



ALLIES

Newsletter for Members and Friends



In the wake of the PBS documentary, bringing history of the Vietnam War to every classroom

By Randal Dietrich
Executive Director, Minnesota Military Museum

More than 1,300 people visited the Minnesota Military Museum as part of the Camp Ripley Open House on Sunday, September 17.

The cool morning and sunny afternoon helped account for the big numbers. It was an ideal day for exploring the vehicle displays and sharing stories among our many indoor exhibits.

We reminded visitors of the 10-part, 18-hour Vietnam War documentary to premiere that evening. Directed by Ken Burns and Lynn Novick, it's a sweeping effort to examine the war on many fronts and one that has renewed a serious discussion of great importance.

In all, 79 voices are featured in the film. Samuel Hynes and Tim O'Brien are two of our state's notable veterans who appear in the documentary.

Just released Nielsen ratings show that viewership in Minnesota was the highest in the nation.

In a review by Marc Leepson, Arts Editor for The VVA Veteran, he states "the American Vietnam War veterans who appear in the film are uniformly articulate, introspective and well-informed. Their demeanor and what they say reflect very well on the 2.8 million of us who took part in the war."

Hank Stuever of the Washington Post argued "Yes, America, PBS' 'The Vietnam War' is required viewing – all 18 hours of it...It is about as complete and evenhanded as it could possibly get, which, of course, means it won't please everyone."

To be sure, there are omissions and a work on this scale always has its detractors but reviews have been largely positive.

Closer to home, Ruben Rosario of the St Paul Pioneer Press characterized it as "mesmerizing, heartbreaking and horrific" and called on it to be "shown in every classroom in America".

I am proud to report that we are doing our part.

We are leading the way. For instance, many of those



who explored the museum on September 17, read accounts of Vietnam veterans in our special exhibit.

Our Vietnam War traveling trunk is available – at no cost - to every classroom. The trunk makes the soldier experience more personal by providing a hands-on opportunity for students to more fully grasp the things they carried.

Trunk Inventory

- M1 US steel helmet
- US helmet liner
- Helmet cover, US, jungle camouflage pattern
- Jungle combat boots, US
- Combat trousers, US, tropical
- Jacket/shirt, US, tropical 3rd pattern jungle with 4th Infantry Division patch
- "Boonie" hat, US, tropical camouflage



ALLIES

- Special Forces Green Beret, US
- Hot weather "baseball" cap, US
- M1956 web belt with suspenders, US
- 1 quart canteen, plastic, US (2 each)
- Canteen cup, metal, US (2 each)
- Canteen cover, US (2 each)
- M1956 ammo pouch, US (2 each)
- M1956 field pack, US
- Folding shovel, US
- M1956 shovel cover, US
- MX-991/U Army flashlight, US

Partnering with the Lindbergh Historic Site and the Morrison County Historical Society, we have been notified that we will receive a modest grant from the Minnesota Humanities Center. The grant will help extend our reach into the community and classroom by increasing the number of Vietnam trunks, hosting community discussions about the war and bolstering museum attendance.

Further, The Minnesota Public Television Association has committed to additional programming, in the coming months, to expand on the Ken Burns documentary. Our Museum will be an important partner to Twin Cities PBS in June of next year.

The Burns/Novick documentary this fall started a timely discussion that will continue for months to come. The Minnesota Military Museum has been part of that discussion and will continue to speak to Minnesota's Vietnam War experience for generations to come.



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 mmilitarymuseum.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!

CURATOR'S CORNER

By Doug Thompson



It's been a very busy summer at the Minnesota Military Museum. Several interesting projects - some large, some small, have kept myself and the volunteers occupied and wondering how the summer months have flown by so fast.

-Several vehicles have received restoration to some degree; some extensive, some minor, with fresh coats of paint to bring them back to their former glory.

The staff and CSMS shops at Camp Ripley have been great partners with us in getting these vehicles into great shape, and we're very grateful for all the hard work put in by them and our volunteers. The natural elements with the extremes of weather and temperature we have in Minnesota takes a toll on these vehicles, so the work done now will help to preserve them for many more years

to come. In addition, all new wood steps that allow access to the tops of some of the vehicles were fabricated to replace the worn wooden ones that were there, and the iron work on the steps was repainted.

-The Merci Boxcar, a historically significant gift from France to the State of Minnesota after the Second World War, received a facelift this summer. The wooden steps leading to the interior received repairs, the old display located on the inside was removed, and a new display area complete with new exhibits and lighting was installed.

-The Artillery Displays building received new signage, and new signs for the artillery pieces located inside were added. Updated signage was also added to several vehicles inside the Vehicle Displays buildings.

-We continue to receive very nice additions to our artifacts collections, especially some by veterans of the Global War on Terror. We continue to actively seeking artifacts, photos and stories from this time period.

-The Traveling Trunk program continues to gain momentum as more and more educators learn about this exciting teaching tool. We hope to be able to add more trunks in the future to ensure that everyone that wants to borrow one of them will have access to one. Want to support the Traveling Trunk program? Contact us to find out how.

OUT OF THE ARCHIVES

By Ryan Welle



Over the past few months work in the archives has continued to move along smoothly. There are still more projects in the plans to make the archives the best they can be at supporting the research needs of our patrons. If you are interested in volunteering in the archives, please let us know.

Some things that will help us in reaching our goals

are a new wide-format scanner that the archives recently received. This scanner will allow for digital copies to be made of some of the larger items in our collections, such as posters and panoramic photographs. These will be helpful for those looking to do research on entire units in the military, as well as hopefully increase the usefulness of these items in exhibits being planned by the curatorial department. Another change that is helping the archives be more efficient with its collection management is the addition of new shelving units that were recently installed. This has provided additional space for the storage

of records and documents, which was greatly needed.

Some other projects that remain on-going are the indexing of the names in the muster rolls collection and managing the veterans' registry on our website. It is our hope that these will become even more valuable resources in the time to come and will assist those interested in learning more about the contributions of veterans across Minnesota, or if they are interested in genealogy. If you are interested in either of these projects, you can look on the archives page of our website or contact me for more information.

We have also started to digitize items within our audio collections. Currently, many of the recordings are on cassette tapes, and I have started to transfer the content to digital files. A large reason for this is that the magnetic tape within cassettes degrades over time. To prevent the recordings from being lost due to degrading or obsolete media, it is important to transfer them to newer media.

Lastly, I would like to invite all of our readers to contribute to our mission of preserving the stories and legacies of Minnesota veterans. If you have any items that you think might be of interest to the archives or museum collections, please let us know. If you are a veteran, or know a veteran, and haven't shared your story and experiences with others, we would love to hear from you. Consider writing down your experiences so they can be saved and shared with future generations before they are forgotten by the sands of time.

ALLIES

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DONOR HONOR ROLL, July to September, 2017

Memorials

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Donations: James Chaffee ▪ Ben Murdock ▪ Elizabeth Masoner ▪ Anthony Nathe ▪ Nisswa Women's Clubs

Artifact Donation Honor Roll

The museum gratefully acknowledges donations of artifacts from the following:
American Legion Post 11, Mankato ▪ Kurt Buhlman ▪ Dick and Sandy Callen ▪ Connie Collett ▪ Rick Gerber ▪ Ron Hansen ▪ Clifford G. Johnson ▪ JoAnn K. Johnson ▪ Kay Kuchinski ▪ Bill & Carolyn Leckey ▪ Jim Manock ▪ Mille Lacs Lake Historical Society ▪ James Mosser ▪ Kenneth Norbie ▪ Marshall Peterson ▪ Mary Saboe ▪ Beth Schramm ▪ Robert Schwier ▪ David Simondet ▪ Nancy Steele Dobmeier ▪ Jan Stefano ▪ Gretchen Steinmetz ▪ St. Louis County Historical Society ▪ Karl Swee ▪ Henry P. Timm, Jr. ▪ Susan Vandrovec ▪ Sandy Wallin ▪ Sue Young