



Ted Alejandro, County Superintendent

San Bernardino County

Superintendent of Schools

Transforming lives through education

## Monday, June 29

2:00pm

## History Detectives – 4<sup>th</sup> thru 8<sup>th</sup> grade

*Mussolini Dagger* - Many servicemen brought back souvenirs from World War II, but did the uncle of a Reno, Nevada, man score a dagger from Fascist Italian dictator Benito Mussolini? The dagger bears the symbols of Italian Fascism, and the initial "M" hangs from the belt clip. A family letter says the uncle had orders to pick up Mussolini, but when he arrived, Mussolini was already dead and hanging in the town square. HISTORY DETECTIVES host Wes Cowan connects various records, pictures and expert opinions to come up with an answer.

*Liberia Letter* - A Lynchburg, South Carolina, woman has a scrapbook of handwritten letters sent to her great-great-grandmother, a freed slave who lived in South Carolina. She thinks her ancestor's brother, Harvey McLeod, wrote the letters. What caught her attention were the repeated references to Liberia. In 1877, Harvey writes: "I hope you will change your mind and come to Liberia, Africa with us." Was this family part of the post-slavery exodus to Liberia? As HISTORY DETECTIVES host Tukufu Zuberi tracks the path of the letters, the story pieces together a tale of slaves adapting to freedom.

*N.E.A.R. Device* - A Colorado ham radio enthusiast may have stumbled across some Cold War history. While sorting through a bucket of old power adapters, he came across a curious device, a hand-sized black box with the wording "National Emergency Alarm Repeater, Civilian Warning Device." HISTORY DETECTIVES Gwendolyn Wright sifts through the secrets to find out whether anyone mass-produced this device and what happened to this Civilian Warning program.

**After watching this episode, choose from the following questions and/or tasks to extend your learning**

### Question Box 1

- What were the Fascist symbols on the dagger?
- Describe the records, pictures and expert opinions Wes Cowan used to determine whether the dagger was in fact Mussolini's. *(ELD) Report your description orally with a family member, using vocabulary from the program.*
- Why was there a post-slavery exodus to Liberia?
- How were the letters used to piece together the post-slavery exodus to Liberia?
- What was the Civilian Warning program during the Cold War?
- Was it used with the general population? Why or why not?
- What would the "National Emergency Alarm Repeater, Civilian Warning Device" have been used for during the Cold war?

### Question Box 2

- Now that it's over, what are my first thoughts about this overall project? Are they mostly positive or negative?
- Using evidence from the text, explain why "History Detectives" is a good title for this TV

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program.

- What was your favorite segment in this episode and why?
- Think about what life must have been like for ex-slaves in the late 1800s. Why do you think many of them fled America to Liberia?
- How do you think ex-slaves adapted to their new freedom? Do you think it was difficult for them? Why or why not?
- What would you do if you found that your family had an item that seemed to have historical significance? Would you keep it if it was worth a large amount of money? Why or Why not?

**Box 3 (Tasks)**

- Research the Merker’s Mine and detail what was discovered in the mine? What was the cash value of the find?
- Research the country of Liberia and the Back to Africa movement. When does the Back to Africa movement get started? Who were key proponents of it and when does it disappear?
- Different types of sources were used in this episode by the History Detectives to find the answers to their questions. Were the sources primary or secondary? How do you know? Why is it important to use a variety of sources when researching the validity of historical documents or occurrences?
- One theme of this episode seems to be courage. How did each of the segments portray a person or group of people with courage? Discuss the actions that demonstrated courageous thinking or bravery. Create a Poster depicting *Courage*.

**Box 4 (Enrichment)**

- Liberia was a country that held promise to freed African American’s before and after the Civil War. Is there a place that holds promise to you? What is this place and what promise does it hold? Describe where you currently stay and why it’s so important for you to have this place of promise. Design a brochure or advertisement for your “place of promise”.
- Civil Defense drills said that we could survive a nuclear attack. Duck and Cover drills were a part of daily life. Talk to someone who was alive during the cold war and have them tell you about duck and cover drills. Research the likelihood of the effectiveness of a duck and cover drill.

**Box 5 (Extend/Real-Life)**

- Do you have the interests that would make you a good detective? Go to this link: <https://www.cacareerzone.org/ip/>
- Click on “Start new interest profiler”.
- Select either the mini or short version.
- Follow the directions.
- Write down your results for the six areas of interests
  - Artistic
  - Social

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- Conventional
- Enterprising
- Investigative
- Realistic
- Click on view occupations
- Review the list and write down two careers that interest you.
- Click on each of them to view the details
- Do either of them require research, investigation, attention to detail, curiosity?
- Do you feel the interest profiler was accurate at determining your interests?
- Even if you don't have the interests to be a good detective you can still learn how to be a detective. Go to this website and solve some of the mysteries  
<http://teacher.scholastic.com/histmyst/index.asp>