Spring Park at the end of Riverwalk east, still exists because of us. The three Curry Houses of our museum still exist because of us. Without us, Bradenton will have lost the only space that preserves and honors ALL the groups that came before us.

Will you join us as a member? When you join, you're helping us preserve artifacts, restore exhibits, and share powerful stories that reflect all who shaped the Manatee River community.



Reflections recently teamed up with Shann and Matt Live at Bat City Comics to write a series of books focusing on the Underground Railroad in the Southeast and the Angola community in Bradenton. Each book is about 10-12 pages long and features significant events and places that characterized the route south. We recently sent the fifth book to our advisory committee and student artists from Ringling College are working on art boards for the remaining books now! We are planning a launch party in March to coincide with the Back to Angola festival hosted by our community partners, Oak Tree Community Outreach.

Sherry Svekis and Jean Lammie blocked the books, based on historical and archaeological research, and then handed off their notes and images to Shann to bring the stories of these freedom seekers to life. With the art of local artist Adrian Prudhomme and Matt's masterful lettering, book 5's story of Angola jumps off the pages of our new comic adventure that will be continued with the help of students from the Ringling School of Art.

Please enjoy a preview of a page from book 5 and stay tuned for more sneak peeks in the future!

The comic project is funded by a grant from the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH), with funding from the National Park Service, National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom.

MANATEE MINERAL SPRING PARK.
BRADENTON, FLORIDA.



Hey Kaycee!
What are
you drawing?

Hi Felipe!

I am working on
a mock up of what
I think day-to-day life in
the **Angola settlement**
would have looked like for
the Freedom Seekers
living there.



Based on
what my dad and the
team have found so far,
I feel like there would have
been a **lot** of fishing
for food and
for trade.

But I wonder if
they had the ability
to grow any of
their own food.

With the
water so close by,
you would think the land
would be **fertile** enough
for plenty of things
to **grow**.



Exactly.

But I wonder
if they would have had
the **tools** or the **ability**
to grow the same stuff we do.
It's really hard to decide if
any of this would have
been **around** then.

Without
actually being there,
a lot of times it feels
like we're just
guessing.



You know
who could help us
get a better look
at things?

T.R.A.M.!



Meet the Board

Ofelia is a bi-lingual, multicultural story teller, dance teacher, and living history educator who teaches children and adults history and culture through the arts. She holds a B.A. from Northeastern Illinois University in International/Intercultural Relations and is a former translator and interpreter for the U.S. Department of Justice. She has lived and worked in Latin America, Europe and the U.S. Ofelia has worked with the Sarasota Ballet, the Sarasota Art Museum, Sun Coast's Remake Learning Days, Cre-Arte Latino Cultural Center, and various other educational organizations in Manasota and the Chicago area.

You may have met Ofelia at one of our past events where she has volunteered as costumed interpreter. She is currently working with Sherry and Jean on new interpretation of Spanish fishing ranchos and will be participating in our field trip programming as one our teaching artists.



Season's Greetings

from Reflections of Manatee

POSTCARD

Members, friends and
supporters of
Reflections of Manatee....

**You are cordially
invited to our annual
Holiday Party!**

Bring yourself and a cup of
cheer for a Jolly good time.



**1302 4th Ave. E
Bradenton, FL
34208**

**December 13th
6 to 9 pm**

**RSVP here or
reflectionsofmanatee@msn.org**

EXPLORE

REFLECTIONS OF MANATEE



**Discover the rich
tapestry of
Manatee's history!**

Our docent-led tours traverse the three historic homes of our museum and invite you to take part in the rich histories of the Ranchos, Seminoles, Freedom Seekers, and Settlers that helped shape the Manatee of today.

**Scheduled Tours
available on
Thursday, Friday,
and Saturday
mornings and
afternoons**



\$10/person*

**Members tour
free!**

**Join now for \$25
come back all
year!**



BOOK YOUR TOUR TODAY

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www.reflectionsofmanatee.org



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