



## **DNAS Museum News - March, 2019**

# **DNAS Museum "PHOENIX" PROJECT Building Recycle/Rebuild Begins**

### **First Load Of Dirt Starts Project**



The planning, permits and required paperwork has been finalized and the DeLand Naval Air Station Museum Volunteers are excited to start the building recycle/rebuild project on the museum complex at 910 Biscayne Boulevard. They will be recycling the steel frame from the former Annex Building and adding ADA compliance public restrooms. Volunteers from age 18 to 95 assisted with taking down the old

annex building, packing and storing vintage memorabilia and now stand ready to rebuild the 60x40 metal building near the original museum building which is on the National Register of Historic Places.

Current Community Sponsors assisting with the project are The City of DeLand, Ronald N. Herman Family, All Quality Products & Millshop, Chris Stubbs Family In Memory of WWII Commander Harry K. Stubbs, Rotary Club of DeLand/Titcomb Family in Memory of Ellwood Titcomb, DNAS Museum First President, DeLand Breakfast Rotary Club, Doug & Sarah Lantier & Marty Torbett Family & Friends In Memory of WWII DeLand Flightline Chief Kenneth Torbett, Tom Bechtol, Bechtol Engineering & Persimmon Hollow Women's Club. The project will be completed with as much Volunteer and in-kind services as possible. New Sponsors, Community Partners and Volunteers are needed and invited to join the efforts to enhance the educational programs and displays of the DNAS Museum for future generations. Individual donations in honor of a Veteran or family member will be displayed on public signage when the project is completed.



# Tom Bechtol Honored By DNAS Museum



The DeLand Naval Air Station Museum Board of Directors and Volunteer Members recently presented Tom Bechtol of Bechtol Engineering and Testing, Inc. with a special plaque expressing their gratitude. Tom, a Breakfast Rotary Club Member, assisted with the engineering services required to start the rebuilding of our Annex Building. A special thanks also to Mike Brooks for his assistance in contacting Tom. Our small museum continues to thrive because of the great community we live in and the many Sponsors, Community Partners and Volunteers who help us every day to preserve our local history for the generations to follow.

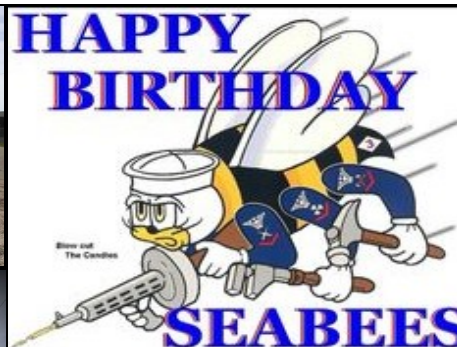
**bechtol.com**



Former Annex and Hexigon Buildings  
Are Removed After Re-Usable



Materials Are Recycled



FOUNDED  
MARCH 5, 1942



Look Out - Seabee  
Don Is On A Mission



Need A Road? "Can Do"  
Our Community Partners & Volunteers Will Make It Happen



New Annex footprint  
Ready for Concrete

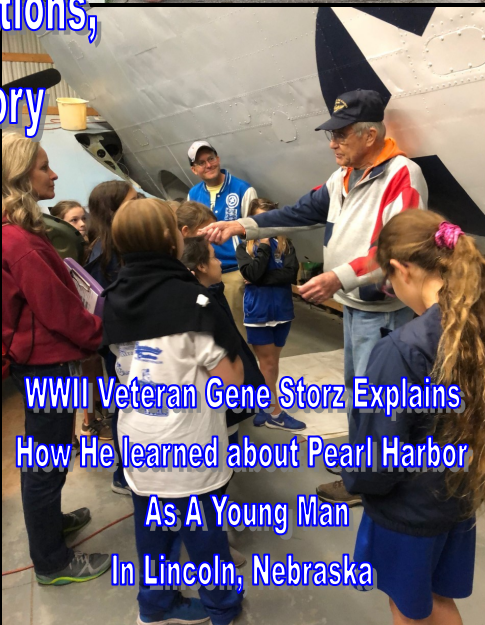
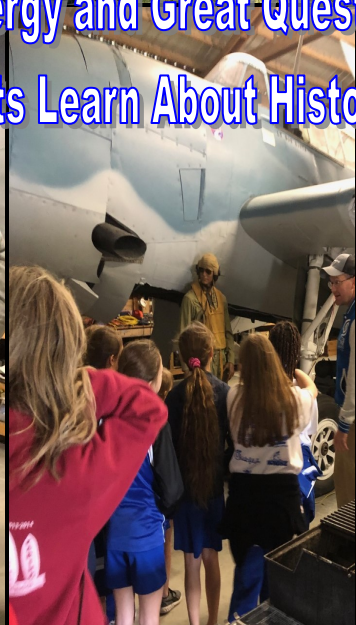


# St. Barnabus Students Visit DNAS Museum

Two Groups of Boys and Girls  
Arrive By Bus



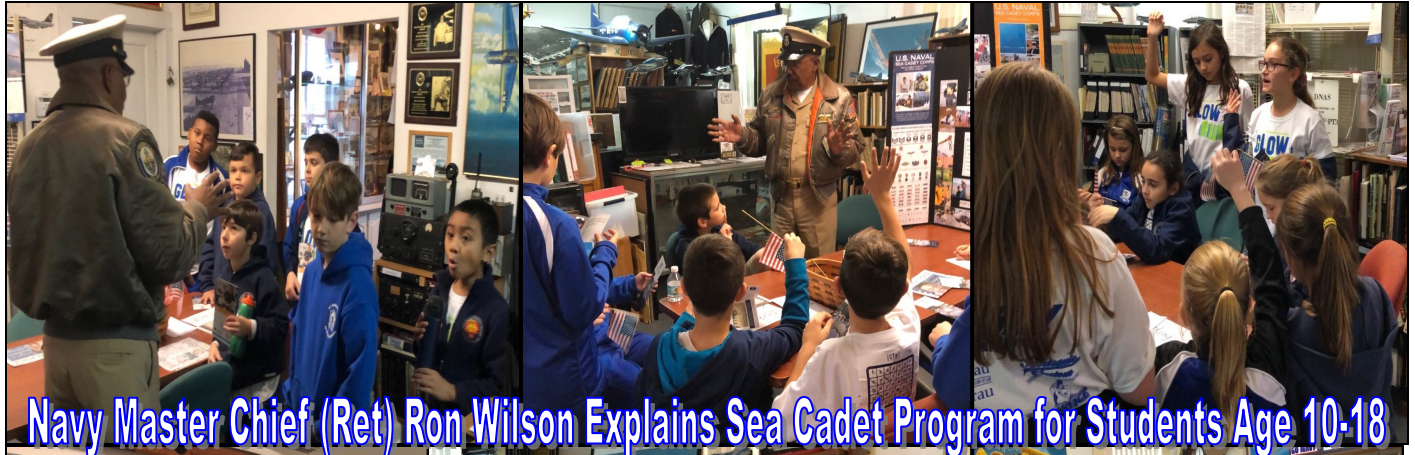
Full of Energy and Great Questions,  
Students Learn About History



WWII Veteran Gene Storz Explains  
How He learned about Pearl Harbor  
As A Young Man  
In Lincoln, Nebraska



# Students Learn History During Educational Tour



Navy Master Chief (Ret) Ron Wilson Explains Sea Cadet Program for Students Age 10-18



Student Have Many Choices to Explore Potential Military Careers



Anchors Away For the Boys

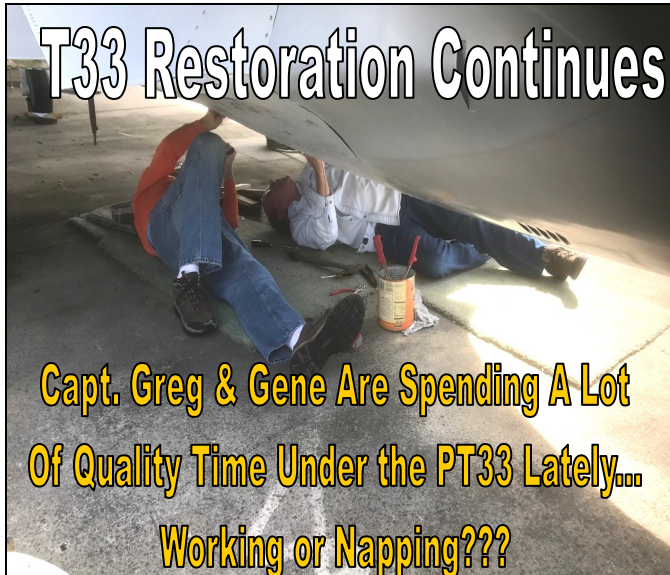
The Girls Pose With WWII Pilot

## A Bright Future Ahead For These Great Students



## T33 Restoration Continues

Capt. Greg & Gene Are Spending A Lot Of Quality Time Under the PT33 Lately... Working or Napping???



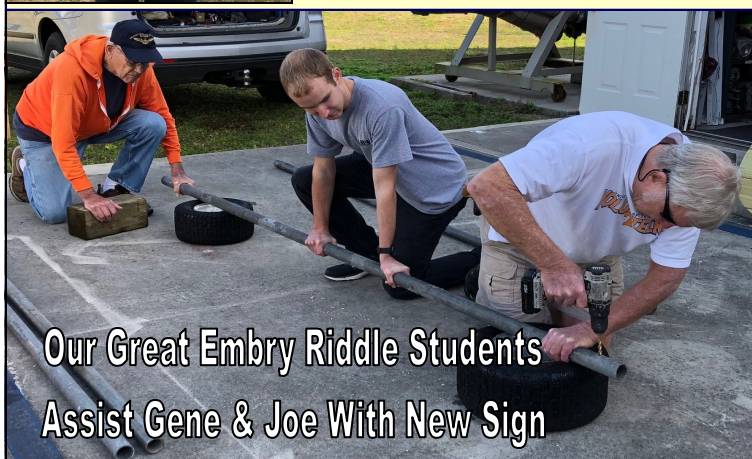
The F-14 Tom Cat Jet Maintenance Is An Ongoing Task



## Teamwork - Three Generations



Our SPECIAL THANKS to Joe Storz for making a replacement sign for our museum entrance. The original sign was damaged in a recent storm. Our Embry Riddle Student Volunteers assisted with the new installation.



Our Great Embry Riddle Students Assist Gene & Joe With New Sign





## PTF3 Restoration Continues



[batterytender.com](http://batterytender.com)



Vietnam Era Patrol Boat  
New Paint



## DNASM Member Shares Post-WWII Memories of DeLand Naval Air Station



Jack Gibson, DNASM Lifetime Member and former DeLandite, recently contacted us to share his recollections of the former DeLand Naval Air Station post-WWII. Jack, who now lives in Hideaway, Texas, recalls in the 1950's being able to witness one of the former Navy base buildings being moved from the Airport to Stetson University for use as a classroom. The building move route proceeded along Woodland Boulevard and at Minnesota Avenue, became tangled in telephone wires and tree limbs. Years later, while a student at Stetson, he took a course on "Russian History & Culture" (basic background info for "then Cold War") in that same building. He had several classes in a building still on the original DNAS site and obtained his uniforms, text books and supplies there. Jack graduated with his ROTC Army Ordnance Corps 2nd Lt. bars in 1956. He shared his recollections about finding a Navy training crash site at the former DeLand Naval Base in the 1950's.

# WWII HISTORY - DNAS RECOLLECTIONS



## WWII DeLand Naval Air Station & “The Skeleton”

By John S. (Jack) Gibson—Hideaway, Texas

In 1946, my family moved to DeLand, Florida from Kentucky. We arrived in DeLand a few months after the DeLand Naval Air Station (DNAS) closed after four years of extensive World War II service primarily as a training base for Navy Dive Bomber Pilots. DNAS had been built around the original, smaller DeLand civil airport on the outskirts of town. By early summer, 1947, I was a sub-teenager and on my bicycle had explored virtually all of DeLand’s four square miles of “checkerboard” layout of streets, avenues, courts, alleys, and boulevards. One morning that summer I ventured on my bike out of town to the abandoned DNAS. I explored hangers, classroom buildings, the control tower, the old mess hall, and

several of the rest of the structures that made up DNAS. The classrooms were the most interesting as all the other buildings had been stripped bare by the Navy, and apparently also by scavengers after the Navy left. The largest classroom building was full of piles of trash and scattered paper, including some training manuals, letters, graded exam papers, old newspapers and magazines, etc. It appeared that bookcases and file cabinets had been dumped on the floor in the hurry to get hardware and furniture out. (This large classroom building, a year or two later, was moved to the DeLand Campus of Stetson University to serve as additional classroom space to help accommodate the many veterans returning to college under the new “GI Bill.”)

I made several of these DNAS bicycle trip explorations and one day decided to go out into the scrubland areas around the runways. There were some old rutted dirt roads available to accomplish this. The first thing I found were two large earth covered concrete bunkers with heavy steel locked doors on one side of each bunker. I assumed that these were abandoned ammunition and/or bomb storage places. I followed another dirt road to about 100 yards from the end of a runway and saw a strange and large object in the underbrush. When I got closer it began to look like an airplane. It was an airplane, a low-winged, single engine type, lying flat on the ground, or a skeleton of one! The fuselage appeared to be only aluminum longerons and ring-like ribs. The wings and the empennage components looked to be just aluminum rib-sections and structural spars. The cowling was missing but a large radial piston engine was still mounted to the firewall structure. And a large three-bladed propeller, each blade bent circularly rearwards, was still connected to the engine by its steel shaft.

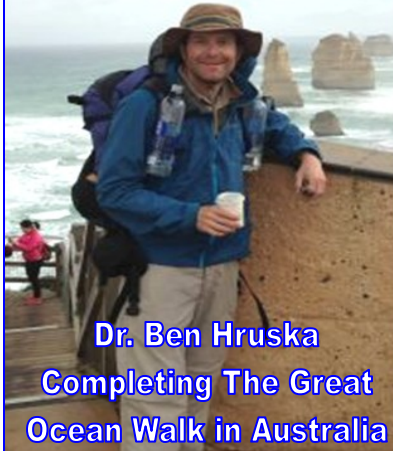
The shape of the skeleton had a distinctive appearance, especially the wings. They drooped down and out from the fuselage for a short distance and then back up, the inverted “gull-wing” design, an obvious giveaway that this was the remains of a U.S. Navy or Marine F4U “Corsair” fighter. The three-bladed prop even indicated that this was an early version of the Corsair. (Most WWII era boy-kids were quite aware of Army and Navy airplane shapes, names, basic characteristics and missions, etc.) Since this aircraft was lined up with a runway and pointed away from it, and the prop blades were bent backwards, I assumed that it had landed long on the runway or had made an aborted takeoff and had destroyed the landing-gear as it barreled off the runway into the sandy scrubland. Closer examination of the skeletal hulk revealed that all of the electrical wire, control cables, hydraulic tubing, instruments, pilot’s seat, anything removable.....had been taken away. Also, literally every square inch of the aluminum skin was gone!

The symmetrically bent three-bladed propeller looked like it would make a fine souvenir (something that today we might call a piece of “modern yard art”). I thought that even though it looked like a tough job, I could cut the steel shaft with a metal cutting hacksaw....and my Dad just happened to have one. The next day I came back and started to work on the shaft. I sawed, and sawed, and sawed. To make a long and sweaty story short, after an hour or so I hadn’t made a dent in the shaft; hardly even scratched it! I don’t know what kind of steel that shaft was made of, but it was not going to be cut by me that day. I was out of luck with my limited tools and knowhow, and biked back home rather dejectedly.

I made another visit to the skeleton and prop a few weeks later. Then another trip out there one weekend a couple of months after that, and....”my” Corsair skeleton was nowhere to be seen, gone, vamoosed! Someone, perhaps the one or ones who stripped it bare originally, had apparently hauled the whole thing away. This ended my DNAS exploration days as I had seen essentially everything that was there to be seen.

“My” Corsair was now the last military aircraft to leave the old Navy base after WWII. There are many good memories of those days of biking and exploring DNAS. To this day, I can still vividly see in my mind that skeleton with the beautifully curved-back three-bladed prop. I often wonder where that prop went, and if it still exists?

## Public Historian



**Dr. Ben Hruska**  
Completing The Great  
Ocean Walk in Australia



Conducting Educational  
Youth Tour

The DeLand Naval Air Station Museum has been so fortunate to have Dr. Ben Hruska, PhD, join us as a Volunteer and Advisor. Ben earned his PhD in Public History from Arizona State University. He held the position of Director of the Block Island Historical Society, which is a house museum devoted to local history located on the small island of Block Island, Rhode Island. He has also served as a digital historian for the U.S. Department of Defense's U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces in Washington, D.C. In 2016, he published his first book *Interpreting Naval History at Museums and Historical Sites*. In this book he explores museums around the world devoted to naval history. Many of these overlooked sites are located inland.

Dr. Hruska is in Volusia County working on his second book but takes the time to assist DNASM with public tours for youth and adults when needed. He has also made himself available as an advisor to assist with technical and practical solutions for museum operations. We appreciate his assistance and look forward to working with him in the future.

## Our Future.....



Just a few short years ago, WWII Veteran Gene Storz was showing his young great grandsons, Preston and Dylan Storz, the military memorabilia at the DeLand Naval Air Station Museum. He is very proud that Preston Storz has joined the United States Coast Guard. We wish Preston the Best of Luck.

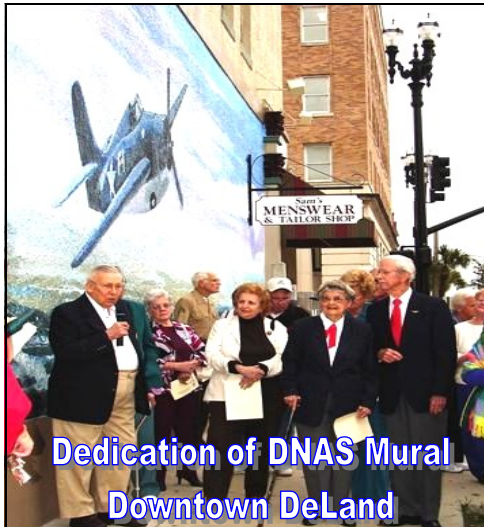




# REMEMBERING RABEL PARSON

## A TRUE SOUTHERN LADY & FRIEND

Our condolences to the Family of DeLandite Rabel Moremen Parson, 94, who passed away Jan. 29, 2019. She and the late Harold Parson were founding members of the DNAS Museum and loyal supporters. Their photos will always be on display and their legacy will continue for generations.



Dedication of DNAS Mural  
Downtown DeLand



Harold & Rabel Were Married 70 Years. We Were  
Proud To Display Her Wedding Gown & His Navy Uniform  
On Special Occasions At the Museums



Making Scratch Biscuits

Rabel was a gifted musician with a beautiful singing voice. During WWII Rabel often sang and played piano for weddings at the DeLand NAS Chapel. She was also DeLand's first woman mail carrier in a program to replace men at war. A Stetson University graduate, she was an elementary school and music teacher. She served as a church choir director and pipe organist throughout her life, and played piano for various community organizations. The Parsons received many awards for their generosity and contributions in our community. Rabel and Harold were both very special. It was our honor to know them both and we will always remember their smiling faces.



Rabel Played Piano for the  
Great Expectations Men's Choir



1st City Commission Meeting Reinactment:  
Rabel Against Bars & Saloons  
& Harold Supporting Them!



Museum National Register  
of Historic Places  
Dedication Plaque

# THANK YOU SPONSORS & COMMUNITY PARTNERS



**RONALD HERMAN & FAMILY**  
[allqualityproducts.com](http://allqualityproducts.com)

**Rotary Club of DeLand**  
[delandrotary.org](http://delandrotary.org)



**CHRIS STUBBS FAMILY**  
 IN MEMORY OF  
 WWII COMMANDER  
 HARRY K. STUBBS

**SANDRA TITCOMB & FAMILY**  
 IN MEMORY OF  
**ELLWOOD TITCOMB**  
 1ST DNAS MUSEUM PRESIDENT

THOMAS C. RYAN  
 HONORING WWII COMMANDER  
 THOMAS J. & MARY RYAN

**DOUG & SARAH LANTIER**  
 MARTY TORBETT  
 FAMILY & FRIENDS  
 IN MEMORY OF  
**KENNETH S. TORBETT**

VIRGINIA BRUNER  
 HONORING  
 STEWART BRUNER



**DeLand Breakfast Rotary Club**  
[wildgamefeast.org](http://wildgamefeast.org)



[briansbbq.com](http://briansbbq.com) [jacobhac.com](http://jacobhac.com)

[mainstreetcbf.com](http://mainstreetcbf.com)



[airportginmill.com](http://airportginmill.com)



[bechtol.com](http://bechtol.com)



[athensdeland.com](http://athensdeland.com)

**DELTRAN**



[batterytender.com](http://batterytender.com)



**EMBRY RIDDLE**  
 Aeronautical University



[ptf3restoration.org](http://ptf3restoration.org)

# VISIT VOLUSIA COUNTY

## SUPPORT OUR SPONSORS AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS



[skydivedeland.com](http://skydivedeland.com)

**Mainstreet DeLand Association**  
[mainstreetdeland.org](http://mainstreetdeland.org)



[visitwestvolusia.com](http://visitwestvolusia.com)  
 Stetson Sports Program



[daytonabahamahouse.com](http://daytonabahamahouse.com)



[marriott.com/dabdl](http://marriott.com/dabdl)



[delandhouse.com](http://delandhouse.com)  
 Rodney Thomas  
 Osteen, FL



[daytonabud.com](http://daytonabud.com)



Jim & Beverly Outlaw  
 Fred & Nancy Clark



[beyourhaven.org](http://beyourhaven.org)



Winn/Dixie



Florida Sheriff's Operation Purple  
 Youth Program

Great Tasting Tours DeLand

[www.greatastingtours.com](http://www.greatastingtours.com)

Kennedy Space Center

Michael Arth—[michaelarth.com](http://michaelarth.com)

Museum of Arts & Sciences History Con

Cecil & Hyatt Brown Museum of Art

New York Yankees Media—Raquel Julish

"They Also Served Program"

Nails & Waxing by Kim—(386) 334-5923

Orlando Science Center

Orlando History Center

Persimmon Hollow Women's Club

San Sebastian Winery—St. Augustine

Search & Rescue of Central Florida

SeaWorld Aquatica—Orlando

Sea Scouts—Student Volunteers

Spruce Creek Scuba.com

St. Augustine Lighthouse Museum

Stetson University Sports Program

University High Student Volunteers

Walt Disney World Orlando

White Diamond Car Car Products

**Thank You Volunteers !!**

African American Museum of the Arts

Athens Theatre - [athensdeland.com](http://athensdeland.com)

Barberville Pioneer Settlement

Butterfly World [butterflyworld.com](http://butterflyworld.com)

Busch Gardens Tampa

Central FLA Nature Adventure Tours

[kayakcentralflorida.com](http://kayakcentralflorida.com)

Central Florida Metal Detecting Club

[www.thecfmdc.com](http://www.thecfmdc.com)

COUNTY OF VOLUSIA - ECHO Rangers

VETERANS SERVICES - [volusia.org](http://volusia.org)

Crankin A's Model A Club

Daytona Beach Area Visitors Bureau

Daytona Beach Navy League

Defending Freedom Warrior Weekend

DeLeon Springs State Park

\*Fountain of Youth ECO Tours

Deltona Memorial Funeral Home [dignitymemorial.com](http://dignitymemorial.com)

Diamond Productions Custom Audio/Video

Dr. Harry Price (386) 985-4788

Dottie's Florist—[dottiesflorist.com](http://dottiesflorist.com)

Don Nedobeck—Artist

Ed's Crane Service (386) 532-0745

Embry Riddle "Riddle Redeemers" Students

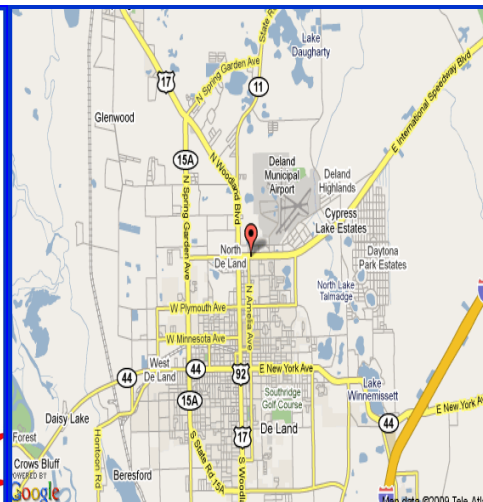
EBY Travel and Tours, LLC [www.ebytravel.com](http://www.ebytravel.com)

# ITEMS NEEDED for Annual Yard 4/12/19-4/13/19

## Tour Guides Needed - Individuals or Couples (Training Script Available)



**National Register  
of Historic Places**



**DeLand Municipal Airport**



**The DeLand Naval Air Station Museum, Inc.**

**Serving DeLand, Volusia County and the State of Florida**

**Preserving Military & Local History**

**In Memory of ALL Who Served**



DeLand Naval Air Station Museum, Inc.

910 Biscayne Boulevard

DeLand, FL 32724

Phone: 386-738-4149

[www.delandnavalairmuseum.org](http://www.delandnavalairmuseum.org)

JOIN US ON FACEBOOK!!

Hours of Operation: 12 Noon—4 p.m.

Wednesday through Sunday

Call to Schedule Group Tours for Adult & Youth Groups



JOIN TODAY OR DONATE

(DONATE WITH CREDIT CARD ON WEBSITE)

**Thank You Museum Volunteers !!**

**View Past Newsletters on Website Under News/Events**