

The Miami Valley
Military History Museum



SCUTTLEBUTT

Fourth Quarter 2015



CURATOR'S CORNER

What an amazing year this has been! We continue to receive fantastic artifacts from around the country. Our main focus for the past 6 months has been to “*get the word out*”. While we have a steady flow of visitors, we want to drastically increase the number of people who get to see and learn about our Veterans and their service. To that end, our Public Affairs Officer, Catherine, has been hard at work scheduling presentations and a “Get To Know Us” Campaign in the Patient Towers. At least once a month you'll find us there with information on the museum as well as “Thank you's” for the Veterans.

Our hours remain the same, 9 a.m. To 3 p.m. But **we've expanded our hours so that we're now open Monday through Friday vice Monday, Wednesday and Friday**. As always, we're open on days when special events are held at the VA campus (for example, the Armed Forces Day and Veterans Day 5K races).

We've stepped up distribution of the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War materials, especially the new “Vietnam War Veteran” lapel pins. The pins are about ¾ inch in diameter and feature an eagle's head and the words “Vietnam War Veteran”. The reverse is inscribed with “A Grateful Nation Thanks And Honors You”. The pins can also be awarded to the immediate next of kin of a veteran – spouses and widows, siblings, etc. To date we've presented more than 300 pins, and we're planning some special “pinning” ceremonies for next year so that we can thank as many of our Vietnam Veterans as possible.



We recently placed a receptacle for tattered, torn, or soiled United States, State, Armed Forces or POW/MIA flags. You can drop your flags off with us and we'll see that they're destroyed in a dignified manner in accordance with the United States Flag Code. The box is located at the front of our building at the main doors. However, *we ask that you do NOT deposit any flags other than those listed above (e.g. sports teams, political, etc.)* - thanks for your understanding!

We use the Unions from some of the flags to make “Thank You Stars”. Originally created for distribution to deployed service members, they're now being used as a token of appreciation for all Veterans. We also present them to First Responders. Shown here is an example of one we've presented. *(Photo courtesy of the Dayton VA Public Affairs Office)*



We were recently contacted by Alex Villalva regarding a Vietnam period Personnel Lowering Device (PLD) – these were used by pilots who bailed out to lower themselves from trees. A PLD contains about 140 feet of 3/4-in tubular webbing folded 140 times; the last 25 feet of webbing are a different color to let you know when you're getting near the end. Ours was manufactured in December 1967 and had been the property of a Wild Weasel pilot,

Lieutenant Colonel (then Major) Jim Gorman. Alex had seen the PLD on display during the 2015 Patriot Freedom Festival.

Alex works for the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) office at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. They need an example of a PLD in good condition to be used as a "Master Reference Item" for use in forensic analysis of materials recovered from crash sites in Vietnam. Needless to say, we were more than happy to donate our PLD to him!

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency was previously known as the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (often referred to as JPAC), a joint task force within the Department of Defense whose mission was to account for Americans who are listed as Prisoners of War (POW), or Missing in Action (MIA), from all past wars and conflicts. It was especially visible in conjunction with the Vietnam War POW/MIA issue. The mission of the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command was to achieve the fullest possible accounting of all Americans missing as a result of the nation's past conflicts. The motto of JPAC was "Until they are home".

On January 30, 2015, JPAC was officially deactivated and JPAC, the Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO), and certain functions of the U.S. Air Force's Life Sciences Equipment Laboratory, were all merged into the new DPAA.

Often, recovered military and personal equipment artifacts are forwarded to the USAF Life Sciences Equipment Laboratory (LSEL, located at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base), for advanced scientific and historical analysis. The LSEL (a highly unique scientific facility within the US and the world) is singularly qualified to scientifically study recovered military equipment artifacts and determine critical forensic aspects such as number of unaccounted for personnel represented at the loss site (i.e. 2 aviators), branch of military service represented (i.e. Navy), vehicle type represented (i.e. F-4 aircraft type), time frame represented (i.e. c. 1967), and represented levels of non-survivability or survivability (i.e. any evidence of fatal/non-fatal status). Frequently, the LSEL is able to provide crucial case determinations (through analysis of recovered equipment artifacts) when other critical evidence (such as human remains: bone or teeth) was not recovered or available, and/or does not yield any substantial conclusions through testing (i.e. DNA testing).



Here's a short video on the DPAA mission featuring Alex: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mJ8uUiNiGEs>

As we close another successful year, here's a short "by the numbers" list:

Number of individuals represented in our displays: ~1,000
Individual uniforms on display: ~130
Individual medals on display: ~100

Number of individual donors for 2015: ~200
Number of tours, presentations etc. provided in 2012: 19
Number of tours, presentations etc. provided in 2013: 22
Number of tours, presentations etc. provided in 2014: 46
Number of tours, presentations etc. provided in 2015: 47

Number of visitors registered in 2014: 774
Number of visitors registered in 2015: 1758 (*typically less than 1/3 of people sign the visitor logs*)

As you can see, we had an increase of about 126% in signatures in the guest book – which is a direct result of our aggressive outreach programs. But, we want to do better!

Please, continue to help us **spread the word** - we've got a lot of great history here! You can help by forwarding this newsletter to people who have an interest in military history, or "**Like**" us on Facebook and invite your friends to do the same – the more people that know about us the better!

And don't forget the 12th Annual Patriot Freedom Festival will be on Saturday and Sunday, May 28-29, 2016, from 11:00AM – 5:00PM each day. This year's theme is “Honoring Women Veterans”! Call our office at (937) 267-7629 for more information or if you'd like to volunteer or participate.

Thanks for your support and we look forward to seeing you in the months ahead!

Respectfully,

Mark Conrad, MSgt, USAF, RET

FROM PUBLIC AFFAIRS

After having lived in the barracks while in the Air Force and having no place to go on Patriotic and Secular Holidays we stayed open on Veterans Day till 5pm. We had some WWII Reenactors stop in with a mule and a 5 ton truck; we had over 50 visitors.

Thanksgiving Day, Mark and I along with Army Vet Tom Whalen, took Veterans Day cards to the Hospice and three Nursing Homes on campus; help served dinner in the dining area and enjoyed a wonderful dinner with fellow Vets. Afterwards we went room-to-room talking with and listening to Vets.

One of the Vets we met was a WWII veteran of the 102nd Infantry Division who'd survived being shot through the left eye by a German sniper. He celebrated his 101st birthday the next day. We also met a WWII 10th Mountain Division vet who fought in Italy, as well as a 36th Infantry Division veteran who fought in North Africa and Europe and later in Korea and Viet Nam.

On Christmas Eve we stayed open till 5pm; went over the Hospice and Nursing Homes with Santa and handed out Christmas Cards, chatted with and listened to our fellow Vets. We attended the Christmas Eve Service in the Patient Tower Lobby; handed out the remaining 50 or so Christmas cards, about 100 “Thank You” flag stars and Vietnam War Veteran lapel pins. Mark gave one Vietnam Veteran his lapel pin along with a "Thank you and Welcome Home!" and he immediately teared up saying his own kids had never thanked him. Its comments like his that keep us motivated!

Everywhere we go we meet Veterans from every era including those who served in Europe, at Pearl Harbor in WWII, Korea and Viet Nam. Many served in Australia, North Africa, Panama, Antarctica, Bosnia, Turkey, Kuwait, Afghanistan, Guam, Philippines, Thailand, Japan and many other countries.

Thanks to OPERATION: CARD ANGELS and a school in Van Wert, Ohio and folks from all over the country we received several hundred “Thanks for Your Service” and Christmas Cards.

OPERATION: CARD ANGELS is a Card Ministry Team which supports Active Duty, disabled and Injured service members, Veterans and their families gave us several hundred Veterans Day Cards in addition to several hundred Christmas Cards. Cards are gathered for all holidays; names and addresses of those needing someone to write them are shared with Card Angels. It's one of the best ways of supporting our brave men and women who keep our nation free and their families. I love being a Card Angel. You can get more information on becoming a Card Angel by emailing Bev Peyton at chaplainbev@gmail.com.

Mark and I carry “Thank You” Stars and Viet Nam pins in our pockets so that we can give them to Veterans, Active Duty, Guard and Reservists.



***(Left to right)
Volunteer Tom Whalen, Catherine
and Bob from the Hospice Staff
after the Thanksgiving meal.***



We had another successful day getting the word out about the museum on December 16th - we met a lot of Vets and handed out over 200 flag "Thank You" stars, almost 100 Vietnam War Veteran lapel pins and dozens of Christmas cards! We also had raffles for "Movie Night" and Christmas baskets.



***Catherine presenting another Vietnam Veteran with his
lapel pin, a flag star and Christmas card.***



Marine Corps Veteran Rick Baldock (left) was the winner of the “Movie Night” Basket raffle and the winner of the Christmas Basket raffle was Edward Blay (right) - congratulations, Rick and Edward!

Before Santa settled in our Reading Room, we went CLC (Community Living Center) and Hospice to hand out Christmas cards, "Thank You's" and spread a little Christmas cheer.

One veteran was close to the end of his life, so we were only able to put a last Christmas card and “Thank You” star on his door.

We've had a very successful year. As part of our “Get To Know Us” Campaign we've been in the Patient Tower at least once a month giving “Thank You” stars and Vietnam War Veteran lapel pins which we'll continue into the new year. Our goal for 2016 is to spend more time in the CLC and Hospice in continued service to our fellow Veterans.

We wish you a safe and happy New Year!

Respectfully,

**Catherine I. Beers, USAF Veteran
Public Affairs Officer**



Santa with his four-legged friend Brodie

DONATIONS QUARTERLY WRAP UP:

This is a unique souvenir of the Cold War – a plaque for service at NORAD. This granite plaque was presented to Senior Airman Catherine I. Beers-Stohon for her service with the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) in the Cheyenne Mountain Complex during the Cold War. SrA Beers served as the Administration Non-Commissioned Officer In Charge (NCOIC) in the Space Operations Directorate, a position normally held by a Technical Sergeant – three grades higher in rank.

Completed in February 1967, the bunker is designed to deflect a 30 megaton nuclear explosion within 1.2 miles. Built under 2,000 feet of granite, fifteen three-story buildings are protected from movement by an earthquake or explosion by a system of 1,000 giant springs. The springs and flexible pipe connectors prevent any of the 15 buildings from shifting more than one inch. Since 2008, NORAD and the United States Space Command have been based at Peterson Air Force Base and the complex, redesignated as an Air Force Station, is now used for flight crew training and as a back-up command center if required. Thanks, Cathy!



These blueprints for a Japanese mini-submarine were taken as souvenirs by Petty Officer Second Class Lewis Rex Klopfenstein from a factory in Sasebo, Japan at the end of WWII. PO Klopfenstein had previously worked aboard a submarine tender maintaining torpedoes, as well as some of the decoding machines at Mare Island. Petty Officer Klopfenstein served aboard USS Nereus:

"After shakedown in the fall of 1945, the new submarine tender departed 15 December for Japan by way of Pearl Harbor. Arriving Sasebo early in 1946, she stripped 39 Japanese submarines of all usable equipment and material before they were towed to sea for scuttling. US Marine demolition crews then sank the submarines with explosive charges in Operation "Roads End" 1 and 2 April."

Thanks, William!



At one of our "Get To Know Us Campaign" tables in the Patient Towers we met Jim Neilan, a Vietnam Veteran. Jim mentioned he had several Montagnard crossbows he'd brought back, and today he dropped them off at the museum. The Montagnards ("Mountain people") have been called "America's most loyal allies in Vietnam". They were skilled jungle warriors in the Central Highlands, but craftsmen as well - making the crossbows, textiles, and bracelets.



Without the generosity of people interested in preserving our military heritage, museums like ours couldn't exist – space doesn't permit an individual listing of all the donations we've received, but we want to thank the following groups and/or individuals for helping us tell the stories of the defenders our great Nation. *(an asterisk indicates multiple donations):*

William Klopfenstein (Ohio) *Rod Stanley (Ohio) Lee Sink (Ohio) The Corner Copyshop Todd O'Brien (Ohio)
*Vince Dec (Ohio) David Schaefer (Ohio) William Foster, Colonel, USAF, Ret. (Florida) Jeff Reed (Ohio)
Mary Blevins (Ohio) Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 8312 (Ohio) American Legion Post 763 (Ohio)
Jim Neilan (Ohio) *Sondra Hill (Germany) *Lynda Dickerson (Ohio) ...and many anonymous donors

FEATURED ARTIFACT(S): Theater-made fighting knife

This fighting knife began life as a Japanese Type 30 bayonet. It was heavily modified for use as a knife by Alvin F. Smorowski (1916-1997), who also made a scabbard with leather pieces of a Japanese officer's boot and brass parts scavenged from a Japanese aircraft wreck. - Thanks Kent!



FREE SERVICES WE PROVIDE:

- Flag disposal
- Speaker Bureau

- Veterans Roll of Honor
- Veterans History Project
- Operation FOOTLOCKER
- Genealogy and research archives
- Awards and Decorations Replacement

The Veterans Roll of Honor can be found at: <http://www.mvmhm.com/vroh.htm>. To submit a veteran for the Roll of Honor, email their full name, rank, branch of service, service history and awards and decorations (these are optional), to our Curator at curator@mvmhm.com. You may submit only a name, or you can also include a picture; if no picture is available, the appropriate service emblem will be used. (*Note that we reserve the right to edit submissions for clarity, grammar and spelling*).

UPCOMING EVENTS:

2016 Events:

- Monday, January 4, 2016, 1:00PM: Presentation for the Vandalia Senior Center.
- Saturday, January 9, 2016, 10:00AM: Presentation for Department of Ohio Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War Mid-Winter Encampment.
- February, 2016: Presentation for the Kenton County Genealogical Society in Kenton, KY.
- Saturday, February 6, 2016, 1:30PM: Presentation for the Greene County Chapter of the Ohio Genealogical Society.
- March, 2016: Presentation and tour for the Vantage Career Center student group from Van Wert, OH.
- Saturday, May 7, 2016: Girl Scout Learning Day.
- Saturday, May 21, 2016, 8:30AM: Armed Forces Day 5K Run/Walk/Roll.
- Saturday and Sunday, May 28-29, 2016, 11:00AM – 5:00PM: 12th Annual Patriot Freedom Festival – Theme: *Honoring Women Veterans!*
- Monday, May 30, 2016: Memorial Day (observed and actual).
- Tuesday, June 21, 2016: Presentation and tour for the Eaton Senior Citizens Center.
- Wednesday, June 22, 2016, 6:00PM: 75th anniversary meeting, presentation and tour for the Bellbrook Gardening Club.
- Sunday, September 11, 2016: Patriot Day.
- Tuesday, September 13, 2016, 6:00PM: Presentation and tour for the Delta Kappa teacher's sorority.
- Sunday, September 18, 2016: National POW/MIA Day.
- Sunday, November 6, 2016, 1:00PM: Veterans Day 5K Run, Walk, and Roll at the Dayton Veterans Affairs Medical Center.
- Friday, November 11, 2016, 9:00AM to 5:00PM: Open house in conjunction with the Dayton Veterans Affairs Medical Center.
- Wednesday, December 7, 2016: Pearl Harbor Day.
- Saturday, December 24, 2016, 9:00AM to 5:00PM: Open house in conjunction with the Dayton Veterans Affairs Medical Center Christmas Eve service.

2017 Events:

- TBD: WWII display in conjunction with the Middletown Mason's USO dance and dinner.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Our "Wish List": We're looking for some specific items to fill gaps in our displays/collection – if you have any of these items, please consider donating them!

Revolutionary War, War of 1812, Mexican-American War, Civil War, Spanish-American War, Mexican Border Expedition: *Anything!*

World War I: U.S. Air Service uniforms; U.S. Navy uniforms, any style; Model 1911 .45 pistol; Model 1903 Springfield rifle and parts; Model 1917 Enfield rifle and parts; Model 1914 Hotchkiss Machine Gun ammunition box; U.S. trench boots; German or Austrian uniform tunic; German "Kratzen" soft hat with insignia; German enlisted or officer's pickelhaube ("Spike helmet", Infantry or Artillery); German, Austrian, or Hungarian medals and insignia; German Model 98n/a ("Butcher") saw back bayonet with teeth intact; German Mauser Model 98 rifle; German P08 "Luger" pistol; German steel helmets; Imperial German or Prussian flags.

World War II: German uniforms and headgear; German medals and insignia; German M24 stick grenade (inert only); German P08 (Luger) pistol; German P38 pistol; Italian uniforms and headgear of any type; Italian medals and insignia; Italian Carcano rifle; Italian Berretta pistol; Japanese uniforms and headgear; Japanese Imperial Navy helmet; Japanese "last ditch" bayonet and scabbard; Japanese medals and insignia; Japanese "Rising Sun" (rayed) flag; Japanese Nambu or Type 94 pistols; Japanese swords; US Marine herringbone twill uniform; US Marine M1 helmet with cover; Army Air Forces A14 oxygen mask; Army Air Forces leather flight gear; Any Pearl Harbor Purple Heart; US field gear; US medals and insignia; M-1 carbine; M-1 Garand; Model 1911 .45 pistol; 100 pound practice bombs.

How can YOU help preserve our veteran's history?

Each day more and more of our veterans are passing away. The last veteran from World War I passed away in February 2011; our World War II veterans are dying at the rate of approximately 1,000 a day. For many younger people, conflicts as recent as Vietnam seem to be "old war movies". Unfortunately, many times when a veteran dies all of his or her history dies with them -we want to bring to life the stories of our veterans and provide a tangible link to them. Donations ensure our continued growth and preservation of our veteran's stories.

What types of things can you donate?

Uniforms

Insignias

Medals

Photographs

Captured enemy trophies

Anything that will help tell our veteran's stories, especially those from Ohio.

(All donors are credited on the museum's web site.)

Nothing is too small or insignificant!

We can also use items that you feel may be too damaged or worn to restore. Artifacts may be used to support our educational programs such as **Operation FOOTLOCKER** (a virtual field trip) and the Speakers Bureau.



Operation FOOTLOCKER

THIS QUARTER IN MILITARY HISTORY:

October 7, 1970: President Nixon announced a new 5-point peace plan for Vietnam.

October 12, 1917: First Battle of Passchendaele.

October 14, 1950: Chinese Communist troops cross the Yalu River into Korea.

October 16, 1918: Private Raymond J. France is killed in action.

October 19, 1781: British surrender at Yorktown, effectively ending the Revolutionary War.

October 21, 1861: Union defeat at the Battle of Ball's Bluff.

October 31, 1941: U-552 sinks the USS Reuben James, 115 die; first US ship lost in WW II.

November 2, 1783: His Excellency, General Washington, bids farewell to his troops near Princeton, NJ.

November 9, 1918: Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany abdicates and flees to Holland.

11 November 1982: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial is dedicated in Washington D.C.

November 12, 1991: President Bush extends call-up of Selected Reservists to active duty from 90 to 180 days.

November 14, 1864: Sherman sets out from Atlanta on his "March to the Sea": "Total War" begins.

November 19, 1969: Congress gave the president the authority to institute the "draft lottery" system aimed at inducting 19-year-olds before older men.

November 24, 1950: General Douglas MacArthur's final "Home by Christmas" offensive begins.

November 26, 1941: Admiral Nagumo's First Air Fleet leaves the Kuriles with 6 aircraft carriers, 423 planes, 2 battleships, 28 subs, 2 cruisers, and 11 destroyers. Destination: Pearl Harbor.

December 2, 1990: Six weeks before the United States and its allies initiate Operation DESERT STORM, Iraq test launches three Scud missiles from sites in eastern Iraq, which impact in western Iraq.

December 11, 1950: The 1st Marine Division fights through encircling Chinese Communist Forces to reach the 3rd Infantry Division in the Chosin Reservoir.

December 16, 1944: German Armies launch a surprise attack in Belgium which becomes known as the Battle of the Bulge.

December 18, 1972: The first Operation LINEBACKER II bombing raids against North Vietnam begin.

December 25, 1914: German and British soldiers in the Ypres sector hold an informal truce and celebrate Christmas together.

December 30, 1862: The U.S.S. Monitor sinks during a storm off Cape Hatteras, North Carolina.

TRIVIA

Last quarter's trivia question was: Which U.S. Air Force aircraft uses aerodynamics discovered during research into how bumblebees fly? The aircraft in question is the F-117A "Nighthawk" stealth fighter.

This quarter's question is: ***In military jargon, what is the meaning of "F-Hour"?***

The Miami Valley Military History Museum is co-located with the American Veterans Heritage Center (a 501c3 organization) located in Building 120, the historic Putnam Library in the Historic District of the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Dayton, Ohio.

Please note that although we are located on federal property, we receive NO funding from the Veterans Administration – we operate entirely "out of our own pockets" and with the help of unpaid volunteers.

Miami Valley Military History Museum
120 Ohio Avenue
Dayton, OH 45428

Hours of Operation: 9AM to 3PM

Monday through Friday
1st and 3rd Saturdays of each month
All Patriotic holidays
By Appointment

(Please note that opening hours are contingent on volunteer availability)

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Official Partner in the Department of Defense Vietnam War Commemoration, the Imperial War Museum World War I Centenary and a member of the Small Museums Association.