2014 ANNUAL REPORT MILITARY HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF MINNESOTA

January 1, 2014 through December 31, 2014



Preserving & Telling the Story of Minnesota's Veterans

December 31, 2014

To the Reader:

Thank you for taking the time to review the annual report of the Military Historical Society of Minnesota (MHSM). The MHSM is a small non-profit with a dedicated board of directors who are passionate about the mission of the organization. Our mission is vital and pertinent not only to our organization, but to everyone who values the freedoms our country has to offer and the sacrifices made by military veterans to obtain those freedoms.

The primary purpose of the MHSM is to provide support and oversight for the Minnesota Military Museum located at Camp Ripley, the largest state owned military training facility in the U.S. It is at the museum where the "story" of Minnesota's military veterans is told and visitors learn about the sacrifices made to obtain the freedoms they enjoy every day.

The Minnesota Military Museum is one of the finest small military museums in the country. A dedicated staff and volunteers take pride in the mission of the organization and provide for the needs of currently serving military, veterans, and visitors from Minnesota and across the country.

We hope this annual report provides you with a synopsis of what we do, who we serve, how we are financed, and what we have accomplished during this past year.

If you found this report on our website, thank you for visiting; if you are reading this report in another format and would like to learn more about our organization, please visit us at www.mnmilitarymuseum.org

Sincerely

Jeff Thielen Executive Director

A LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Background & 2014 Highlights

• The Military Historical Society of Minnesota (MHSM), an independent, non-profit, 501(c)3 educational corporation was organized in 1976 for the purpose of interpreting and preserving Minnesota's military history. The Minnesota Military Museum is the Society's principal activity. In 2014 the museum continued efforts to become more of a resource for Veterans and to increase Veteran awareness of the museum. The new museum archivist began the task of organizing the archives and catalogued over 51 Cubic Feet of materials. The museum continued a project to inventory the collection and computerize the records for all artifacts, which now number nearly 100,000. The library received a private collection of over 2000 books on military history which increased our library holdings to over 14,000 items.

Working partnerships

• The museum is recognized by the U.S. Army as an official National Guard museum, which enables it to acquire and display historical federal property of a military nature. In 2014 the museum also received preliminary approval from the Air Force Museum to be able to obtain Air Force equipment and is awaiting final approval to become an official Air Force Museum. The Society works closely with the Minnesota Department of Military Affairs and Camp Ripley. They provide the buildings, cover utilities, and take care of general maintenance and repair around the museum. They also help plan and assist with special capital improvements funded by the Legislature. The Minnesota Historical Society was instrumental in organizing the MHSM. They transferred "start-up" artifacts to the museum (mostly weapons), and gave early staffsupport. They continue to serve as our fiscal agent for biennial legislative funding, refer potential artifact donors to us, and provide curatorial advice.

HISTORY & BACKGROUND

The Military Historical Society of Minnesota (MHSM) operates the Minnesota Military Museum in order to provide education and training on the role played by Minnesotans who have served in the armed forces. The museum is also a major repository in Minnesota for military artifacts and records. We believe it is important to:

- *Strengthen public understanding of how armed conflicts and military institutions have shaped our state and national experience;
- * Identify, document, preserve, and depict the stories and contributions of Minnesotans who served in all branches of service or on the home front -in time of peace and war from Minnesota's early frontier years to the present;
- *Acquire artifacts and records from the public and other sources that help us to better tell those stories;
- * Function as an important resource center for the benefit of the general public as well as Minnesota Veterans; and
- * Provide the opportunity for all people to utilize the museum, regardless of ability to pay.

BELIEFS AND PHILOSOPHY



The mission of the **Military Historical Society of Minnesota** is to educate the public on the service of Minnesota's veterans, to preserve a record of their service through exhibits of the **Minnesota Military** Museum, and to preserve the artifacts related to their service for future generations.

MISSION STATEMENT



The museum currently utilizes 14 buildings for artifact display and storage and has options to utilize additional buildings as needed.

Outside exhibits include; wheeled vehicles, tracked vehicles, fixed wing and rotary aircraft located around the central exhibit buildings which house Approximately 100,000 artifacts, 14,000 books, and 15,000 photographs.

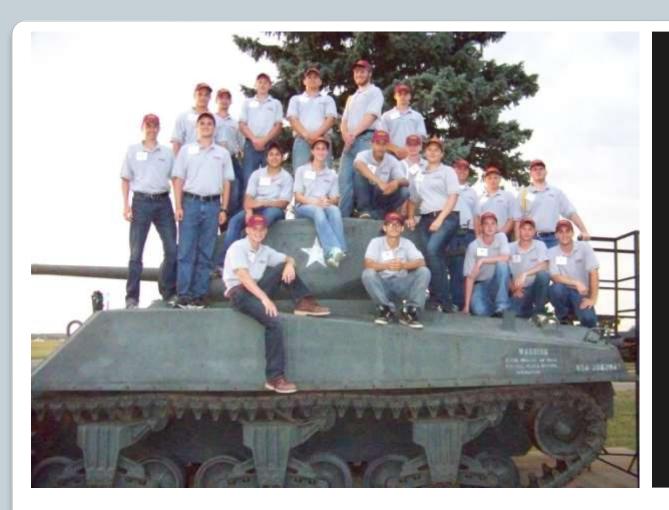
A BIRDS EYE VIEW OF OUR FACILITY



We serve veterans living and dead by honoring their memory and preserving their legacy by telling their "stories" through exhibits at the Minnesota Military Museum.

We serve veterans organizations and organizations that support veterans.

WHO DO WE SERVE?



We serve the general public and visitors of all ages from across Minnesota and the country. We serve schools from across Minnesota and we serve researchers, historians, and vacationers.

Visitors in the photo are members of the State Patrol Youth Recruitment Camp conducted at Camp Ripley every year.

WHO DO WE SERVE?



Attendance at the Museum in 2014 was 8270. For the second year in a row this number was down from averages; however, it was similar to what was seen by other local attractions.

Attendance numbers included 76 tours for schools, youth groups, scouts, seniors, bus tours, fraternal organizations, and military and veterans organizations.

Pictured is one of our volunteers explaining the history of mortars and showing equipment he wore in Iraq to guests during the History after Hours event.

WHO DO WE SERVE? History After Hours, Special Event





In 2014 the museum hosted a traveling exhibit on Vietnam sponsored by the Mobile Riverine Force Association. The mobile museum and memorial is dedicated to the soldiers of the 9thInf. Division and sailors of Navy Task Force 117 as well as all Navy & Coast Guard Units in the Mekong Delta and other areas of Vietnam from 1966-70. The one day exhibit attracted over 300 visitors, many of them Vietnam veterans.

Who Do We Serve



Great strides have been made to make the archival holdings more accessible for patrons through the creation of a website for the archives which hosts a blog that introduces visitors to a sampling of the materials found in the archive. See www.mnmilarchive.org

In addition, the archives site also hosts online finding aids following professional archivist standards for archival collections that have been completely arranged and cataloged. If a researcher needs additional guidance or has specific questions, the website provides forms for visitors to ask questions.

Left- Replacing file cabinets with organized boxes!

HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2014, Archival Records Processed

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HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2014, Archival Records Processed

We have processed a number of collections that include, but are not limited to, the records of the St. Peter Armory, the Adjutant General's Office Records which contain the muster rolls and pay rolls to the Minnesota National Guard dating back to 1884.

So far, approximately 51 cubic feet of records have been completely processed, while an additional 48 cubic feet of Minnesota National Guard records are in the process of being arranged and described.

The last major task that took place this year is that contact was initiated with the state archivist at the Minnesota Historical Society to work out an agreement to keep and maintain the state records of the Minnesota National Guard currently at the museum.

Left- Example of archival record processed.



On a warm summer evening the museum hosted "History after Hours." Visitors were able to enjoy wine, beer, and hors d'oeuvres while touring the inside and outside museum exhibits.

Special "hands on" stations manned by period actors allowed guests to fire a Civil War musket, pull the bolt back on a WWI machine gun, simulate firing an antique mortar, taste test a Meal Ready to Eat (MRE) or help WW II medics provide first aid to casualties using WW II equipment and supplies.

HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2014, History After Hours, Special Event



A frequent guest and added attraction for Museum visitors. (C-130 on Approach)



Six Minnesota Veterans were honored in 2014 in our Veteran of the Month Exhibit. They included:

Donald Frederick Norman Sterrie Reuel Pietz Norm Arvidson Jerry Huntington Merl Fletcher Ken Buettner

Pictured here is the Veteran of the Month display case featuring veteran Norm Arvidson.

HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2014, Veteran of the Month Exhibit



We value our Staff & Volunteers!

(Museum board members, staff and volunteers at the 2014 annual Volunteer Appreciation banquet) Volunteers provided over 3,500 hours of service in 2014

Thanks to the generosity of a local resident we are now able to display and use an Air Force Tug.

A Bradley Fighting Vehicle being delivered to us by Camp Ripley staff.





HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2014
New Items for the Outside Displays

- Complete Certification process to be an Air Force Museum.
- Increase emphasis on library and archival resources and expanding public access to both.
- Complete a project to inventory and catalogue museum artifacts in a digital format utilizing staff and volunteers.
- Moving the 34th Infantry Div. exhibit and opening of a 50th Anniversary of Vietnam exhibit, with continued development of the Veteran of the Month exhibits.
- Renovation of the "Women in the Ranks" Exhibit.
- Look for funding to develop a satellite museum, or mobile museum, in an effort to improve our mission to educate the public on veterans' service.

PLANS FOR 2015

President: Nicholas Ostapenko-- Attorney and retired Brigadier General, MNARNG.

V.P. Personnel: Robert L. Boone—Retired school administrator and retired C.S.M, MNARNG

V.P. Finance: Tim Meininger—V.P. Beacon Bank, Duluth; past president and chair, Duluth C of C

V.P. Programs Stephen E. Osman—Retired director Ft Snelling Historic Site, Minnesota Historical Society.

Secretary: Thomas Chial—Retired MSG, MNARNG and USAR.

Member: Richard Nash – Major General , Adjutant General , State of Minnesota.

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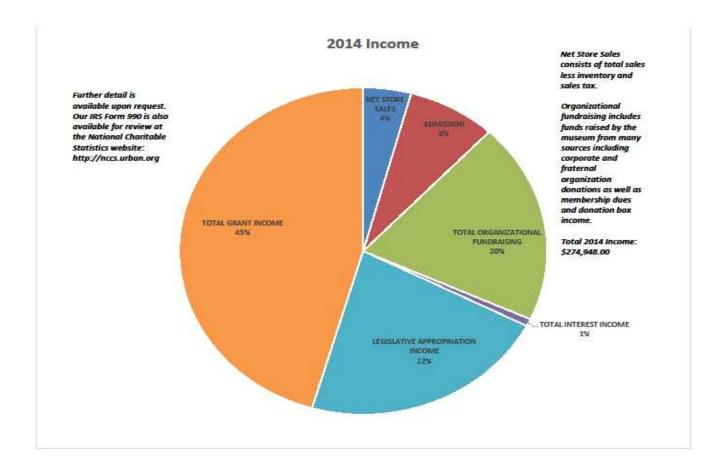
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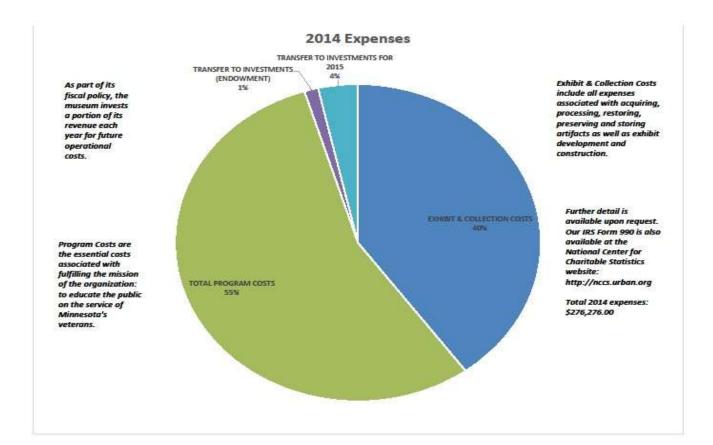
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Our Board of Directors



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