

Mississippi Armed Forces Museum
Building 850
Camp Shelby, MS 39407
601.558.2757
www.armedforcesmuseum.us

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MISSISSIPPI
ARMED ★ FORCES
MUSEUM
CAMP SHELBY

THE MILITARY HISTORY MUSEUM FOR THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI

Quarterly Newsletter
Spring 2010



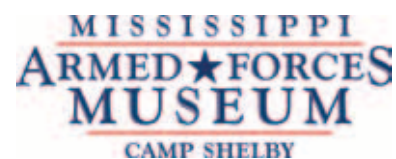
Soldiers of the 278th ACR in formation on the parade grounds at Camp Shelby

Mission Statement

The mission of the Mississippi Armed Forces Museum is to collect, preserve, interpret, exhibit and hold in public trust for the exclusive benefit of the people, significant historical property related to the history of the State of Mississippi and its contributions to the Armed Forces of the United States from the early nineteenth century to the present. The Museum directly supports training, study, research and education in related subjects.

The Museum honors the service and sacrifices of servicemen and women of all branches from Mississippi and others who received wartime training in Mississippi during times of war. The Museum's state-of-the-art exhibits tell personal stories of the heroes and heroines of our Republic and serves to educate future generations about the price paid for the freedom and prosperity Americans enjoy today.





Hours of Operation

Tuesday through Saturday – 9am-4:30pm
 Closed Sundays, Mondays & State Holidays
 Open Memorial Day, July 4th & Veteran's Day

MUSEUM STAFF

Chad Daniels
Director

Christy Calhoun
Archivist

Brenda Crowley
Administrative Assistant

COL Jim Darrah, USA(Ret)
Collections Manager

Neil Fairley
Facilities Supervisor

Lisa Foster
Registrar

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 MSG (Ret), MSARNG
Arms & Vehicle Conservator

Michael Rucker
Graphic Designer

Nikki Fairley
Misti Harrison
Eileen McVay
Casey Stevens
Visitor Services Representatives

Chad Daniels
 Museum Director



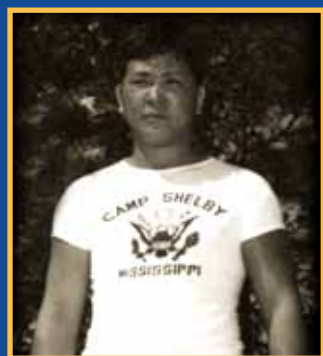
It's spring and things at the museum are busier than ever! I am happy to report that our overall visitation is at the highest level in the museum's history for the first four months of a calendar year. We hope to top our record visitation this year and exceed 50,000 visitors. We need your help in getting the word out about the museum. Many visitors tell us that this is 'one of the best kept secrets in Mississippi.' Help us change that by getting the secret out to your family, friends and associates! The museum is free and, we hope, well worth the drive out to Camp Shelby.

As with most museums, the economic downturn has caused some cutbacks in programming and activities, but there is still a great deal happening this spring and summer. We are excited to participate in the Trail of Honor event in Jackson (21-24 May) at the Harley-Davidson dealership. If you have not attended this great patriotic event before, I encourage you to do so this year. Six Medal of Honor recipients, four Tuskegee Airmen, Navajo Code Talkers and many other prominent veterans from wars past and present

will attend. This is a great chance for you to meet some of the real heroes of our Republic.

One of the great things about the museum's location at Camp Shelby is that our visitors have the opportunity to both learn about or military heroes of the past and also meet some of our brave men and women who are training to serve in Iraq and Afghanistan. Over 100,000 American (and a few thousand Canadian) troops have mobilized, trained and demobilized at Camp Shelby since June, 2004. It means a great deal to these men and women to know that their service is appreciated. I encourage you to let them know that you appreciate what they do for us anywhere you encounter uniformed service personnel. ■

Like this shirt?



Vintage Camp Shelby t-shirts now available at the Museum gift shop.

A Visit from the Tuskegee Airmen

by Chad Daniels

South Mississippi is gaining more and more military history attractions. In addition to the Mississippi Armed Forces Museum at Camp Shelby, we have the excellent G.I. Museum in Ocean Springs and the Laurel Veterans Memorial Museum in Laurel. Our newest partner in honoring veterans is the African-American Military History Museum in downtown Hattiesburg. The museum is located in the Historic USO Club, built during the Second World War. It is great to have so much interest and appreciation for veterans in the southeast corner of the state!

The Mississippi Armed Forces Museum has partnered with the African-American Military History Museum and VisitHattiesburg, the Hattiesburg area tourism organization, to host four of the famous "Tuskegee Airmen" from May 25-26. The visiting airmen are Col. (Ret) Charles McGee, Lt. Col. (Ret) Leo R. Gray, Lt. Col. (Ret) Alexander Jefferson and Lt. Col. (Ret) Herbert E. Carter, a native of Amory, Mississippi. The airmen will be at the Mississippi Armed Forces Museum from 9:00 am until noon on May 25 and the public is invited to attend.

This event was initiated by Mr. Clint Martin of Hattiesburg, a docent with the Mississippi Armed Forces Museum. Mr. Martin is a historian and a talented artist who has portrayed many of the Tuskegee Airmen's famous exploits in his work. As part of the visit to the museum, Mr. Martin will donate a special piece of art made to commemorate the visit and four radio-controlled model aircraft will be presented in honor of the Airmen. Each portrays the type aircraft flown by each visiting Airman with the exact markings of the aircraft they flew. The radio-controlled model aircraft are provided by Mr. Jeff Williams and the Pine Belt Radio Control Club with the aircraft markings painted by Mr. Martin. ■



Mr. Clint Martin





Figure B

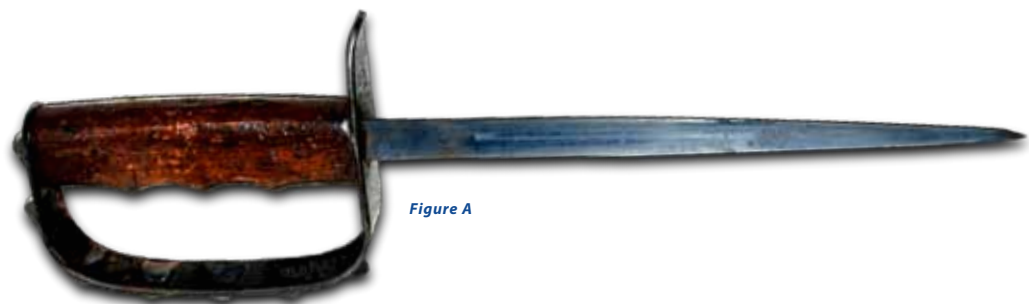


Figure A



Figure C

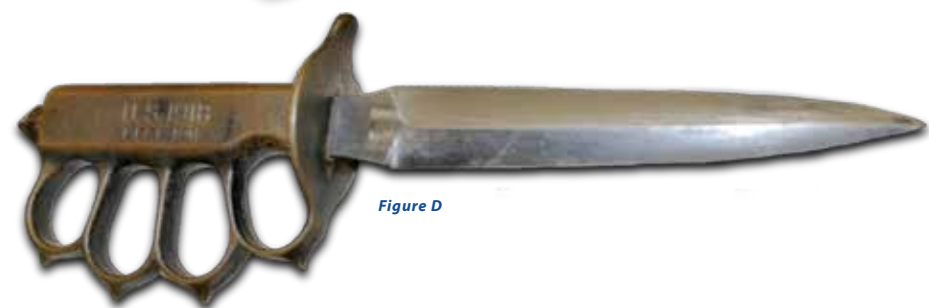


Figure D

The American Trench Knife

by Glenn Husted

In 1917, the American Expeditionary Force (AEF) was sent to Europe to fight in the First World War. The war in Europe had dragged on for years because of the killing prowess of the newly introduced machinegun. Such was the lethality of the machinegun that troops were compelled to deploy into vast networks of trenches.

Once dug in, the war became stalemated with each side waiting to make massed attacks on the enemy's trench lines. Unlike the battles fought by previous American generations of soldiers, melees were now mainly confined to the tight quarters of subterranean trenches. The long rifles and long bayonets (16 inches) once used in hand-to-hand combat were unwieldy in the trenches.

As a direct result of this new battlefield phenomenon, a new close-quarters fighting weapon was developed. The M-1917 trench knife (Figure A) designed by Henry Disston & Sons of Philadelphia (HD&S) was fielded to the troops. The original knife was made with a knuckle bow featuring a row

of pyramidal knobs, a pointed pommel, and a triangular blade. All of these features were designed to cause damage to the enemy, no matter which part of the knife was used to land a blow.

Of particular interest is the blade design. The nine inch, three-sided blade was used for its ability to penetrate heavy clothing. Also, it had the ability to inflict a severe puncture wound rather than a simple laceration.

The introduction of the M-1918 trench knife (Figure B) showed something new in the design of the knuckle bow. The new knife featured parallel rows of raised flanges. There were two different styles of flanges used, rounded ones predominantly replacing the earlier pointed ones. More than 120,000 of these knives were made under contract by Landers, Frary & Clark (LF&C) and Oneida Community Ltd. (O.C.L.). They were dubbed "knuckle-dusters" by the troops, after the common vernacular for brass knuckles, a similarly designed domestic weapon of choice for close-in fighting.

On 1 June, 1918, the AEF started exhaustive testing of trench knives. After lengthy consideration it was decided that the new MK I trench knife would have a completely new blade design. Focusing on lethality

and field utility, a double edged, straight blade was selected. With this new edged weapon, troops could cut rope, wood, fabric, and food.

The American Government placed an order for 1,232,780 of the MK I trench knives (Figure D), but only one production run of 119,424 was completed prior to the Armistice.

Ultimately, the war ended before American-made MK I trench knives could be shipped to the battlefield. However, a French company (Au Lion/Societe General) did produce some MK I trench knives (Figure C) in time to see service during the war. These knives can be recognized by a Lion (Figure E) featured on the ricasso portion of the blade.

In 1922, both the M-1917 and M-1918 trench knives were declared obsolete. The MK I's were placed into long term storage. They re-emerged 23 years later for issue during the Second World War. They too were declared obsolete in 1945. The Mississippi Armed Forces Museum is very fortunate to have specimens of four different models of these historic knives on display. ■



Figure E

THE MINUTEMAN:
SYMBOL OF THE NATIONAL GUARD



The Minuteman from the American Revolutionary War is the symbol of the National Guard and speaks of the dual role of our service men and women as both citizens and soldiers. Provided by Gulf States Manufacturers in Starkville, Mississippi, these 100% American-made icons are now available in the Museum giftshop. In addition, all sale proceeds from these figures are used to support the Museum and the Gold Star Mothers of Mississippi. The Gold Star Mothers are the mothers of American military personnel killed during active duty service.

MAY 21st-24th Trail of Honor (Jackson, MS)

The Museum will have several special exhibits at this patriotic annual event held at the Harley-Davidson Shop of Jackson. This Trail of Honor is attended by Medal of Honor recipients, Gold Star Mothers and many prominent veterans from the Second World War through the Global War on Terrorism. Living history exhibitions are also featured for conflicts as early as the French and Indian War. Admission is FREE. For more information visit www.trailofhonor.org or call (601) 372-5770.

MAY 25th Tuskegee Airmen Visit Camp Shelby (Museum)

9:00 am – Noon, Admission is FREE.
Meet and learn from four famed "Tuskegee Airmen" during their visit to Camp Shelby. The visiting Airmen include Lt. Col.(Ret) Leo R. Gray, Lt. Col.(Ret) Alexander Jefferson, Col.(Ret) Charles McGee and Lt. Col.(Ret) Herbert E. Carter, a native of Amory, Mississippi. These fighter pilots of the Second World War served in the all African-American 332nd Fighter Group.

MAY 28th 4th Annual Laying of the Wreaths (Museum grounds)

9:00 am – 10:30 am, Admission is FREE.
Join us for this solemn military ceremony that begins the Memorial Day weekend. The event honors the service of veterans of wars past and present as wreaths are laid ceremonially by active military personnel and veterans of past conflicts at each of the monuments on the Museum grounds.

MAY 30th(Sunday) Dutch Fliers Visit

9:00 a.m. until Noon, Admission is FREE
Dutch diplomatic and military officials, veterans and families of Dutch veterans of the Second World War will visit the Mississippi Armed Forces Museum on Sunday, 30 May 2010. The visit is part of an annual event to honor the "Dutch Fliers," pilots, aircrew and ground crew from the Netherlands that trained in Mississippi from 1942-45. Expected are the following: the Dutch consul from New Orleans, the Dutch war graves commissioner, senior Dutch military attachés from Washington and family members of Dutch World War II veterans.

MAY 31st (Memorial Day)

Museum Open 9:00 am – 4:30 pm

JULY 4th

Museum Open 9:00 am – 4:30 pm

A Soldier's Letters

by Christy J. Calhoun

There have been several very interesting acquisitions to the Museum archives in recent months. The family of Paul Eft, an Ohio native and veteran of the 85th Division, donated letters written while he was training at Camp Shelby in 1942 and 1943. The actual letters he wrote while he was here have been donated to the archive, along with the transcript of the rest of the letters he wrote while stationed in California, North Africa, and Italy. The letters offer a great account of what the average enlisted soldier experienced while training at Camp Shelby. He had some interesting things to say about Hattiesburg, as well! The museum very much appreciates the donation, which was made by David Eft on behalf of Paul Eft's seven children.

The upswing in research requests has kept the archive busy. If you have a family connection to Camp Shelby and are interested to learn whether or not the museum has any holdings related to your subject, please contact us! You can use the research request form on our website, or contact us via phone or email. We are happy to assist with your research. ■



Top: Paul Eft's letters written during his time at Camp Shelby during the Second World War; Above: (left to right) Christy J. Calhoun and Lisa Foster stand with David Eft and his father's letters

65th Division Reunion



The Museum welcomed attendees of the 53rd annual reunion of the 65th Infantry Division on February 23rd, 2010. As host, the 65th Infantry Division Association organized the reunion and brought veterans, wives and children of the 65th to tour the Museum after meeting in Biloxi, MS. Visitors were able to see a special exhibit highlighting the 65th Division and their exploits in the Second World War. COL Wallace B. Sanders, an irreplaceable supporter and founding member of the Museum, spoke before the assembled group. He thanked several people for their help with the 65th Division Association and also with making possible the Division's place in the Museum.



The 278th Deploys a Second Time

by Michael Rucker

On February 5th, a sendoff ceremony was held on the parade grounds at Camp Shelby for the 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment of the Tennessee National Guard. The 278th was the first unit to deploy from Camp Shelby during the Global War on Terror. This is their second deployment to Iraq since 2004. More than 3,000 soldiers stood in formation on the parade grounds as their families and friends came to wish them well.

Immediately following the sendoff, the Museum also held a dedication ceremony for the 278th's new monument. Joining a line of memorials of America's heroes, the new 278th monument stands as a testament to the 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment and their sacrifices in service of our country.

In attendance at the ceremony were Tennessee Governor Phil Bredesen, his wife, Andrea Conte, and MG Max Haston, Tennessee's Adjutant General. Gov. Bredesen spoke addressing the assembled soldiers. He said, "Nothing humbles me more than to serve as your commander in chief."

Camp Shelby has been responsible for the training of many of the units

deployed in America's defense at home and overseas since the First World War. From 2004 to the present, Camp Shelby has trained, deployed and demobilized more than 100,000 soldiers to fight in the Global War on Terror. ■



Across: At the dedication ceremony for the 278th ACR Monument, soldiers bow their heads during the benediction; Above: Soldiers of the 278th ACR in formation on the parade grounds at Camp Shelby

Calling All Artifacts!



Iraqi schematic of an AKM assault rifle

The Museum is seeking artifacts, photos and documents related to the Global War on Terror to augment its collection. If you have any items you are interested in bringing to the Museum's attention, please contact Lisa Foster at 601.558.2337 or at lisa.foster2@us.army.mil. And special thanks to COL Dennis Adams for his donation of a copy of the 2005 deployment yearbook.

Remembering Our Heroes

4th Annual Laying of the Wreaths

On May 28, 2010 at 9 a.m., please join the Museum in honoring the memory of Mississippi's soldiers, airmen, sailors, Marines and the many servicemen and women that have trained at Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center.



Membership

Armed Forces Museum Foundation

The Armed Forces Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) charitable organization dedicated to enhancing the future of the Museum through tax deductible contributions from veterans, present military personnel and friends of the Museum interested in preserving and promoting an appreciation of Mississippi military history. Your financial support of the Armed Forces Museum Foundation is

needed to enhance the operation of the Museum. The Mississippi Legislature is responsible for funding the salaries of the staff members and day-to-day administrative activities. The Armed Forces Museum Foundation supports the Museum's exhibits, artifact conservation requirements, educational programs and promotes the Museum to the general public.

The Armed Forces Museum Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) charitable organization created to support the institutional development of the Mississippi Armed Forces Museum.

MG William L. Freeman, Jr.

The Adjutant General

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in memory of
Reese H. "Coach" Snell

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in memory of
Reese H. "Coach" Snell

Ms. Helen Nicholson
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Honored Veterans Entries

Mr. Joe Blackledge
in honor of
SF3C John D. Blackledge

A full list of 2010 members will be printed in the Museum's fall/winter newsletter.