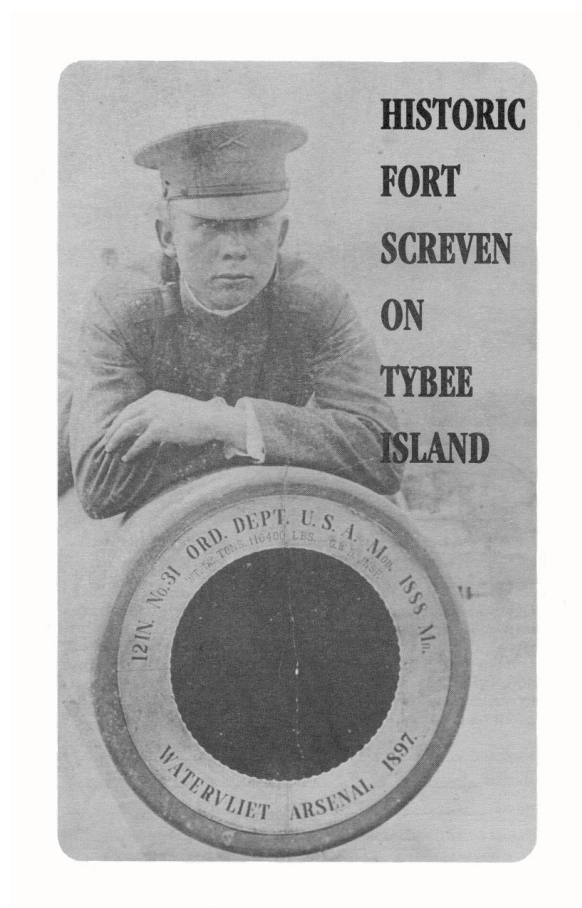


# Tybee Island Museum Education Manual



## LESSON PLAN

### **Lesson One:**

Objective: Students become familiar with the concept of symbols and the information contained in “The Seven Flags” included in this packet.

Begin this lesson with a discussion of the term “symbol.” Explain to the students that a symbol can be anything which represents something else. Use a variety of examples with which they may already be familiar. Gradually narrow the topic to the use of flags as symbols.

Ask the students why flags are important. Some actual flags could be effective supplement to this lesson. Be sure to discuss the stars and stripes of the American flag and the fact that each represents a state or an original colony. Be prepared to answer any questions the students may ask about things such as the “Pledge of Allegiance” or the “Star Spangled Banner.”

Using the information contained in “The Seven Flags,” explain how the flags at the Tybee Museum tell a story about the history of Tybee Island.

### **Post Visit Activities**

1. Assign an art project in which students design flags to represent their school or their class. The flags could be drawn and colored on pieces of posterboard and displayed. Have the students write a short description of their flags and their reasons for choosing their particular designs. Do their flag show an effective use of symbols?
2. Assign a library project in which students can use a card catalogue to find information on a Tybee related topic. General James Screven is a good example.

### **Lesson Two:**

Objective: Students understand the purpose and significance of the Tybee Museum.

Begin the discussion of museums by asking “What is a museum?” A museum, as defined by the American Association of Museums, is an organized and permanent non-profit institution, essentially educational or aesthetic in purpose with professional staff, exhibits them to the public on a regular schedule.

Note: The Tybee Island Museum is a historic site, operated by The Tybee Island Historical Society, whose collection of tangible objects include the structures as well as the objects inside. In addition, the grounds themselves are part of the museum and are considered part of the collection. The purpose of The Tybee Island Historical Society is to develop and promote an active interest in the Tybee Museum and any associated activities. The Tybee Island Historical Society shall provide a center for preservation and interpretation of the history of Tybee Island, Fort Screven, and its people for the present and future generations.

## LESSON PLAN (continued)

Further the discussion by asking for examples of the different types of museums - art, science, history, etc. Ask the students to think of some of the items that might be found in each type.

Some examples are:

Art Museum: painting and sculpture (in Savannah, an example of an Art Museum would be The Telfair Academy of Arts and Sciences, which many students many have visited).

Science Museum: animals and computers (in Savannah, an example of a Science Museum would be The Savannah Science Museum, which many students may have visited).

History Museum: antiques, books, suite of armor (The Tybee Island Museum is a history museum).

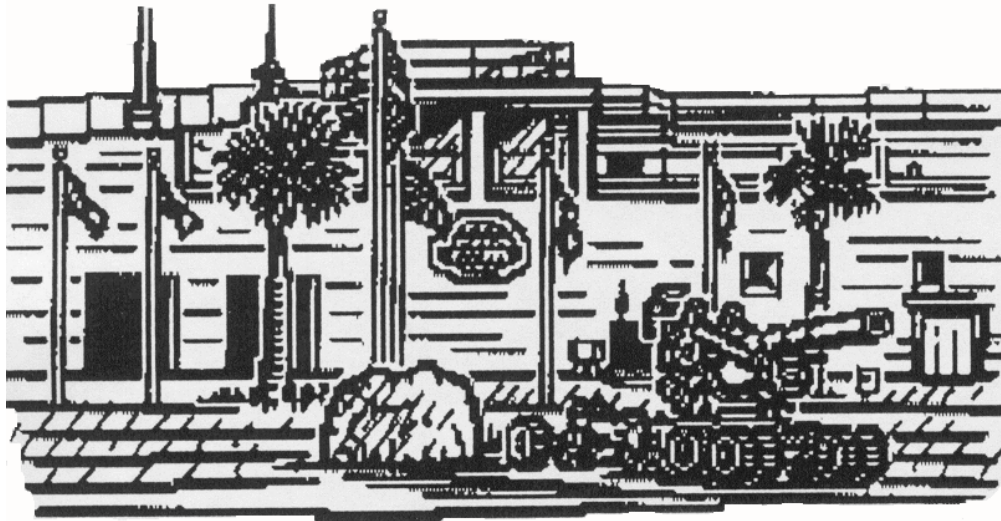
House Museum: such as The Juliette Gordon Low Birthplace.

Now ask students why we have museums and why they are important. This should prove to be more difficult than the earlier question. You may wish to ask a more specific question such as, "Why would a suit of armor be found in a history museum?"

These questions and the students' responses should lead into a discussion about the purpose and the functions of a museum. You may wish to list the purposes and functions as the students describe them.

The major functions of a museum are:

1. Collection - gathering and grouping of related items.
2. Conservation - slowing the deterioration of these items.
3. Education - using the items to teach.
4. Research - finding information about the items.
5. Exhibition - displaying the items.
6. Interpretation - showing relationships among the items.



## **TYBEE ISLAND MUSEUM / BATTERY GARLAND**

### **BACKGROUND OF THE TYBEE MUSEUM**

The Tybee Museum was established in 1961 by The Tybee Island Museum Association. The Association is now known as The Tybee Island Historical Society, a non-profit organization which also operates The Tybee Island Light Station in addition to the Tybee Museum. The purpose of the museum was the same in 1961 as it is today - to interpret the rich history of Tybee Island.

Perhaps the most interesting feature of the museum is its location in Battery Garland of Fort Screven. Battery Garland was constructed between 1898 and 1899. It was originally used to mount a huge 12 inch "non-disappearing" rifled long range cannon on top of the battery. Within the walls of Battery Garland are seven rooms which contain artifacts and exhibits covering more than five centuries of history. Most of the lower rooms which now contain the Museum's exhibits were originally used to store smokeless gun powder and projectiles which weighed over 700 pounds each. Battery Garland was named in honor of Colonel John Garland, Eighth Infantry, who "served with distinction in the Florida War, and died on January 5, 1861." The Battery was used as part of America's Coastal Defense System until 1947 when it was decommissioned.

## **A BRIEF HISTORY OF TYBEE ISLAND**

The origin of the name “Tybee,” like the history of the island itself, has many interpretations. Most historians believe “Tybee” is derived from the Native American Euchee Indian word for “salt”, which was one of the many natural resources found on Tybee.

Those natural resources have played an important role throughout the Island’s history, including Spanish exploration for riches from the new world in 1520. Lucas Vasquez de Ayllon laid claim to Tybee Island as part of Spain’s “La Florida” which extended from the Bahamas to Nova Scotia.

In 1605, the French were drawn to Tybee in search of sassafras root which was considered by Europeans to be an herbal miracle cure. The Spanish would fight the French in a naval battle just off shore of Tybee Island to regain control over the area.

For many decades, Pirates visited the island in search of a safe haven and hiding place for treasure. Tybee and other remote islands were also a source for fresh water and game to replenish their supplies.

Spain was forced to give up their claim to Tybee Island and other extremities due to superior French and British settlements. In 1733, General James Oglethorpe and a handful of settlers came to the area. They called it Savannah, because of the vast marshlands and tall grass. Here, they established the new colony of Georgia, named in honor of King George II. Tybee Island was considered to be extremely important to the development and future of Savannah and the colony because of its location at the mouth of the Savannah River. General Oglethorpe ordered a lighthouse to be constructed to mark the entrance to the river in 1736 and a small fort to be constructed to insure control over access to the River. In 1736 John Wesley, the “Father of Methodism,” said the first prayer on the American Continent at Tybee Island.

Tybee Island played a significant role throughout Georgia and U.S. History. During the Revolutionary War, Tybee served as the staging area for French Admiral D’Estaing’s ill-fated 1779 “Siege of Savannah,” the combined multinational forces’ attempt to defeat the British, who held Savannah. During the War of 1812 the Tybee Island Lighthouse was used as a signal tower to warn Savannah of possible attack by the British. Though no such attack took place, a “Martello Tower” was constructed on Tybee to provide protection in guarding the Savannah River. Located on the western end of the island was an area known as a “lazaretto,” a variation of an Italian word meaning “hospital for the contagious.” The lazaretto was established to quarantine slaves and other passengers who might be carrying diseases before they entered the port of Savannah and spread disease throughout the colony. Mass burial on Tybee would be the final port of call for many of those quarantined there.

By the outbreak of the American Civil War, Tybee would again play an important military role in U.S. History. First, confederates occupied the island. In December of 1861, the Confederate

forces withdrew to Fort Pulaski under orders from Robert E. Lee to defend Savannah and the Savannah River. Union forces under the command of Quincy Adams Gilmore took control of Tybee Island. The Union forces constructed earthen batteries on the Northwest part of the island facing Fort Pulaski about one mile across the Savannah River. On April 11<sup>th</sup>, 1862, the Union batteries fired a new weapon called the “rifled cannon” at Fort Pulaski and changed forever the way the world protected its coastal areas. Within 30 hours the rifled guns had such a devastating effect on the brick fort that it was surrendered and brick masonry forts like Pulaski were considered obsolete.

After the Civil War, Tybee began to grow as a resort area for local Savannah residents who wanted to escape the heat of downtown for the cooling breezes of Tybee Island. The island had very few year-round residents before the 1870s. By the 1890s, there were over 400 beach cottages and other buildings built for the “summer” residents.

In 1885 plans were made for Fort Screven to be built on the north end of Tybee to provide a more modern system of seacoast defenses. Six poured concrete, low profile gun batteries and a minefield were ordered for Tybee along with hundreds of other military buildings. Gun batteries such as Battery Garland would be named to honor America’s integral part of America’s Coastal Defense system. Troops would train and stand guard on Tybee throughout the Spanish American War, World War I and World II. In 1947, the fort was closed and sold to the Town of Savannah Beach and tourism returned as a major part of Tybee’s history.

In 1961 Battery Garland, the former gun battery and magazine for a 12-inch long range gun, became the Tybee Museum. Rooms which once stored six hundred pound projectiles and two hundred pound bags of gun powder now hold the collections and exhibits of over four centuries of Tybee Island history.

## THE SEVEN FLAGS

One of the first things that visitors to the Tybee Museum notice is the group of flags which fly over the grounds. These flags are much more than colorful decorations; each represents an important part of Tybee History.

The first European flag raised over Tybee Island after the discovery of the New World was the flag of Spain. In the year 1520 the island was claimed as part of the Spanish lands of “La Florida.”

In 1605 the French came in search of sassafras root. The Spanish were not about to tolerate an intrusion by the French and the two countries engaged in a naval battle over the control of the island.

For many years in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries, the islands of Coastal Georgia served as hideouts for bands of notorious pirates and outlaws. French, Spanish, and English ships filled with gold, silver, and other treasures were ripe targets for enterprising pirates. Legends say that some of this stolen treasure may still lie buried beneath the sands of these islands. The pirate flag is a reminder of one of the most chaotic periods in Tybee history.

The English presence on Tybee began with the founding of the Colony of Georgia in 1733 at Savannah. General James Oglethorpe had intended for Georgia to be a refuge for debtors and other undesirables who were no longer welcome in England. He hoped Georgia would serve as a buffer between South Carolina and Florida, which was still controlled by the Spanish. The first lighthouse at Tybee was built in 1736, and the island has been continuously inhabited ever since. The British flag that is currently being flown is commonly called the “King’s Colors”. It was in use prior to 1806.

The state flag of Georgia and the American flag were raised on Tybee shortly after the Revolutionary War. Although, the Georgia flag has flown continuously since then, for a time the American flag was replaced by the flag of the Confederate States of America.

In January 1861, Georgia seceded from the Union to join South Carolina and other Southern states in the Confederacy. During the Civil War Tybee was used as the base from which Union forces attacked and captured Fort Pulaski. The confederate flag that is now flying was the official flag of the Confederacy used until March 1863. This flag is commonly called the “Stars and Bars.” The flag that most people associate with the Confederate Army is the Confederate Battle Flag. This flag was only used on the field of battle and never flew over Tybee Island; so the “Stars and Bars” is the one that is historically accurate in the context of Tybee Island history.

## **A BRIEF HISTORY OF FORT SCREVEN**

As part of a nationwide effort to improve coastal defenses, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers drew up plans for the construction of a new fort on Tybee Island in 1872, acquiring the land on the north end of the island in 1875. In 1896 contracts were let for construction. Fort Screven was to guard the main entrance to the Savannah River.

Although the land for a fort on Tybee was purchased in 1875, construction did not begin until 1897. The original name was Fort Tybee and later Camp Graham. In 1899 the name was changed to Fort Screven in honor of General James Screven, a Revolutionary War hero who was killed in action near Midway, Georgia in 1778.

During President McKinley's administration, the nation was drawn into a war against Spain over its treatment of the people of Cuba. On February 15, 1898 the U. S. Battleship MAINE exploded and sank in Havana's harbor with the loss of 266 American lives. While the cause of the explosion was eventually found to be accidental, most Americans at the time believed the MAINE had been deliberately destroyed by the Spanish.

Georgia's coastal defense improvements were accelerated as war approached. Fortifications were constructed to guard the entrances to Savannah, Darien, Brunswick and St. Mary's. All but Fort Screven were temporary and were abandoned soon after the Spanish American War ended. Fort Screven, however, remained an active military post until 1945.

The completed fort consisted of seven concrete and granite batteries as well as a submerged minefield in the northern channel of the Savannah River. Eventually, over 200 support buildings were added including a gymnasium, library, bakery, and theater. Many of these buildings still stand today.

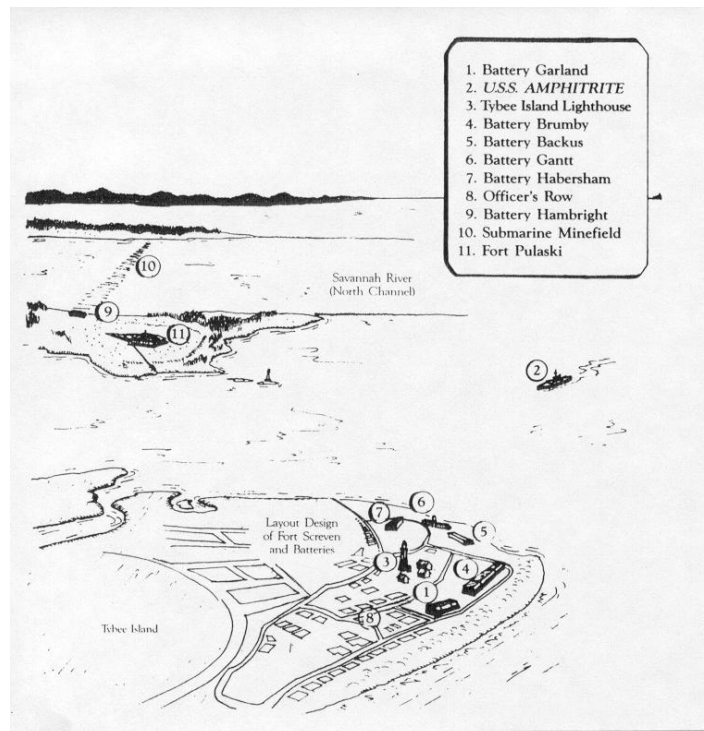
The gun batteries were built for coastal defense when Fort Screven was constructed in 1897. Originally constructed with walls of up to twenty feet thick, and surrounded by as much as thirty feet of earth, the batteries were all but invisible from the sea, hidden behind an enormous sand mound.

The first and largest battery to be completed was Battery Brumby. It had four 8" rifled guns mounted on disappearing carriages. After firing, the recoil would push the gun below a protective parapet where the soldiers could reload it in safety. Each of these guns weighed 32,000 pounds and fired shells which weighed 108. Their effective range was about 10 miles. During World War I the guns were shipped to Europe, or melted down for other military uses.

Fort Screven was manned by the U.S. Coast Artillery until 1923 when it became the home of the 8<sup>th</sup> U.S. Infantry. The 8<sup>th</sup> Infantry was the last American unit to return from Europe after World War I. In 1932 Lieutenant Colonel George C. Marshall, Jr. was given command of Fort Screven. Marshall spent just over a year at Tybee and he went on to become one of the nation's leading statesmen and most respected generals.

During World War II Fort Screven was occupied by the 70<sup>th</sup> Coast Artillery and the 252<sup>nd</sup> Coast Artillery of North Carolina National Guard. It was the home of the Army's only diving and salvage school for beginning divers.

The guns of Fort Screven were never fired in actual combat, and at the end of World War II it was declared a surplus reservation by the U.S. Army. It was purchased by the town of Savannah Beach (now Tybee Island) in 1945 for \$230,101. The fort was over 265 acres. Although military life at Fort Screven has ended, Battery Garland remains as a home for the Tybee Museum.



## **ELEMENTS OF FORT SCREVEN**

### Battery Brumby

The first battery to be placed into service, fortified with four 8" rifled guns mounted on disappearing carriages. After firing, the recoil would lower the gun back and down below the protective parapet. There the men could reload in relative safety and mechanically raise it to fire again.

Construction began April 1897, and was completed June 1898. The guns were mounted May 1898. The guns weighed 32,000 pounds, and had a firing range of about 10 miles. Operation required four officers and 157 men. In 1917-18 the guns were dismantled and shipped to Europe or melted down for other military purposes during WWI. Battery Brumby was named for Lieutenant Thomas M. Brumby who served in the Spanish American War.

### Battery Backus

Two 4.7" rapid fire guns were brought from Fort Morgan on Wassaw Island and mounted on Battery Backus in 1900, beside an already-mounted 6" gun. Construction began April 1898 and was completed in 1900. A 6" gun was mounted in September 1898, and was replaced in 1905 with a more modern 4.7" gun. Two 4.7" guns were mounted in 1900. Battery Backus was named for Colonel Electus Backus who served in the War of 1812.

Battery Garland One of the principal gun emplacements, Battery Garland was armed with one 12" rifled gun on a non-disappearing carriage. Construction began 1898. The gun was mounted February 1899, the battery was completed March 1899. Two officers, forty-seven men were required for operation. The gun remained until 1942, after which it was melted down for reuse during WWII. Battery Garland was named for Colonel John Garland who served in the Florida Seminole Indian War.

Battery Gantt Armed with two 3" rapid-fire guns to guard the submerged minefield in the river. Construction began December 1899, and was completed February 1900. The guns were mounted in September 1903. One officer and 25 men were needed to operate this battery. Battery Gantt was named for First Lieutenant Levi Gantt who served for the 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry in the Indian Wars.

Battery Habersham Had eight 12" steel rifled mortars. Each emplacement had four guns arranged into a rectangle. These mortars fired 700 lb. shells in a high arc which would descend four or eight at a time onto the decks of enemy ships. Next to the mortar rooms and relocating rooms, which helped direct the gunfire, were two observation stations above the battery. Construction started December 1898. The guns were mounted March - June 1900. Seven officers and 219 men were needed to operate Battery Habersham. The mortars were removed and shipped to France during WWI. Battery Habersham was named for Major J.S. Habersham who served in the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War. He also served as Postmaster General from 1785 - 1801.

Battery Fenwick Housed a 12" non-disappearing rifled cannon. The battery was named after John R. Fenwick, an Artillery Colonel who served with distinction during the War Of 1812. The cannon fired seven hundred pound projectiles for 7-8 miles. Forty-two soldiers and two officers were required to operate the battery. This battery had it's own electric generating plant for search lights and interior electrical needs.

Battery Hambright During the war, the entrance to the Savannah harbor was guarded at this narrow point by a submerged minefield. The mines were anchored to the bottom of the Savannah River; floating above each mine, but bellow the water surface, was a buoy. When passing ships hit the buoy, an electrical signal would be sent ashore to the mining case mate in Fort Pulaski where observers would determine if the ship was friend or foe. After the war, the War Department, in providing additional protection at the point, began construction of Battery Hambright on June 1, 1899. The battery held two emplacements for 3" rapid fire guns.

Officer's Row Consisted of nine two-story homes overlooking the parade ground and Atlantic Ocean. Provided housing for ranking officers and their families. Grand in scale and design. Constructed of Cypress and Pine, raised in brick and granite piers. On top of crescent shaped berm.

USS Amphitrite The first line of defense for the Savannah harbor was provided by the USS Amphitrite which patrolled between Charleston and Savannah and was stationed at Port Royal, South Carolina. The Amphitrite was a double turreted monitor, 262'9" long and 55'4" wide. Armaments included four 10" guns, two mounted forward of the bridge and two mounted aft. Built in 1874 and refurbished in 1895, she had an average speed of twelve knots and carried thirteen officers and 200 men.

## WORLD WAR I

Fort Screven was a training camp for thousands of soldiers during WWI.

## WORLD WAR II

Fort Screven was a training camp for thousands of soldiers during WWII. WWII came very close to Tybee's shores when Nazi submarines closed the port of Savannah for a time. After WWII Fort Screven was closed by the government. The houses and properties were sold and are now private residential properties.

## MISCELLANEOUS

Not considered rough duty, Sundays and holidays were family picnics and concerts on the parade ground. Athletic events were held all year.

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE TYBEE MUSEUM**

1. Is the museum building part of Fort Screven?  
Yes, the museum is housed in Battery Garland of Fort Screven.
2. When was Fort Screven built?  
In 1897-1903 during and after the Spanish American War.
3. Why was Fort Screven built?  
To protect the entrance of the Savannah River from enemy ships and submarines making their way into the port or blocking the port from commerce.
4. Where was the Martello Tower?  
On the beach side of Battery Brumby. The site is now under water. The Martello Tower was destroyed by the military.
5. Was Battery Garland a gun emplacement?  
Yes.
6. Was Fort Screven in operation during World War II?  
Yes. Fort Screven, established in 1897-1898 for the Spanish American War served through World War I and World War II, and was decommissioned in 1948. At that time it was sold to the city of Tybee Island who in turn sold sections off to the public.
7. Did the guns of Fort Screven ever sink any ships?  
No.
8. Where is the beach located?  
The beach is located behind the museum and across the parking lot.
9. Is this a Civil War Fortification?  
No, it was built after the Civil War for the Spanish American War.

## **BOOKS TO READ**

**Fort Screven (1897-1945)** by Hans Neuhauser. The Tybee Island Museum Association, Tybee Island, 1988. This 16 page booklet is actually a guided tour of Fort Screven. It includes maps, sketches, and photographs which help to provide an effective overview of this prominent place in Tybee History.

**A History of Fort Screven, Georgia** by James Mack Adams.

**Historic Tybee Island** by Margaret Godley. Savannah Beach Chamber of Commerce, Savannah Beach, 1958. Reprinted by The Tybee Island Museum Association, Tybee Island, 1988. This 72 page book includes chapters on the Lighthouse, Fort Pulaski, the Waving Girl, and many other aspects of Tybee history.

## **VIDEOS TO VIEW**

**The History of Fort Screven** by The Tybee Island Historical Society. Telemedia, 1998.

**The History of Tybee Island** by The Tybee Island Historical Society. Telemedia, 1998.

## MUSEUM WORD SCRAMBLE

Unscramble the mixed words in the list below. Arrange the words to form a sentence which tells a fact about the Tybee Island Museum.

TA	_____
HTE	_____
BYETE	_____
SALDIN	_____
MMUUES	_____
RETHER	_____
REA	_____
SOLT	_____
FO	_____
TSIBHXEI	_____
NO	_____
ETH	_____
HROYSIT	_____
FO	_____
ROFT	_____
NSVEREC	_____
NDA	_____
ETH	_____
SALNDI	_____

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## ANSWERS TO MUSEUM WORD SCRAMBLE

At

The

Tybee

Island

Museum

There

Are

Lots

Of

Exhibits

On

The

History

Of

Fort

Screven

And

The

Island.