



MILITARY HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF MINNESOTA
MINNESOTA MILITARY MUSEUM

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ALLIES

Newsletter for Members and Friends



Captain Dudley Chase's Sharpshooter Rifle

By Stephen E. Osman

Berdan's Brigade plunged into the cedar thicket and the sharpshooters were soon exchanging accurate shots with rebels moving across their front.

It was the late afternoon of May 2, 1863, at Chancellorsville, Virginia, and the green clad expert riflemen of the Second United States Sharpshooters were putting their Sharps breechloading rifles to good service.

Back in the wagons were a few of their specialty sniper rifles – heavy barreled, muzzle loading, and equipped with long tubular telescopic sights. Captain Dudley Chase's own rifle was there, but the captain had other things on his mind as a new rebel battle line threatened the regiment's left flank.

Chase ran to Company E and was wheeling them to face the enemy when a bullet shattered the bone in his right arm and entered his chest. He continued forward but was quickly knocked down by a shell fragment.

As the firing slackened his men carried him off the field. Surgeons were forced to amputate the Captain's shattered arm, and with thousands of other wounded he endured a painful wagon ride to a Washington general hospital. There he died a few days later.

Captain Chase's body and his personal effects, including his sniper rifle, were sent back home to Minnesota.

Dudley Chase had moved there from his native Maine a few years before the war. He tried his hand at lumbering and farming, but the death of his wife left him supporting six young children in the frontier state.

When war came, the 43-year-old Chase found temporary homes for the children and headed east as second lieutenant of the First Company, Minnesota Sharpshooters.

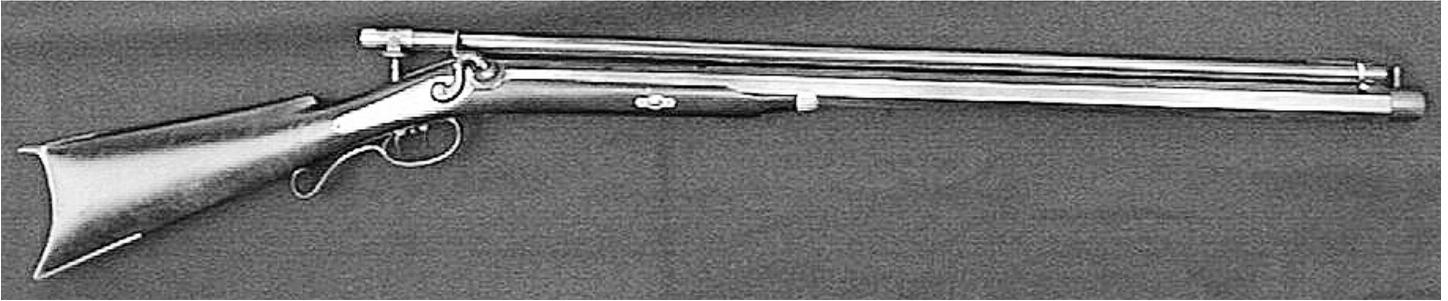


War time photograph of Captain Dudley Chase

That 100-man organization soon became Company A of the Second Regiment, United States Sharpshooters, posted to the hard fighting Army of the Potomac. Like Colonel Hiram Berdan's first regiment, the sharpshooters would account for thousands of enemy casualties.

Chase proved to be an efficient and valued officer, and

ALLIES



Captain Chase's sharpshooter rifle, now on display at the museum

by the summer of 1862 was in command of the Minnesota company. The sharpshooters saw continual service in reconnaissance, skirmishes, and battle. At Second Bull Run they were hard hit, and at Antietam ten more in the company, including Captain Chase, were wounded. By the spring of 1863 the Second Sharpshooters were among the most valuable troops in the Union Army and Chase himself had been in 14 battles. After Chase's death the sharpshooters went on to essential work at Gettysburg, the Wilderness, Cold Harbor and Petersburg.

Captain Chase's orphaned children opened the melancholy crate of his effects in 1863. Uniform, sash, sword, carved pipe and letters were distributed across the country with various descendants.

But the rifle stayed in Minnesota with Chase's daughter and passed eventually to her grandson. He treasured the rifle and his great grandfather's memory, as did Minneapolis Civil War veterans who had founded the Dudley P. Chase

Post of the Grand Army of the Republic.

The present owner first saw the rifle in the 1960s and was impressed by the amount of documentation gathered by the family. But there was much more available on the service of the efficient Sharpshooter officer in National Archives service records, on the internet, and in recently published books on the combat history of the Second Regiment.

The rifle itself is a heavy barreled .45 caliber half-stock percussion target rifle marked "N. Lewis, Maker, Troy, NY". Known to collectors as a New England target rifle, it retains a false muzzle at the end the barrel.

Designed to protect the rifling, the false muzzle was removed before firing. The double set triggers in a pistol grip style trigger guard and back action lock were precisely tuned for accurate shooting. On the left cheek is a



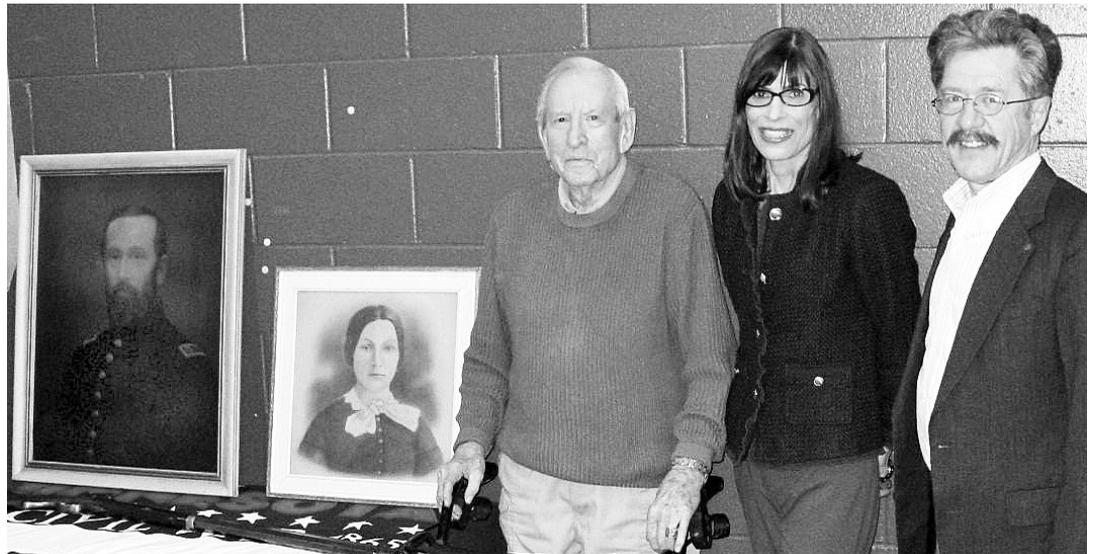
"Sharpshooter on Picket Duty" by Winslow Homer

silver inlay of a running buck.

Mounted to the rifle is the original 35 inch long iron telescopic sight marked "R. Haskell, Painesville, Ohio". Weapons like this accompanied the sharpshooters to war, but were soon replaced by Colt's revolving rifles and eventually by the better Sharps breechloading rifle.

But each company retained a few telescope-rifles for sniping and even the regimental chaplain was employing one during Captain Chase's last fight at Chancellorsville.

Today, Captain Chase's sharpshooter rifle can be viewed in the "Minnesota's Two Civil Wars" exhibit at the Min-



Chase's great grandson, Graham Freer, with his daughter and the author at grave rededication ceremony in 2014.

nesota Military Museum.

The captain's grave in Minnetonka was recently rededicated with a new memorial stone by the Minnesota Civil War Commemorative Task Force.

Eat More Wings and Support the Military Museum

Buffalo Wild Wings in St. Cloud and Baxter will donate 10% of your total bill to the Minnesota Military Museum every Wednesday in April 2015. Just clip the ticket below and bring it in or mention you are there to support the

Minnesota Military Museum and 10% of your total bill will be donated to us. Applies only to Buffalo Wild Wings in St. Cloud and Baxter.

EAT WINGS. RAISE FUNDS.

On the day listed below, present this ticket to your server and Buffalo Wild Wings® will donate 10% of your total bill (not including tax, gratuity or promotional discounts) to our organization.

Buffalo Wild Wings strives to support our community and the organizations and sports teams within it. Together we can make a positive impact and help keep our community working and playing together.

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**MINNESOTA MILITARY MUSEUM/
MILITARY HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF MINNESOTA**

Wednesdays in April, 2015

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ADMIT ONE

ALLIES**CURATOR'S NOTES**

By Doug Bekke



Winter is the time for updating and changing exhibits at the museum. The seemingly endless work on the military badges exhibit is at last finished. When I started this project nearly four years ago I thought it would be quick and easy. I have put many hours into the exhibit, seeking badges from sources around the country, including PXs in the Twin Cities and Camp Ripley. Five museum volunteers have worked on the project.

Funding the many necessary purchases was aided by the generosity of Clifford and Diane Peet, and Dan Ojeda, Jr. Nearly 400 badges are now in the exhibit, covering the Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, Coast Guard, and Merchant Marines. I'm sure someone will soon view it and complain that we left out their badge, and my volunteers and I have debated if we should award this person a prize. (We won't.) With the addition of new LED lighting, we are all very pleased with the exhibit's comprehensiveness and appearance.

Over the winter the 34th Division exhibit was modified and in early March it was moved to the new Camp Ripley Education building where it will continue to honor the soldiers of the 34th Infantry Division from 1917 to today, and into the future. The many weapons obtained by General Nash in Bosnia that had been part of that exhibit could not go to the Ed Center because of security considerations, but many have been integrated into the museum's

Arms Room exhibit.

Speaking of the Arms Room, some of the old exhibit on ammunition has been moved and some of it has been put in storage. That space has now been filled with a new exhibit of swords and edged weapons. Captions for that exhibit are now being made.

Work is moving forward on the updated and improved exhibit on women in the military. The biggest dilemma confronting me is deciding what to include and what to leave out. As in most museums, we have many more things to display—important things—than we have exhibit space. It is hoped that this exhibit can be completed by the start of our summer schedule on May 1st.

Work also continues on the major Vietnam exhibit that will open on 18 July with an event that we are now planning. Please watch for more information on this event and try to attend in order to honor our Vietnam veterans. If you are a Vietnam (Laos, Cambodia, etc.) veteran, please consider sending us one or more short stories (about one page in length) and some photographs regarding some aspect of your time in Vietnam. We are running out of time, however, so do it now. In the past, we have had some veterans show up at our doorstep with their things on the week or the day the exhibit opened, and were then disappointed when we could not fit them into the exhibit. We really need to have your stories/artifacts by June 1st.

Many other projects are being worked on as the museum moves forward on its mission to honor all Minnesota veterans. Many thanks to the museum's great crew of volunteers! Their dedicated work has been instrumental in our ability to move the museum's mission forward—getting things done that, not so long ago, I never thought possible.

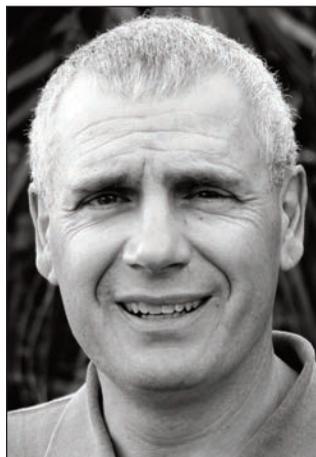
Financial Report for Museum Operations in Calendar Year 2014

REVENUE		\$	EXPENSE		\$
Cash donations		\$ 40,107	Salaries and wages		\$130,712
Grants		134,278	Payroll taxes		9,600
Legislative appropriation *		110,000	Contracted services, curatorial		33,185
Membership dues		4,603	Collections and exhibits		74,187
Admission fees		21,333	Special projects		5,759
Interest on accounts		2,007	Advertising and promotion		4,838
Net store sales		11,529	General expenses		10,135
Miscellaneous other		1,089	Insurance		2,930
		<u>\$324,948</u>	Transfer to endowment		3,500
			Miscellaneous other		385
					<u>275,231</u>
			Carry forward and fund transfers		49,717
					<u>\$324,948</u>

* \$220,000 for the 2014-15 biennium (1 Jul 2013 – 30 Jun 2015). For purposes of this report, half is assigned to 2013 and half to 2014.

DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

By Jeff Thielen



I always appreciate this opportunity to share with you and to update you on what is happening with the plans and goals at the museum. Sharing plans and goals helps build excitement for those goals and keeps us on task to make them a reality.

On April 25 we will hold our first "Teacher Appreciation Day" at the museum. We've invited teachers from across the state to meet with staff and volunteers so they

see what we have to offer at the museum. We have partnered with St. Cloud State University to host a teacher workshop in conjunction with the event that will provide teachers with six continuing education credits and give them some great ideas on how to incorporate the museum into their class plans. We plan to continue working with teachers in Minnesota, expanding ways the museum can be a resource for students and teachers alike.

Another resource we have been working to improve for patrons and visitors is the museum library. Over the years the library has grown to approximately 14,000 items. There have been some great volunteers who have helped develop the library and we currently have a volunteer working 20 hours a week to organize the data base and complete an inventory of the collection. Her work is the

first step in the process of opening the library collection to the public. We are now seeking funding to create a fully functioning library. It is our intent to improve the existing data base of items in the collection and make that data base available online. Although many items in the collection will never leave the library (because they are rare or unique, for example) and will be only be used under supervision, we hope to be able to create a lending library for at least some of the collection within the next two years.

One of the goals I have had for the museum since I first started here four years ago was to obtain a C-130 for display on the museum grounds. We will be one step closer to making that a reality in May when we host a site visit by a staff member of the National Museum of the United States Air Force located at Wright Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio. In order to obtain any aircraft from the Air Force, the museum must be officially designated as an Air Force Museum (this would be in addition to our current status as an Army museum). Our initial application in that process was completed last summer and was administratively qualified by the Air Force last fall. Once the site visit is complete and we are designated as an Air Force Museum we will be able to make application for Air force equipment, to include a C-130 Hercules 4 engine turbo prop aircraft.

If you have not visited in a while please make plans to check out the upgrades Doug Bekke and the curatorial staff have been working hard on. The Featured Veteran display is changed almost every month, the Women in the Military exhibit is new and improved, and a new special exhibit on the Vietnam War will be opening July 18. We're looking forward to seeing you here soon.

Preserving Our films: Fighting Against Time

Did you know that the museum has a sizeable collection of 16mm, 8mm, and 35mm movie film? These films cover a whole range of subject and time periods, from the earliest known movie of Camp Ripley in the mid-1930s, to training films dating from the 1940s – 1970s, to amateur "home movies" taken by vets that depict their military activities. Unfortunately, up to now they have been stored in an uncontrolled environment, which will inevitably lead to their decay and loss (nitrate degradation for films made prior to the early '50s and "vinegar syndrome" for later acetate films).

The cost of professionally conserving these films—which includes making a duplicate negative, a copy on digital tape, and a DVD copy—is high. For example, the

National Film Preservation Foundation estimates that a 400 foot, 12-minute, 16mm film would cost \$2,390; a 1900 foot, 52-minute film would cost \$12,340! We will have to prioritize which films are most important to keep, and then seek grant funding for their preservation. In the meantime, our archivist, Chad Conrady, has halted further deterioration of all our old films by putting them in cold storage, which is the recommended procedure.



ALLIES

OUT OF THE ARCHIVES

By Chad Conrady



In my last column, I said that I was working on old St. Peter Armory records, the records of Company D, Second Minnesota Infantry, and the personal papers of Kenneth Murphy. These collections are now available for research and can be further examined by using the archival finding aids that are on the archive's website: mnmi-larchive.org.

Last fall I started processing a large group of records pertaining to the Minnesota National Guard that came to the museum back in 2001.

Included in this collection are records for headquarters of the 205th Infantry Regiment and the Second Battalion of the 135th Infantry Regiment, which were once based in Mankato; records for headquarters of the 1st Battalion, 135th Infantry Regiment based in Rochester; and various units based in Stillwater, such as the Headquarters and Headquarters Company of the 1st Brigade, 47th Division, and the Heavy Motor Company, 135th Infantry Regiment.

We also have a large group of scrapbooks and photographs that cover such topics as Camp Rucker during the Korean War, military parades at Camp Ripley during the 1950s, annual field training at Ripley, and the 1959 Wilson Meatpacking Strike in Albert Lea and the 1985-86 Hormel Strike in Austin.

I have also processed a collection of materials that the museum received from the Minnesota Military Academy, which included yearbooks, graduation programs, and technical manuals.

We have been reorganizing our space. As I was removing a section of shelving in the archives, I ran across some boxes labeled simply "Miscellaneous Magazines." The contents were not magazines. In them were assorted training manuals, prayer books, guides, personal notes, photographs, and post cards from various donations made from the 1970s to the 1990s.

Most notably they also included things that belonged to General Ellard Walsh and General George Leach. Since discovering these orphaned materials, I have worked with curator Doug Bekke and his donor records to reassemble them into smaller, more precise collections based on the

topic or person who initially collected or owned them.

I know that components of these collections are scattered throughout the archives and/or the museum, so as I come across orphaned materials they will be reassembled in order to properly present the history of the individual the collection documents.

One of the things I learned shortly after starting work here is that Minnesota State Statutes (chapter 138.161 and 15.17) provides guidance to state departments and agencies regarding the control and disposition of their records.

It basically says that all state records need to be deposited and managed by the Minnesota Historical Society, but there is a provision that allows a state agency or department to specify, through an agreement, an alternative repository for a specific group of records.

The museum reached out to the Minnesota Department of Military Affairs and the Minnesota Historical Society to assist in resolving the issue of state records housed at the Minnesota Military Museum. A representative from the Department of Military Affairs met with the state archivist at the Minnesota Historical Society to initiate the creation of such an agreement between our three organizations.

From August to the end of December I developed and wrote a six-page agreement with the state archivist and her assistant to maintain and provide access to Department of Military Affairs records already housed at the museum. The museum had to agree to meet certain archival requirements, such as providing public access to the records and properly caring for them. In January the agreement started making its way for the signatures of specific members representing each of the three organizations concerned.

Because the law states that such agreements can only apply to a specific group of documents, the current agreement only covers those Minnesota Department of Military Affairs records currently at the museum. That means that any new records deposited by the department or any component of the Minnesota National Guard will need to have another agreement completed and signed down the road.

SUMMER HOURS

Beginning May 1, the museum transitions to its summer schedule: Open every day, 7 days a week, 10: a.m. – 5:00 p.m., including holidays.

DONOR HONOR ROLL, January-March, 2015

Memorials

January – March, 2015

Given by:	In Memory of:
194th Tank Regiment Assn.	Patricia Raymond
Alice Bekke	SGT Richard Ingle
Doug Bekke	SGT Richard Ingle
Margaret Fletcher	Merl Fletcher
Richard and Betty Hayes	COL (Ret.) Leonard Fielding
Richard and Betty Hayes	CWO Delbert Kendrick
John and Bonnie Olsen	CWO Delbert Kendrick
David W. Larson	LTC (Ret.) Leonard K. Grein

Artifact Donations

January – March, 2015

The museum gratefully acknowledges donations of artifacts from the following:

Accent Store Fixtures ▪ Dave Bartholomew ▪ Patricia Beckers ▪ Vince Botz ▪ Jamie Lloyd Hanson ▪ Ron Jacobson ▪ Clifford Johnson ▪ Meg Lytwyn ▪ Jim Lindfors ▪ Leon Mackechnie ▪ Marge O'Brien ▪ Stephen Osman ▪ LeRoy Rockman ▪ Dept. of MN Ladies VFW Auxiliary ▪

Contributions

January-March 2015

Renewing Members: Susan DeSimone ▪ Dan Ewer ▪ Lyle Fuller ▪ Marvin Hey ▪ George Jacobs ▪ Ed Komac ▪ Allan Meixner ▪ Ron Miller ▪ Marveen Minish ▪ Herb Schaper ▪ LaVon Skoog ▪ Harry Sieben ▪ Scott St. Sauver ▪ Larry Schmitz ▪ Doug Thompson ▪ Shawn Willy ▪

New Members: Phil Harein ▪ Gerold Healy ▪ Robert O'Neill

American Legion: American Legion Post 102, Anoka ▪ American Legion Post 550, Bloomington ▪ American Legion Post 323, Clearwater ▪ American Legion Post 455, Cold Spring ▪ American Legion Post 157, East Grand Forks ▪ American Legion Post 202, Hackensack ▪ American Legion Post 47, Hastings ▪ American Legion Post 211, Holdingford ▪ American Legion Post 46, Little Falls ▪ American Legion Post 12, Long Prairie ▪ American Legion Post 234, Minneapolis ▪ American Legion Post 627, Nisswa ▪ American Legion Post 328, St. Joseph ▪ American Legion Post 221, St. Stephen ▪ American Legion Post 109, Two Harbors ▪ American Legion Post 134, Walker ▪

VFW: Dept. of MN Ladies VFW Auxiliary ▪ VFW Post 6316, Blaine ▪ VFW Post 1296, Bloomington ▪ VFW Post 1816, Garrison ▪ VFW Post 425, Hopkins ▪ VFW Post 1140,

SPOTLIGHTED RECENT DONATIONS



We recently acquired a rare WWII 34th Infantry Division helmet from a collector. It has the Red Bull insignia painted on the front of the steel helmet and the liner and is complete with original helmet net. Attached to the inside back of the liner is a wool flap intended to shield the wearer's neck from the sun. The flaps, unique to the 34th, were made and issued in Tunisia.

I once did an oral history with 34th ID Sergeant Don Mendenhall, who told me that most soldiers hated the hot, wool flaps and often "lost" them. Don also provided a photo showing men in his unit wearing flaps in North Africa. The helmet we acquired may have been brought home at the end of the Tunisian campaign or smuggled home later. When the war ended, soldiers were typically required to leave their field equipment behind. Steel helmets were repainted and reissued, so it's very special to have this particular helmet and to know some of the story that goes with it.

Long Prairie ▪ VFW Post 246, Minneapolis ▪ VFW Post 4393, Northfield ▪ VFW Post 7902, Osakis ▪ VFW Post 6208, Prior Lake ▪ VFW Post 9073, Randall ▪ VFW Post 8663, Roseau ▪ VFW Post 6992, Sauk Rapids ▪ VFW Post 2793, Thief River Falls ▪ VFW Post 5462, Waconia ▪ VFW Post 3922, Wadena ▪ VFW Post 1782, White Bear Lake ▪ VFW Post 1639, Willmar

Donations: AK Steel Foundation ▪ Anakkala, Berns PLLP ▪ Buffalo Lions Club ▪ Coborn's, Inc. ▪ David Colburn ▪ Courtland Lions Club ▪ Eagles Aerie 287, Brainerd ▪ Eagles Aerie 4129, Shakopee ▪ GNP Company ▪ Grey Eagle-Burtrum Lions Club ▪ Hackensack Lions Club ▪ Hanneken Insurance Agency ▪ Jasen Hruza ▪ Vegard Roening Huber ▪ Craig Johnson ▪ Lin Furniture ▪ Macy's ▪ Erlend Magnussen ▪ Marshik Agency, Inc. ▪ Betty Masoner ▪ Melrose Lions Club ▪ Mid-Minnesota Federal Credit Union ▪ Mills Fleet Farm ▪ Russell Ness ▪ Nisswa Lions Club ▪ Myron Peterson ▪ Randall Cushing Lions Club ▪ Lou Sanchez ▪ C. Perry Schenk ▪ John Simmins ▪ Support Our Troops Grant Program ▪ The Office Shop ▪ Jon Trost ▪ Vacuum Cleaner Outlet & Service ▪ Wal-Mart Foundation ▪ Streiff ▪ Thomas Surdyk ▪ Ethyl Tate ▪ Jon van der Hagen ▪ Joseph Vita ▪ JoAnne Blowers Volkman ▪ James Weaver ▪ Dennis Weiss ▪ Christina Mitchell Wheeler ▪ Tom Wilharber ▪ James Youngquist ▪ Jim Zindler

ALLIES

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MILITARY HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF MINNESOTA - Application for New or Renewed Membership

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____ Email _____

MEMBERSHIP TYPE New member Renewing member

MEMBERSHIP LEVEL Regular - \$30/yr Family - \$55/yr Supporting - \$100 Life - \$500

(Life memberships may be paid in four installments of \$125 each. Tell us if you want this option.)

Additional contribution \$ _____

All memberships are acknowledged in the museum newsletter and in our website's Donor Roll Call. Contributions of \$500 or more in a single year and all Life memberships are also recognized permanently on a plaque in the museum lobby.

How would you like to receive your newsletter? Postal mail Email

Would you like to receive information about volunteering? Yes No

PROCEDURE

Pay by mail: Print this form and mail with your check (payable to the Military Historical Society of Minnesota) to: Minnesota Military Museum, Camp Ripley, 15000 Highway 115, Little Falls, MN 56345. If you prefer, you can mail or fax (320-632-7797) this form without payment and follow up by calling the museum at 320-616-6050 with your credit card information.

Pay online: We also have a simple, secure way for you to become a member or renew your membership online. Go to our website at mnmilitarymuseum.com. Click on Support Us>Become a Member and follow the prompts.

Your membership is fully tax deductible. We salute and thank you for your support!