



3RD QTR
2026



NEWSLETTER VOLUME 02

Rowland Freedom Center



MUSEUM HOURS

OPEN:
WEDNESDAY - SUNDAY
10:00 AM - 4:00 PM

CLOSED:
MONDAY & TUESDAY

CLOSED for Special Events:
September 12th & 25th

 (707) 449-3402

 300 County Airport Rd.
Ste. C4
Vacaville, CA 95688

CEO CORNER: BOB HAMPTON

Happy Belated 250th Anniversary of Our Great Nation!

To all who have served—and continue to serve—our deepest appreciation for the commitment and sacrifices that keep this nation free. In 1630, John Winthrop introduced a powerful phrase to the colonists of the Massachusetts Bay Colony: “We are a city upon a hill.” He urged them to embrace both the challenge and the visibility of a new beginning, declaring, “For we must consider that we shall be a city upon a hill. The eyes of all people are upon us.” His words offered both hope and a solemn warning—to the settlers and to the world at large.

America's journey has not been perfect. Like any journey in life,

it has been marked by pitfalls, failures, and challenges. Yet self-reflection on those experiences has produced growth, hard-won lessons, and evolution. Nowhere is this more evident than under the intense visibility of today's social media platforms. It is easy to point out failures; what matters is that we learn from them and grow. John Winthrop could never have imagined the kind of constant visibility we experience today. Still, growth does not occur in the darkness (unless you are a mushroom)—it flourishes in the light.

Peter Marshall Jr. captured this truth in his historical series beginning with *The Light and the Glory*. The light of our history has exposed much, yet from those darker moments have come glorious contributions to the story of the modern world. Honoring early visionaries like Winthrop—and others who saw what America could be and still can be—resonates as strongly today as ever. *America, still that City upon a Hill 250 years later: Happy Birthday!*

A big thank-you to everyone who supported our Gala revival! It was a wonderful and inspiring evening. Special thanks to all who contributed, and to the many volunteers and staff who made the event possible.

Please stay connected—exciting progress continues on our museum expansion project. If you are not yet on our mailing list, we invite you to join. You can sign up at the museum or simply reach out through our website: www.rowlandfreedomcenter.org.



www.rowlandfreedomcenter.org

Enjoy your summer,
Bob Hampton, CEO
Rowland Freedom Center

“In the truest sense, freedom cannot be bestowed; it must be achieved.”

- Franklin D. Roosevelt



Planes, Trains & Automobiles

September 26th & 27th from 9:00am - 2:00pm



PHOTOS BY @AVIATION_AND_ADVENTURES

FOOD VENDORS - CLASSIC CARS - MODEL TRAINS - PLANES - RAFFLES - FACE PAINTING - PETTING ZOO - TRAIN RIDE (CALIFORNIA DREAM EXPRESS) - HANDS-ON EXHIBITS - CARNIVAL GAMES - MUSIC - AND MORE!!!

BUY TICKETS!



ADMISSION

ADULTS:\$15, AGES 5-12/VETERANS: \$10

UNDER 5 & MILITARY W/ID: FREE

CAR SHOW OPEN TO CARS / MOTORCYCLES / MILITARY VEHICLES / TRUCKS

COMPETITION CAR SHOWS ON BOTH DAYS
\$25 PER VEHICLE (DAY OF REGISTRATION: \$30)

TO PRE- REGISTER YOUR VEHICLE, VISIT ROWLANDFREEDOMCENTER.ORG

**HAND
CRAFTED
TROPHIES**



Visit Vacaville Farm to Table Dinner

On July 10th, Visit Vacaville, hosted their famed Farm to Table five-course dinner at the Rowland Freedom Center. It was a huge success. Working with the best Solano County and surrounding area chefs and purveyors to provide a sustainably sourced dinner, the food was phenomenol. There were also wine pairings from local wineries for each course, beer from local breweries and coffee from Vacaville’s own Journey Coffee Co. Approximately 150 guests attended. RFC was honored to host!



Top Photo: Some of the RFC team and Board at the Farm to Table Dinner.

Left Photo: Beautiful place settings at the Farm to Table Dinner.

2026 Heroes Through History Gala

A special thank you to everyone who attended this year’s Gala! We were delighted to welcome approximately 200 guests this year. Our deepest appreciation goes to those who generously donated auction items, everyone who placed bids, our valued community partners, and the many volunteers! Thanks to your collective generosity, we raised significant funds that will directly support RFC’s mission and programs. We are truly grateful for the continued support of our community and hope to see you all again at next year’s annual Gala in May 2027!



Julie Clark, 2025 National Aviation Hall of Fame Inductee and Brian Evans, museum contributor.



Top Photo: Gala place settings and dining tables prior to dinner.

Left Photo: RFC Benefactor, Herm Rowland w/ Stephanie Goetz, National Anthem Singer and Pink Jet Pilot.

Other Upcoming Events



August 1 & September 5 @ 9:00am
Cup of Joe

Septmeber 26 & 27 @ 9:00am - 2:00pm
Planes, Trains, & Automobiles



Written by: Paul Mirich, General Manager, Rowland Freedom Center

When the name of Robert Emmett Fletcher Jr. is mentioned, most Americans respond with: “Who?” So, what was it that makes the name of “Bob” Fletcher a name that should be known to most Americans? Simple. Bob believed that ALL Americans, no matter of your race, should be treated like all other Americans. At a time in America when this was not happening, Bob sacrificed in many ways to make sure that his neighbors, who believed in the American dream, would not have to live with an American nightmare.

On February 19, 1942, two months after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor which caused America to enter World War II, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, authorizing military commanders to incarcerate over 120,000 Japanese Americans into internment camps for the duration of the war.



Photo: Robert E. Fletcher Jr.

Because of the swiftness of this action, many Japanese Americans did not have the opportunity to prepare to leave, thus they lost their homes, farms, or business either selling them for a very low price or having the property seized for lack of payments. Three Japanese American families, the Tsukamotos, the Okamotos and the Nittas, all owned farms in the Florin, California area (10 miles south of Sacramento). Before being shipped out to a camp, they contacted Bob Fletcher, a man they felt that they could trust.

Bob was born in 1911 in San Francisco and in 1933, he graduated from UC Davis with a degree in agriculture. After running a peach orchard in Red Bluff for a few years, Bob became a state shipping point inspector in Florin. Bob was married and was described as a taciturn man and seemed to get along with everyone. The families approached Bob with a proposition. If Bob would tend their farms and pay their bills with the money made from the crops, Bob could keep all of the money that was left over. The farms totaled 90 acres and it would be for an undetermined amount of time. Bob agreed under one condition. As he had to quit his job as an inspector, he would only take half of the profits and keep the rest for the families when they returned.

Once the families were sent to the camps, Bob quit his job and took over the ranches, many times working 18-hour days. His wife Teresa assisted with many of the chores to keep the houses functioning.

Bob's decision to help out his fellow Americans were not appreciated by the entire community. In town some people ignored him, others called him names and yelled at him. Some said that he was now their enemy for life. One night, while Bob was in the barn, someone shot into it, missing Bob.

Bob continued with working the farms until the end of the war and the families were able to return not only to a fully functioning farm, but money in the bank. Bob and Teresa made sure that three American families, after enduring many hardships just based upon their race, were able to continue with their American dream. The families called Bob an “honorable American” who deserved recognition even though he didn't seek it. When they asked him why he helped them, he answered them with “It was the right thing to do.”

Bob Fletcher passed away in 2013 at the age of 101. Bob will be highlighted in our upcoming Asian-American display.

America Turns 250: Continuing the Celebration at the RFC

As we wind down from the hype of the fireworks displays, parades and 4th of July parties, there are still 5 more months to soak in the fact that America—the only country of its kind in the history of the world—is turning 250 years old. So many generations ago, the Founders laid down a list of grievances that explained how the government of England violated the colonists' fundamental human rights, and therefore it was their duty to form a new government in order to protect the people's rights. A consensus of these self-evident rights is what formed our nation. It's what our brave men and women in uniform fought and died for over the past 250 years.

The Rowland Freedom Center has a special temporary exhibit open that highlights different moments in our history that have defined what we fight for. Combined with the community exhibit "Moments that Made Us," created by History Colorado, the RFC is displaying genuine artifacts from the Revolutionary War like musket balls, a Dutch Druit coin (also known as the New York Penny), the first edition of the Ladies Magazine, along with a replica of Molly Pitcher's cannon rammer/sponge staff. The focal point of the exhibit is the large scale Declaration of Independence (on loan from the Schillingers). A couple of facts you will learn



Lrg scale Declaration of Independence
(on loan by the Schillinger's)



Panels from "Moments That Made Us" exhibit



from the exhibit are that 56 individuals signed the Declaration of Independence, and 9 of those 56 died fighting in the Revolutionary War. Also, a fun fact is that the signers ranged in age from 26 (Edward Rutledge) to 70 (Benjamin Franklin). The America 250 exhibit will run until December 2026.

Leave us a Google Review and have a chance to win an Patriotic Mug!

Leave us a positive review on Google and be entered into a chance to win a patriotic mug from our Gift Shop! Let us know about your positive experience at the museum, friendly staff you may have met, or your favorite exhibit or event you have attended at Rowland Freedom Center! After leaving your review, please email a screenshot of the review to info@rowlandfreedomcenter.org. All entries received by 11:59pm on Sept. 30th will be entered into a random drawing. Thank you in advance, as we aim to boost our online presence!



[Click here to leave a review!](#)

Rowland Freedom Center relies on community donations to keep our doors open & our mission alive. Every contribution directly supports displays, educational programs, and honors the legacy of those who served. Without donor support, this living piece of history couldn't continue to operate. Thank you for your continued support!

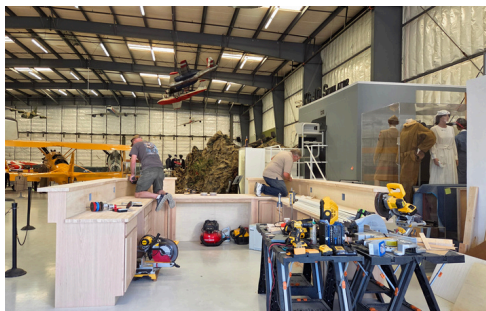
DONATE



Two Carpenters, Three Weeks

Rowland Freedom Center is proud to present a dazzling new addition to our front entrance: our brand new, custom-built Reception Desk! The desk is the final part of our Front Entrance Remodeling project, which started three years ago and included the Early American Aviation Exhibit, the re-design of the Gift Store, and the Donor Wall, among other changes.

The desk was expertly built by two of our volunteers, John Olp and Tim Nelson. These two talented gentlemen have years of wood-working experience and designed the beautiful 12'x12' desk, which immensely elevates our front entrance. John and Tim spent nearly every day at the museum during the three weeks leading up to our Heroes Through History Gala, working hard to finish the desk before the big event. The desk not only looks great, but also provides more working space for our volunteers, allowing museum operations to run more efficiently. On behalf of the Board, staff and volunteers, thank you John and Tim!



John Olp working on the front desk



Tim Nelson working on the front desk



Brand new RFC front desk



Jan Aldrich
In Memorium



It is with sadness of heart, that we share with you that one of our dedicated volunteers, Jan Aldrich, passed away from a sudden illness this past week. Jan and her beloved dachshund, Max, were valued members of our Rowland Freedom Center team. Her warmth and engaging personality will leave a void that will be hard to replace. Thank you for your dedication and selfless service to Rowland Freedom Center Jan, as your presence will be missed. Service times and location will be posted on our web page for those who wish to attend.



Jan and Max at the Nut Tree Spring Fair



Jan, 4th from right, with her RFC family.



Jan in front of the RFC Revolutionary War Display

Volunteers of the Month

Congratulations, and a huge thank you, to our Volunteers of the Month for May, June, and July. We couldn't do it without you!



May: Tim Nelson
June: Tom Kelley
July: Doug Dunnett



Want to get involved and help advance RFC's mission? [Click here](#) to Volunteer today!!