

**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](http://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 staff support. 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 9<sup>th</sup> Inf. 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](http://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

(IN DUPLICATE) (All blanks must be filled in)

## ENLISTMENT PAPER

 Battery } "K2" " { 1 F. Art'y } M. N. G. St. Peter, Minn.  
 Station Company } Infantry }

 Name in full Ralph W. Woolhouse Born in Cumberland,  
 State of Wisconsin on Dec. 15, 1892 Residence Kasota, Minn.  
 Age 23 years 1 months Height 5 feet 8 inches Complexion medium  
 Eyes Blue Hair Brown Occupation Section Foreman Married or Single Single  
 Name of wife or nearest relative C. H. Woolhouse, father Address of same Kasota, Minn.

## NATIONAL GUARD SERVICE

 Private in Co. "K", 2nd { Inf. Minn. Nat. Guard January 16, 1912  
 Appointed Corporal July 7, 1913 promoted Sergeant March 5, 1915  
 Honorably discharged January 15, 1915 for Expiration.  
 Re-enlisted January 16, 1915 for one year; honorably discharged January 16, 1916  
 Re-enlisted January 16, 1916 for one year; honorably discharged  
 Re-enlisted January 16, 1916 for one year; honorably discharged

## U. S. ARMY OR VOLUNTEER SERVICE

 Private in Co. { Inf. U. S. from 18 to 18  
 Corporal 18 to 18 Sergeant 18 for  
 I to 19 Honorably discharged 18 for

 Discharge from other organizations should be exhibited to Mustering Officer.  
 Previous military service

I hereby declare that the foregoing statements are true and correct, that I am of sober habits, good character, and physically qualified to perform the duties of a soldier, that I have never been discharged from any service except with good character; that I fully understand the nature of the duties required of a soldier and the laws and regulations governing the Minnesota National Guard, and, if enlisted, will faithfully perform such duties and obey all lawful orders of my superiors.

 Introduced by \_\_\_\_\_ Signature of Applicant Ralph W. Woolhouse  
 Co. \_\_\_\_\_ M. N. G. P. O. Address \_\_\_\_\_

## SIZE OF CLOTHING, ETC.

ARTICLE	SIZE
Overcoat	
Service Coat, etc.	
Service Trousers	
Khaki Service Breeches	
Foot or Mounted	
Drawers	
Leggins	
Shirt	
Hat or Cap	
Gloves	
Shoes	

## OATH OF ENLISTMENT

 STATE OF MINNESOTA,  
 County Kassota

 I do solemnly swear that I am of legal age to enlist, and have this day voluntarily enlisted as a soldier in the Minnesota National Guard and the organized militia of the United States for the period of three years, unless sooner discharged by proper authority; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the United States of America and the State of Minnesota; that I will serve them faithfully against all their enemies whosoever; and that I will obey the orders of the Commander-in-Chief, and the orders of the officers appointed over me according to law. So help me God.

 Subscribed and sworn to before me this 16th day of Jan. 1916, and I further certify that I have carefully examined into the qualifications of the recruit above named and have found him eligible under the laws and regulations of the National Guard governing enlistments.

Francis Wagner  
 Capt. Commanding { Company "K", 2nd { Infantry } M. N. G.  
 Battery { 1 F. Art'y } Recruiting Officer

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.

# HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2014, Archival Records 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 34<sup>th</sup> Infantry Div. exhibit and opening of a 50<sup>th</sup> 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.

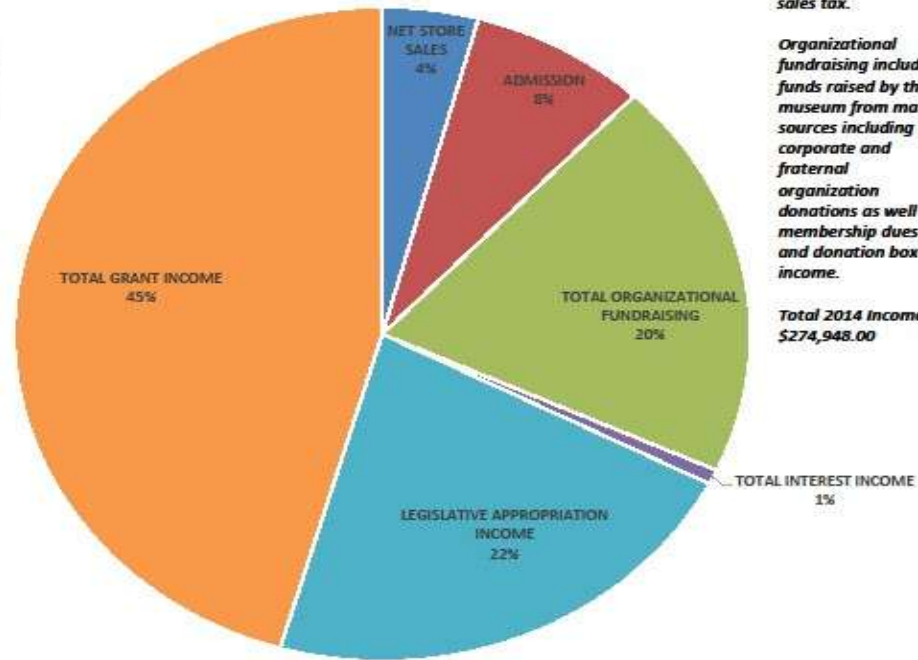
## **PLANS FOR 2015**

- 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.
- Member: **Lyle C. Doerr**— Retired Washington County facilities manager & Brig. General, MNARNG
- Member: **Doug Hanson**- Radio station general manager & retired SGM, MNARNG.
- Member: **Betty Masoner**— Retired educator.
- Member: **Jack K. Johnson**— Retired Univ. of Minn. administrator and retired Major, MNARNG.
- Member: **Frank A. Messina**—Realtor & owner Messina & Associates, Duluth.
- Member : **Mark Vargas**—St. Cloud State University, Library head.
- Member : **Jon van der Hagen**- Urgent Care doctor and avid historyfollower.
- Member: **Jill Stephenson**- Corporate leader, fund raiser, public speaker, Gold Star Mother.
- Member: **Paul Monteen**— Law enforcement investigator and instructor
- Ex Officio Member: **Doug Bekke, Curator**— Commercial Artist and retired Major, USA and USAR.  
 Ex Officio Member: **Jeff Thielen, Executive Director**— Retired MN DNR Enforcement & retired Major, MNARNG

# Our Board of Directors

## 2014 Income

*Further detail is available upon request. Our IRS Form 990 is also available for review at the National Charitable Statistics website: <http://nccs.urban.org>*



*Net Store Sales consists of total sales less inventory and sales tax.*

*Organizational fundraising includes funds raised by the museum from many sources including corporate and fraternal organization donations as well as membership dues and donation box income.*

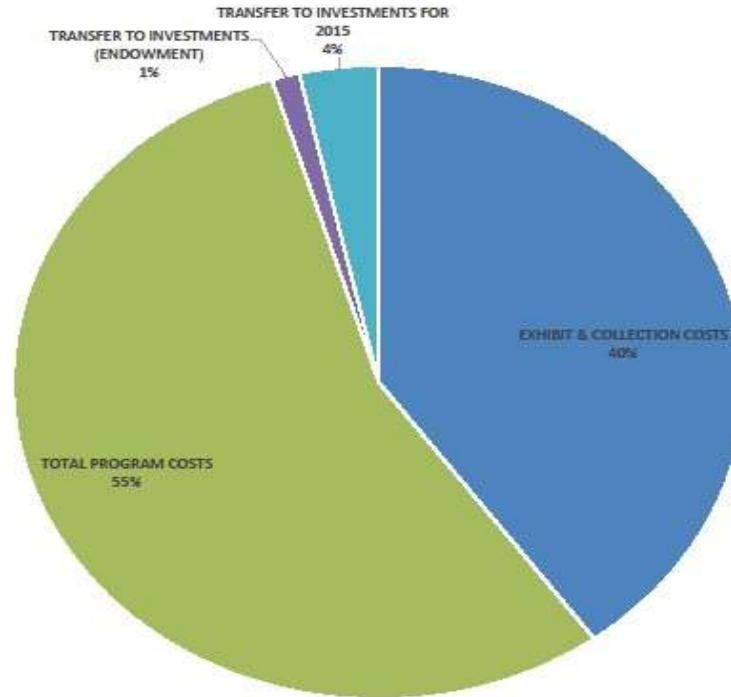
**Total 2014 Income: \$274,948.00**

# Where our money comes from

## 2014 Expenses

*As part of its fiscal policy, the museum invests a portion of its revenue each year for future operational costs.*

*Program Costs are the essential costs associated with fulfilling the mission of the organization: to educate the public on the service of Minnesota's veterans.*



*Exhibit & Collection Costs include all expenses associated with acquiring, processing, restoring, preserving and storing artifacts as well as exhibit development and construction.*

*Further detail is available upon request. Our IRS Form 990 is also available at the National Center for Charitable Statistics website:  
<http://nccs.urban.org>*

**Total 2014 expenses: \$276,276.00**

# Where our money goes



**Military Historical Society of Minnesota**  
***Preserving & Telling Minnesota Veterans' Stories***

Minnesota Military Museum, 15000 Highway 115, Little Falls MN 56345

Phone: 320-616-6050 Fax: 320-632-7797

[www.mnmilitarymuseum.org](http://www.mnmilitarymuseum.org) & [connect@mnmilitarymuseum.org](mailto:connect@mnmilitarymuseum.org)