

LEOH Trip

Eternal Gandhi Museum Houston (EGMH)

January 14, 2026

The museum, located at 12379 Riceville Road, is a cultural and educational museum dedicated to preserving and promoting Mahatma Gandhi's legacy of nonviolent conflict resolution.

In early 2020 a core group traveled to India to tour several National Gandhi museums, to gain inspiration for the design and build of the Houston museum.

Brian Crockett, a museum consultant with Smithsonian credentials, guided the entire process, while education consultant Honor Moorman created a TEK-certified curriculum for students grade 6-12.



Presented by the
Indian Council for Cultural Relations
Government of India
Dedicated by
Mr. D. C. Marjunath
Consul General of India, Houston

Madison
welcomed us to the museum



The Gift Shop
was just inside the lobby, and was the perfect place to browse and purchase unique items following our visit



**GENERATIONS TO COME WILL SCARCE BELIEVE THAT SUCH A ONE AS THIS EVER
IN FLESH AND BLOOD WALKED UPON THIS EARTH. - ALBERT EINSTEIN**

The above quote was posted in the Gift Shop, above the entrance to the museum proper

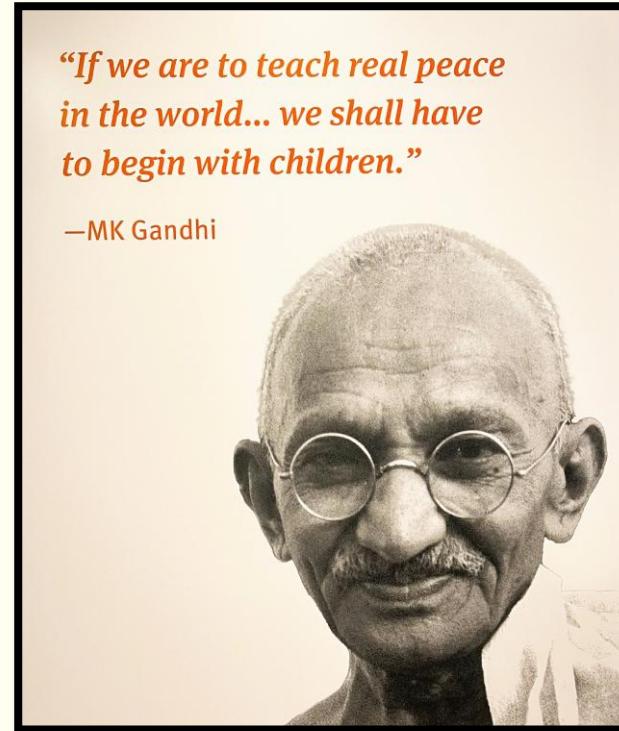
The **MISSION** of the *Eternal Gandhi Museum Houston (EGMH)* is to “cultivate universal values of truth, nonviolence, love, peace and service through education and community dialogue and to encourage visitors to embrace these values in their own lives to resolve conflicts nonviolently”.

Its **VISION** is a world where conflicts are resolved by nonviolent means.

Student tours of the museum, led by docents, are encouraged.

Students learn about Gandhi's life, work, and teachings; how global peace leaders have been inspired to carry on his work; and how to personalize their experience in a meaningful way.

These curriculum-based tours are tailored for grades 6-12 and are aligned to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS).



British India

Beginning in the mid-1700s, the British East India Company seized control of India's Bengal-Bihar region and abolished local rule. After suppressing the Indian Freedom Struggle of 1857, the administration of British India passed from the East India Company to the British Crown itself.

For the next 90 years, the British colonial government controlled Indian courts, schools, public offices, and the military. The government also passed laws requiring Indians to buy British-made products and sell to British markets, resulting in unskilled employment, low incomes, and heavy debt. Severe famines also ravaged British India, with tens of millions perishing between 1876 and 1900.

Gandhi's India

By the turn of the 20th century, roughly 290 million people lived in British India. Deindustrialization under British rule transformed India into a nation of agriculture, with farming and irrigation largely replacing traditional Indian industries like textile manufacturing. Despite the completion of a modern railway system by 1900, India struggled to blend rural and urban communities, with a sharp divide in both literacy and economic means.



FROM A CHILD OF FEAR TO A MAN OF FREEDOM

Born on October 2, 1869 to Karamchand and Putlibai in the coastal town of Porbandar, India, Mohandas K. Gandhi was an inquisitive and happy child, but timid & fearful. Though he was not fond of school, Gandhi found inspiration in reading classic Indian plays like *Shravana Pitribhakti Nataka* and the story of Harishchandra.

Gentle, but Mischievous

As a child, Gandhi was very shy. Each day after school, he ran home because he feared talking to others and becoming the target of their jokes. He was also fearful of the dark, believing unseen thieves, ghosts, or serpents would attack him at night.



As a teenager, however, Gandhi behaved more mischievously. Against his family's wishes, he was persuaded by a friend to eat meat, believing it would make him strong. He also stole money on occasion to buy cigarettes. Both offenses羞ashamed him.

In 1883, 13-year-old Gandhi married 14-year-old Kasturbai in an arranged marriage. Two years later, his father died. Anguished by the loss, Gandhi completed school and an elder recommended pursuing a higher education in law by going to London, England. With his mother's blessing, he left India for London, taking his first step into the wider world.

A Mother's Influence

The women who influenced Gandhi's formative years certainly include his nursemaid, who comforted his fear of the dark each night, and his young wife, Kasturbai, to whom Gandhi was passionately devoted.

But none affected Gandhi so much as his mother, Putlibai.

A deeply religious woman, Putlibai visited the Vaishnava temple daily and never took meals without prayer. She also fasted regularly and without complaint, instilling in Gandhi a belief in God and the personal value of abstinence. Before traveling to London, Gandhi met with his mother and vowed to avoid meat, alcohol, and improper relations with women. He kept his word.

Sadly, Putlibai passed away before Gandhi could return to India.

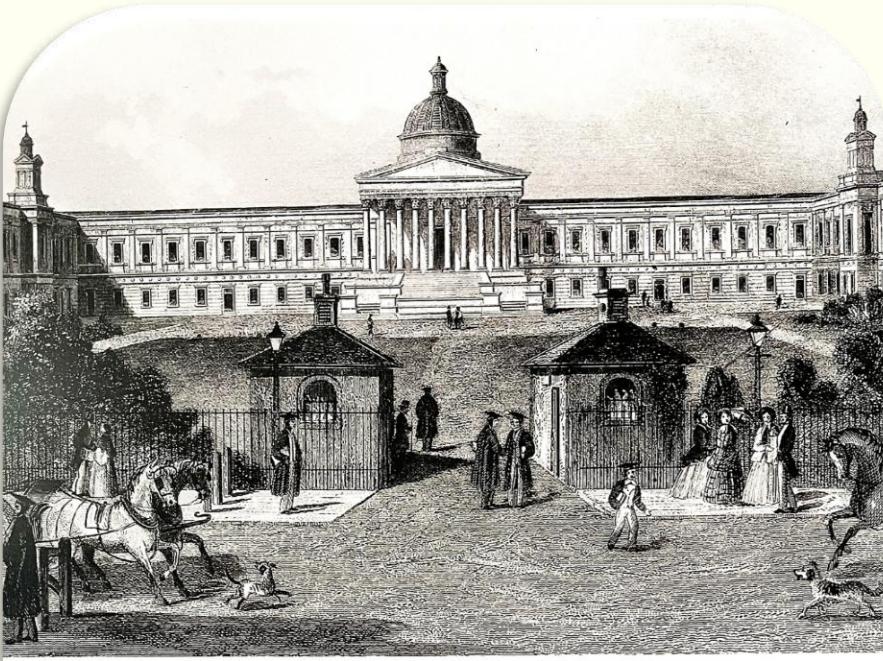
Kasturbai's Courage

Only 14 years old when she was married, Kasturbai became for Gandhi not just a wife, but a life partner, a fellow activist, and a decades-long source of faith and inspiration. She joined Gandhi in protests and marches despite having poor health, and was arrested numerous times and occasionally forced into hard labor. She also frequently led other women in prayer and encouraged literacy education.

In 1918, Gandhi fell victim to a severe bout of dysentery and high fever. Due to the intense fatigue, he often imagined he was dying. A doctor in Bombay pleaded with Gandhi to drink milk as a treatment, but he had vowed to abstain from milk in protest of dairy farmers' cruelty to cows and buffaloes. Kasturbai retorted, "But surely you cannot have any objection to goat's milk then." Gandhi relented and agreed to drink goat's milk.



Kasturbai



University College, London, Engraving by W. E. Albutt after D. C. Read. Wellcome Collection

Enters law school at University College London

Comienza a estudiar derecho en el University College de Londres

विश्वविद्यालय कॉलेज लंदन में कानून की शिक्षा में प्रवेश लिया

1888
London, England

Gandhi's father encouraged him to enter the legal profession. At age 18 he traveled to London to study law, where he had difficulty transitioning to Western culture. He embraced *Jainism*, an ancient Indian religion that practiced non-violence, fasting, meditation and vegetarianism.

During his time in law school, he also began reading and learning more about world religions.

Following completion of law school in 1891, he returned to India, only to learn that his mother had recently died.



Mahatma Gandhi (bottom right) with the Vegetarian Society, London, 1893. Gandhi Research Foundation, Jalgao, India

Returns to India and begins practicing law

Regresa a la India y comienza a ejercer la abogacía

भारत वापसी और कानूनी प्रैक्टिस की शुरुआत

1891
Bombay, India



Finding steady work as a lawyer in India proved challenging, so he signed a 1-year contract to perform legal services in South Africa.

Upon arrival, he was appalled by the discrimination and segregation of Indian immigrants imposed by white British and Boer authorities.

Later that year, Gandhi was riding a train to Pretoria in first-class with the appropriate ticket, when a white man complained about his presence there. When Gandhi refused to move to the back of the train, he was forcibly thrown off the train.

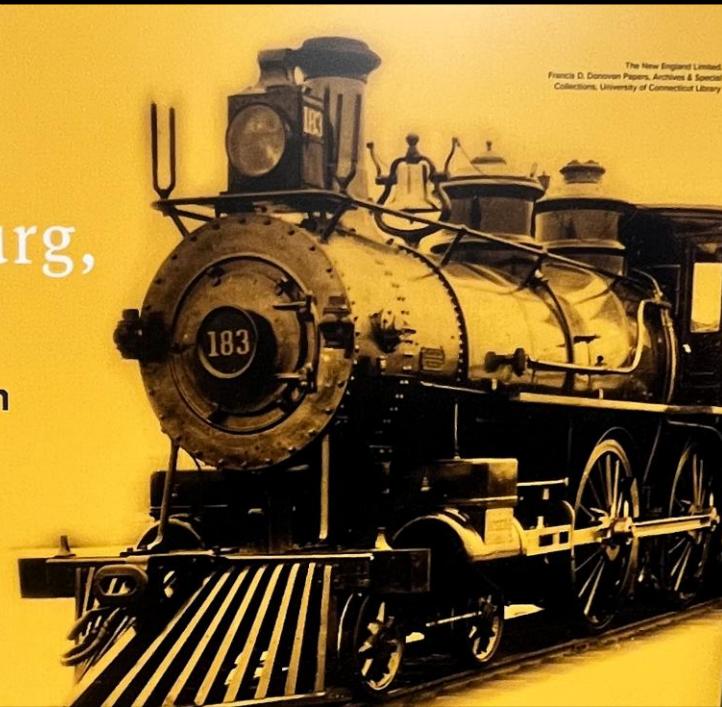
This one act of civil disobedience was pivotal to Gandhi devoting himself to fighting prejudice based on a person's color.

1893
Pietermaritzburg,
South Africa

Forced off first-class train compartment

Lo sacan a la fuerza del
compartimiento de primera
clase del tren

प्रथम-श्रेणी ट्रेन के डिव्हे से जबरन उतारा
गया



**Joins Indian
trading firm of
Dada Abdulla & Co.**

Se une a la firma comercial
india de Dada Abdulla & Co.

दादा अब्दुल्ला एण्ड कंपनी की भारतीय
ट्रेडिंग फर्म में शामिल

1893
Pretoria,
South Africa





Mahatma Gandhi (top center) and co-founders of the Natal Indian Congress, Durban, South Africa, 1893.
Gandhi Research Foundation, Jaipur, India

Establishes Natal Indian Congress

Funda el Congreso Indio de Natal

नाताल इण्डियन कंग्रेस की स्थापना की

1894
Natal, South Africa



Gandhi formed the **Natal Indian Congress (NIC)** to combat discrimination against Indians in South Africa.

It expanded to champion and provide social and economic equality for all, regardless of race, caste, gender or religion.

The NIC later allied with the African National Congress (ANC) during Nelson Mandela's fight to end apartheid in South Africa.

A few years after forming the NIC, he was assaulted and almost lynched by an angry white mob.

Gandhi and his family lived in South Africa for the next 20 years. He continued to face threats as he pressed for equal rights.



Boer War: the work of the Natal volunteer ambulance force. Reproduced after a photograph by A.L. Twiss after F. Dadd. Wellcome Collection

Raises 1,100 ambulance corps volunteers to serve in the Second Boer War

Forma un cuerpo de 1.100 voluntarios «carga camillas» para servir en la segunda guerra de los bóeres.

दूसरे बोअर युद्ध में सेवा करने के लिए ११०० एम्बुलेंस कोर के स्वयंसेवकों को तैयार किया

1899
Natal, South Africa



1906
Natal,
South Africa

Renews his volunteer ambulance corps to serve in the Zulu Uprising

Renueva su cuerpo de voluntarios «carga camillas» para servir en la sublevación de los zulúes

ज़ुलु विद्रोह में सेवा करने के लिए एक स्वयंसेवी एम्बुलेंस कोर का नवीनीकरण

The **Boer War** (1899-1902) was a conflict between the British Empire and independent Boer republics for control of land and resources. The British eventually won the war.

Out of a sense of loyalty to the British Empire, Gandhi assisted the British in both the Boer War and later in what was termed the **Zulu Uprising**, by organizing a volunteer ambulance corps comprised of fellow Indians.

Starts publishing
political newspaper
Indian Opinion

Comienza a publicar el
periódico político «Indian
Opinion».

राजनीतिक समाचार-पत्र इण्डियन
ओपिनियन का प्रकाशन आरंभ

Durban,
South Africa
1903

The *Indian Opinion*
newspaper, published every
Friday, was intended
“for the moral, political and
social advancement of
Indians in South Africa”.

Upon leaving South Africa
to return to India in 1914,
Gandhi published
“A Farewell Letter”
in the newspaper.

Indian Opinion

PUBLISHED WEEKLY IN ENGLISH AND GUJARATI

No. 30—VOL. XII.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 2 YTHI, 1914.

Registered at the G.P.O. as a Newspaper
PRICE THREEPENCE

A FAREWELL LETTER

JUST before leaving South Africa, Mr. Gandhi handed to Reuter's Agent at Capetown the following letter addressed to the Indian and European public of South Africa :—

I would like on the eve of my departure for India to say a few words to my countrymen in South Africa, and also to the European community. The kindness with which both European and Indian friends have overwhelmed me sends me to India a debtor to them. It is a debt I shall endeavour to repay by rendering in India what services I am capable of rendering there; and if in speaking about the South African Indian question I am obliged to refer to the injustices which my countrymen have received and may hereafter receive, I promise that I shall never wilfully exaggerate, and shall state the truth and nothing but the truth.

A word about the settlement, and what it means.

of last year and we should have laid ourselves open to the charge of making new demands.

But I have also assured them that the present settlement does not preclude them from agitation (as has been made clear in my letter to the Secretary of the Interior of the 16th ultimo) for the removal of other disabilities which the community will still suffer from under the Gold Law, the Townships Act, the Law 3 of 1885 of the Transvaal and the Trade Licences Laws of Natal and the Cape. The promise made by General Smuts to administer the existing law justly and with due regard to vested rights gives the community breathing-time, but these laws are in themselves defective, and can be, as they have been, turned into engines of oppression and instruments by indirect means to drive the resident Indian population from South Africa. The concession to popular prejudice in that we have reconciled ourselves to almost the

INTENTIONAL LIVING

Gandhi came to believe the key to India's freedom from British rule lay in "intentional living," by which a person chooses to lead a simple life of community and self-sufficiency. Beginning in 1904, he opened several experimental ashrams—communities of like-minded individuals devoted to simple labor, teamwork, sharing resources, and sustainability.

For Gandhi, the ashram stood as an embodiment of truth—a house without boundaries of race, caste, gender, or religion. All could live together in serving a shared cause and finding individual fulfillment. These communes were also physical reflections of Gandhi's socio-economic philosophies. For example, his 1904 Phoenix Settlement ashram was inspired by British philosopher John Ruskin's essay "Unto This Last," which greatly influenced Gandhi's devotion to communal living and "Sarvodaya" (upliftment of all).

Upon Gandhi's return to India, he lived in the Sabarmati Ashram in Gujarat.



Phoenix Settlement settlers, near Durban, South Africa, 1905.
Gandhi Research Foundation, Jaigao, India

Opens communal living “Phoenix Settlement” Ashram

Funda el «áshram» de vida comunal
«Asentamiento Phoenix»

साम्रदायिक जीवन जीने के “फॅनिक्स सेटलमेन्ट”
आश्रम की स्थापना

1904
Durban, South Africa

**Coins the term Satyagraha
or “holding onto Truth”**

Acuña el término «Satyagraha»
o «aferrarse a la verdad»

सत्याग्रह शब्द की रचना
जिसका आशय है “सत्य पर अडिग रहना”

1905

Johannesburg, South Africa

Satyagraha defines a philosophy of nonviolent resistance developed by Gandhi to combat injustice through love and moral persuasion, as opposed to violence. It emphasizes self-suffering, truthfulness, nonviolent or civil resistance, to convert opponents.

Satyagraha influenced **Martin Luther King** during the U.S. civil rights movement, **Nelson Mandela’s** struggle against apartheid in South Africa, and many others in their struggles for justice.



What is ‘Ahimsa’?

An ancient spiritual doctrine shared by Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism, Ahimsa literally means “nonviolence” or “non-harming.” Those who practice Ahimsa refuse to cause harm or suffering to any living thing in thoughts, words, or actions. They instead vow to show kindness, compassion, and love to all.

Although Gandhi first practiced Ahimsa as a young vegetarian, his devotion to nonviolence would become the foundation for the pacifism and conflict resolution that defined his life. As Gandhi said, “To one who follows this doctrine, there are no enemies.”

Seeds of Satyagraha

Truth Force

Without a doubt, the discrimination and violence Gandhi experienced in South Africa set him on a lifelong path. The shy young lawyer, unwilling to allow bigotry and injustice to thrive, had found his passion. But he refused to counter violence with violence.

Inspired by the Bhagavad Gita and filled with the words of Henry David Thoreau, Gandhi vowed to resist unjust British laws simply by refusing to cooperate. Protests, marches, and the burning of registration certificates soon followed. He would be beaten and arrested for his efforts, but the seeds of nonviolent resistance were quickly sown across South Africa and the world.

Gandhi was assassinated by a Hindu extremist in 1948.

HIND SWARAJ OR INDIAN HOME RULE

BY
M. K. GANDHI

Publishes *Hind Swaraj*
or *Indian Home Rule*

Publica el «*Hind Swaraj*»
o «*La autonomía india*»

हिन्द स्वराज या
इण्डियन होम रूल का प्रकाशन

1909
Natal, South Africa

Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rule, 1921.
Gandhi Research Foundation, Jaigaron, India

Indian Home Rule, written in his native language, *Gujarati*, essentially advocated for India's independence from the British, and western civilization in general, through passive resistance. Upon its publication, it was banned by the British authorities. The book has continued to receive mixed reviews through the years.

The “Great March” in 1913 was a strike by miners with the goal of reinstating fired workers and improving working conditions by revising scheduled working hours. The marchers were mostly non-violent, with a few stones and bricks thrown, and were met with gunfire. In all, 25 miners were killed, with others injured.

Overall, the march was successful, with miners achieving their goal of improved working conditions.

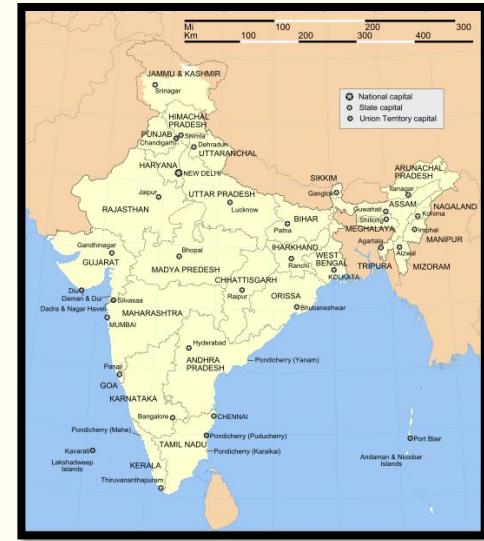
Leads 2,100 protesters on “Great March” in South Africa

Dirige a 2.100 manifestantes en la «Gran Marcha» en Sudáfrica

दक्षिण अफ्रीका में “ग्रेट मार्च” पर २१०० प्रदर्शनकारियों का नेतृत्व किया



1913
Transvaal,
South Africa



A major test of Satyagraha, or nonviolent protest, was the Salt March, begun by Gandhi after his return to India, to protest the British salt monopoly and tax.

Salt has naturally occurred for thousands of years on the west coast of India along the *Rann of Kutch*.

This particular salt is of premium quality. Salt was also produced along the coast of the Indian city of *Odisha*.

Taxes were imposed on Indian salt by the British East India Company, beginning in **1759**, following a successful battle and possession of land near Calcutta. Since that time, taxes continued to be levied on India by the British.

The **1930** march began with many of Gandhi's trusted volunteers and covered more than 200 miles. Many Indians joined the march along the way. Gandhi and other marchers were beaten, arrested and jailed.

An American journalist documented the violence; his reporting on the violence helped turn world opinion against British colonial rule of India.

The salt tax continued. In April **1946** Gandhi made a formal request to a finance member of a British Executive Council to abolish the oppressive tax. The Council member issued an order abolishing the tax; however, the order was vetoed. The tax continued until it was finally abolished in **1947** by the interim government of India headed by Jawaharlal Nehru.

Gandhi was assassinated in **1948** by a Hindu extremist.

Violence

“I must remind you that starving a child is violence. Neglecting school children is violence. Punishing a mother and her family is violence. Discrimination against a working man is violence. Ghetto housing is violence. Ignoring medical need is violence. Contempt for poverty is violence.”

—Coretta Scott King

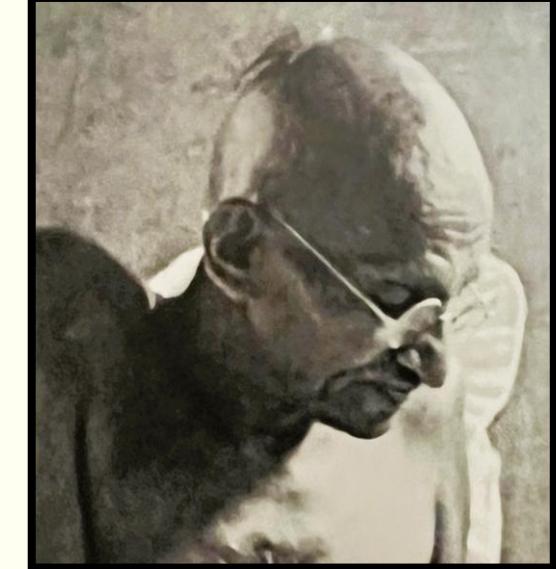
“The enemy is fear. We think it is hate, but it is really fear.”

—MK Gandhi

An Instrument of Ultimate Protest

As a child, Gandhi witnessed his mother conduct long fasts many times in service to her faith. Her dedication and strength of will inspired Gandhi to use fasting as a form of nonviolent protest. By refusing to eat—he would accept only water, or water with salts and sour limes—Gandhi could instill feelings of sympathy among his opponents, and inspire positive action.

*An eye for an eye
will make the whole
world blind.*



For Gandhi, fasting was “the purest prayer [that] purified the soul.” He fasted 17 times during his life; his longest continued for 21 days. He often fasted in protest of unjust election laws and unfair labor laws, or to support democratic changes to government. He even favored fasts-unto-death, calling them “the last and the most potent weapon in the armory of Satyagraha.” He fasted to bring about communal harmony at the time of the deadliest communal riots the world has known at the time of the division of India.

Help Eradicate the 7 Social Sins

Inspired by an Anglican priest's sermon at Westminster Abbey in England, Gandhi published the "Seven Social Sins" in an October 1925 issue of his weekly newspaper Young India.

For Gandhi, it wasn't enough to resist active violence alone; he also believed in the danger of passive violence and its harmful effect on society. "We could work 'til doomsday to achieve peace," he said, "and would get nowhere as long as we ignore passive violence in our world."

Wealth without Work
Pleasure without Conscience
Science without Humanity
Knowledge without Character
Politics without Principles
Commerce without Morality
Worship without Sacrifice

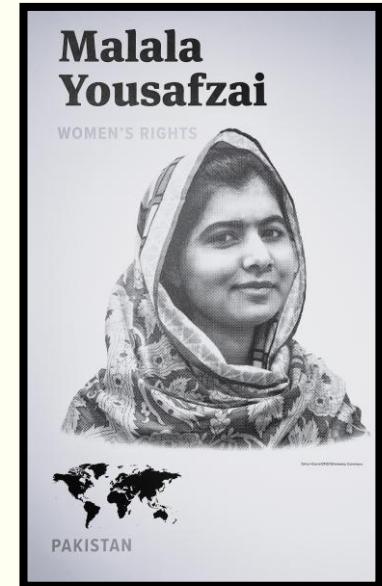
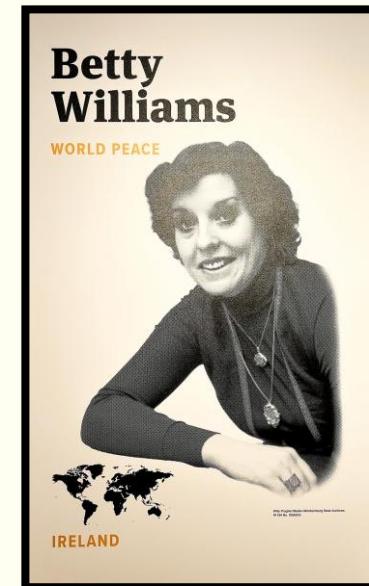
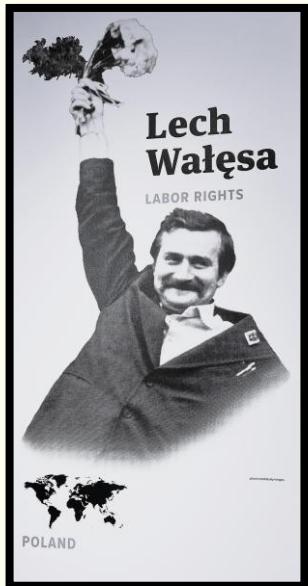
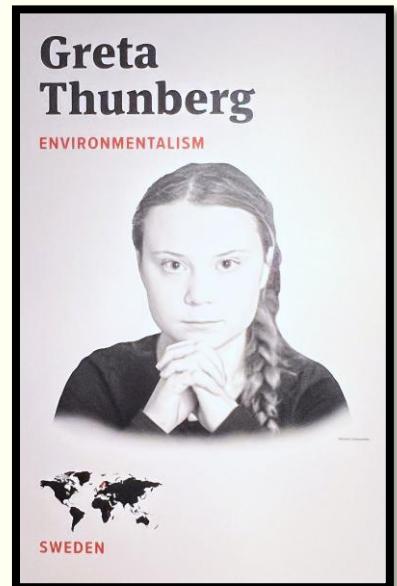
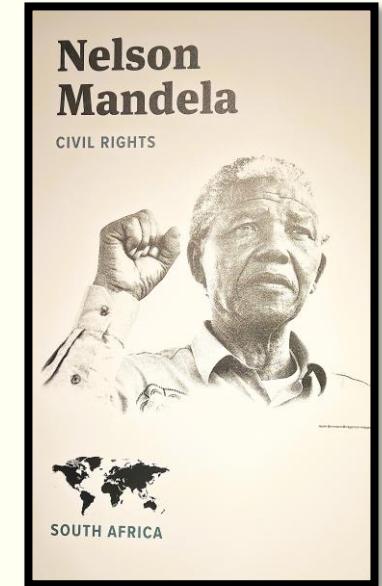
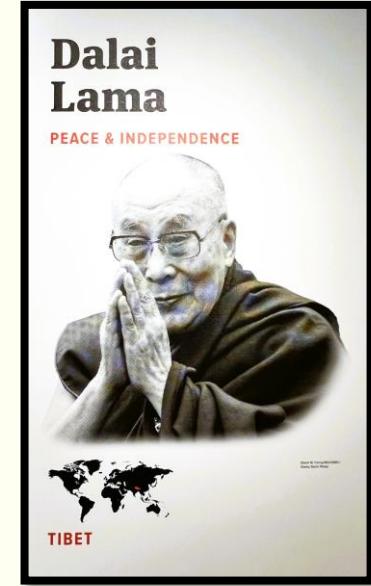
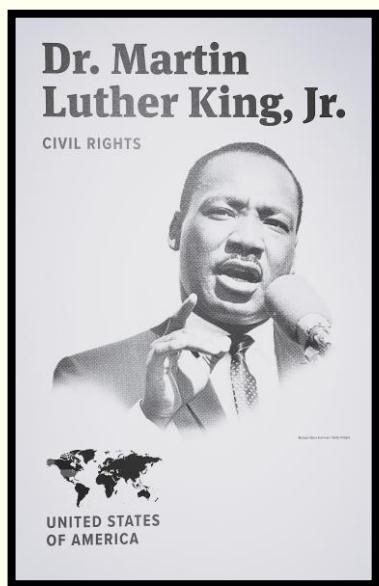
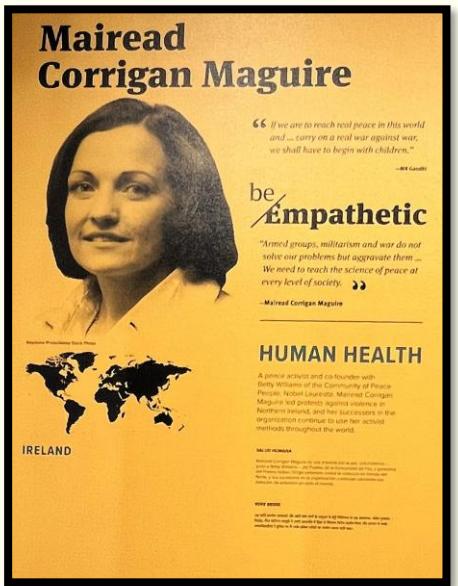


Interactive exhibits were on display throughout the museum. Below right is a display of the young Gandhi. Pressing each of the 3 touch pads gives the listener information about him at that stage of his life.



To the left is an interactive display of what Gandhi described in 1925 as the 7 social sins.

The museum pays tribute to other leaders, past and present, committed to facilitating profound social change through peaceful means. The focus is on timeless teachings and positive outcomes.



BE THE CHANGE was a recurring theme.

Gandhi stated that “***you must be the change you wish to see in the world***”.

The display below illustrates a few of the ways to be the change for **love**, for **truth**, and for **peace**.



As we neared the end of the museum tour, some of us stopped to take one or two (free) colorful wristbands with affirmative statements such as ***BE THE CHANGE*** and ***NONVIOLENCE***. Booths were also available to individuals for a brief interactive computer exercise, which involved selecting from a choice of responses on how to personally “be the change you wish to see in the world”. The exercise concluded with a booth photo of yourself with your affirmative statement that you could then email to yourself to print as a letter-size poster.

The museum visit was not complete without a stop in the **Gift Shop**! There were many interesting items to choose from, including items with affirmative statements, and meditative tools such as Singing Bowls and Incense.

And, of course, books on Gandhi. Learn more about the museum at egmh.org.



#changemakers

@egmhbh.org

truth, non-violence

I have nothing new
to teach the world.
Truth
Non-violence





Following the tour, the group posed once more for a photo op in front of the museum.

Everyone enjoyed lunch at Luby's before heading home.



Michael
Precinct One
bus driver



Ann
LEOH Trip Coordinator

Future Trip



Tuesday, February 10: Houston Ballet Performance and Tour



Self-drive or carpool to ***The Margaret Alkek Williams Center for Dance***, 601 Preston St.

This new facility features nine dance studios, a Dance Lab that seats 175 for presentations as well as rehearsals; and artistic, administrative and support facilities for Houston Ballet and its academy.

Enjoy a 1-hour Studio Series Performance of *Dancing Through Time with the Houston Ballet*,
plus a 1-hour “Behind the Scenes” tour.

Lunch will follow at the *Lyric Market Food Hall*, across the street,
where parking for the tour and lunch are available.



Signing Up for a Trip

Trip Coordinator Ann Fairchild may be contacted at fairann@sbcglobal.net or **281-686-1325**.

She will publish complete trip details, with the opportunity to sign up, closer to the trip date.

If the traveler quota is full, you may ask to be put on a waiting list.