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# Museum ArtiFACTS

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National Guard Militia Museum of New Jersey

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## *Lawrenceville Annex on the Move....Caissons Keep Rolling Along*

**T**he caissons and cannon keep rolling in! During the past several months the Field Artillery Annex in Lawrenceville has acquired a 75mm gun, the same type of weapon the 112th Field Artillery Regiment was activated with in 1941. Also added to the collection is a World War II 155mm Long Tom, a Korean War vintage 75mm anti tank weapon, a second 75mm pack howitzer and a 105mm towed howitzer. Several more pieces of equipment are scheduled to become part of the Annex collection.

The Annex was donated a great model collection of World War II and post war tanks and weapons. The collection was built by SFC Charles I. Conover, a former member of HQ Battery 695th Armored Field Artillery Battalion. The collection was given to the 112 Field Artillery Association by his daughter, Mrs. Virginia Hartman of Jackson, New Jersey.

SFC Lew Enrico, a member of the 112 FA Association, volunteered his time to unpack, assemble and repair the collection of over 150 models. They are now on display in the old rifle range of the artillery armory. Lew is a model builder and he has given the Annex his M-60 tank collection.

The cannon repair shop is growing and weapons are being restored thanks to retired MSG David Morton and his sons, Dave Jr. and Frank. Also, every Tuesday and Friday the cannoneers Dave Horner, Jetta Bodix, Jim Carroll, Al Fink, and Bill Hutchinson are hard at work.

The larger weapons are in need of adoption by units or individuals to restore for display. Thus far, Co C 50th Main Support Battalion has adopted the Honest John launcher. Battery B 3/112th FA has adopted the 8" towed howitzer.

Finally, the Annex is the home of one of the best Grand Army of the Republic collections of Civil War records and memorabilia. COL Charles Larkin's group is assembling and displaying in a room next to the Field Artillery Annex. The group is at the armory every Tuesday.

## *Submarine Surfaces in Sea Girt ..... Civil War Era*

**A** large cast iron, cigar shaped structure is now on display at the museum. Some people say it looks like a torpedo and others a mouse, but it is really a submarine called The Intelligent Whale built in 1866. The submarine came to the museum from the Navy Historical Center at the Washington Navy Yard where it was housed for many years. Delivered on April 30th and with much maneuvering, to include a hole cut in the roof of the museum to get it in place, the Intelligent Whale sits on it's red cradle for all to see.

The submarine was designed by Scovill S. Merriam who contracted with Augustus Price and Cornelius Bushnell to build for \$15,000. In April 1864 the American Submarine Company replaced then and the building cost overran the initial estimate by 400%. This led to a series of lawsuits that led to a new owner, Oliver "Pet" Halsted.

The submarine carried four men who turned cranks attached to a four bladed propeller. It achieved a speed of four knots and held enough compressed air for ten hours. Two large ballast tanks connected to the air tanks and to the water surrounding the craft. A rudder and aft trim planes allowed the pilot to control the boat diving and surfacing. A short conning tower with bull's eyeglass provided the skipper with limited visibility while partially submerged. Other navigational aids included a depth gauge, compass and air pressure indicator.

Between 1866 and 1870 the Intelligent Whale had many successful unofficial and quasi-official trials, and the Department of the Navy had received favorable reports on them. Unfortunately Halsted's untimely death led to further delay and in 1872 the Navy evaluation board finally came to observe the tests.

The packing around the hatch was defective and the Intelligent Whale began taking on water. Then the tide pushed the boat under a derrick, which prevented her from surfacing. A group of workers freed the boat that by then was half full of water. She was classified a failure by the Navy!

The submarine remained at the Brooklyn Navy Yard until 1968 when it was move to the Navy Yard in Washington D.C. A recent visitor to the museum stated that when he was little he and his friends used to play on the Whale at the Brooklyn Navy Yard. Today at the museum you can look up at the insides of the submarine and only wonder what it would have been like to go underwater in a boat that is 29 feet long, nine feet high, and seven feet wide.

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## *Member's Day October 24th*

**T**he annual membership meeting of the National Guard Militia Museum of New Jersey will be held on Sunday, October 24, 1999, at 1000 hours in Patriots Hall, Building #26 at the National Guard Training Center in Sea Girt.

The annual meeting is open to all members, and you are urged to attend. It is a voting meeting for new Trustees and other issues. So, please make an effort to attend and make your voice heard in support of the museum.



Colonel Leonard Luzky will be the guest speaker at the meeting speaking on the lineage of the 113<sup>th</sup> Infantry, one of the nation's oldest militia units.

## Message From The President

**A**s summer wanes and the days grow shorter, there are still some exciting times at our museum. The excitement revolves around new locations, new opportunities, and new exhibits such as the Intelligent Whale at Sea Girt and the Long Tom Lawrenceville. Fall also brings our annual membership meeting, which this year will feature Colonel Leonard Luzky speaking on the lineage and history of New Jersey's 113<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, one of the nation's oldest militia units!

We need your help! Our National Guard Militia Museum of New Jersey, Inc. is a nonprofit organization that provides support to the maintenance of artifacts and operations of the museum. Your volunteer participation keeps the displays current and our doors open. Your dues and donations help provide materials and services to enhance our artifacts and exhibits. We need you to keep your dues current and to help us find new members. Remember, your donations are tax deductible.

The museum and its annexes in Lawrenceville and the Trenton War Memorial are exciting places for children to learn, military members to expand their knowledge, the curious to explore, and old soldiers to reminisce. Knowing that you fit one of these categories, I invite you to come and visit and share your time and gifts to help us become better.

Now, what is an Intelligent Whale you ask? Well, if you enjoyed watching the movie "The Hunley" this summer, you will enjoy our Whale – she is pretty smart looking!

## Ruch Exhibit at War Memorial

**W**hen the New Jersey War Memorial was rededicated last January, the National Guard Militia Museum of New Jersey War Memorial Annex was opened to members of the public. The exhibits broadly covered the New Jersey National Guard from the Revolutionary War to the present. One exhibit was made possible by a loan from Mr. John Baughman. It tells the story of CPT Alexander Frank Ruch, a member of 114th Infantry in World War I.

Born in Philadelphia in 1887, his family moved to Woodbury, New Jersey, where he was raised. Ruch enlisted in Company I, 3rd New Jersey Infantry in 1907 and by 1911 he was a sergeant. He was an expert rifleman and a long distance expert. He was a member of the 3rd New Jersey Infantry Rifle Team and member of the New Jersey State Rifle Team in 1915 and 1916.

Sergeant Ruch was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in 1913. He continued to serve with Company I until it was federalized along with the 5th New Jersey Infantry and reorganized into the 114th Infantry. He departed for France in June 1918 as a First Lieutenant in Company E, 114th Infantry. Soon after he was promoted to Captain and given command of Company E. After World War I, Ruch continued to serve in the New Jersey National Guard until 1925.

Throughout his life he continued to be an active member of the community, serving as post commander and charter member of the William Stokes-Bonsal American Legion Post in Woodbury. During World War II he worked in the New York Shipyard in Camden, New Jersey. Alexander Frank Ruch died in 1977.

Among items in the exhibit are his complete uniform, foot locker, photographs, pieces of trench art and personal effects. After the display is removed from the War Memorial, it will be housed in the new 114th Infantry Heritage Room in the Woodbury Armory, where Captain Ruch will stand as an example of a true citizen soldier and proud member of the 114th Infantry.

## Manasquan Medical Chest Yields a Treasure

**W**hen the Squan Village Historical Society lost their building to a fire a few years ago, a new site was needed. An old home on South Street in Manasquan was found for their new home. It was the residence of the Reed family, an old established family of Manasquan. While cleaning out the barn and attic the members found several items that were military in nature and called our museum. One of the items was a red medical chest belonging to the 102<sup>nd</sup> Cavalry, Roseville Avenue, Newark, New Jersey!

The contents of the chest resulted in the Turn of the Century Army Medicine exhibit now on display at the museum. Among the contents of the chest was a one pound box of cotton made by Johnson and Johnson dated to pre 1910; a bar of Ivory soap dated to between 1907 and 1917, based on a description of the wrapper; a veterinary kit made by Parke Davis dated to 1917. There were several types of unopened bandages, vials of iodine, catgut, and rubber gloves.

Other items in the exhibit include a World War I nurse in a uniform loaned to the museum from the Meadowlands Museum in Rutherford, the Boar War medical chest and some of its contents and a history of Army medicine at the turn of the century. And of course, the red medical chest is there too!

## Research Requests Provide Results

**I**f you recall from the last issue of Artifacts, requests for research come in all the time to the museum. Some of the findings do surprise the families, such as the Johnson family. COL George Johnson (Ret) came to the museum doing research on his grandfather and in doing so mentioned his brother, James who was in World War II. James was in the 114th Infantry and on his gravestone he is listed as a sergeant. However, COL Johnson stated that James had received a battlefield commission to a lieutenant, but no records ever could prove it, despite several attempts with Army records. Curator, CW4 McCabe showed COL Johnson a copy of *The Coastal Route of the 114th Infantry, Oct 18, 1944 to May 5, 1945, France, Germany, Austria*. COL Johnson expressed an interest but did not read it. A couple of days later he called and said he would like to look at it. So he came in and began to read.....in less than five minutes there was a loud whoop in the museum. It was COL Johnson with, "I don't believe it, here it is!" With tears in his eyes he pointed to his brother's name under a column titled "114th Infantry Battlefield Appointments." There in black and white was, "Promoted to 2nd Lt. 19 Dec.'44 - James J. Johnson."

Quickly a copy of the report was made for COL Johnson to share with his family. He finally had the proof he had been looking for and now the opportunity to have James' headstone corrected. COL Johnson was extremely grateful to the museum for assistance in finding information.

## *Cavalry Pieces Donated*

**S**everal artifacts were donated to the museum by Warren Hall of Hewitt, New Jersey. They are a collection of cavalry pieces dating as far back as 1300 BC. Yes, that's 1300 BC! With the assistance of Colonel (P) William J. Marshall III, the collection was delivered to the museum in April. Mr. Hall wished to donate the collection to a museum so that they would be displayed and preserved.

As a result, one display has been set up using artifacts from the Civil War. The items include a saddle shield found at the site of JEB Stuart's camp, caltrops, a soldier's shaving cup and razor, a civil war sword and horse bits made in Newark.

Another display is being prepared entitled "Cavalry Through the Ages." It is being done with the assistance of Colonel Warren Curd. Some of the artifacts will include a set of spurs from 300 BC, bronze horse bits from 1300BC, a Rose sword, and a donkey muzzle.

## *Tax Deductions !!*

**I**f you contribute money to the museum, pay your dues or travel to the museum as a volunteer or as a member of the Board of Trustees you may deduct the expenses from your income tax. The Board of Trustees is 501-C3 exempt organization that enables you to deduct your direct cost incurred for the museum. If however, you are a volunteer who is reimbursed for your travel expenses by the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs you may not deduct your expenses from your income tax.



## *History Channel Visits Sea Girt*

**O**n a hot day in July the National Guard Militia Museum of New Jersey had a very interesting visitor. It was the History Channel and they spent the day filming a documentary to be aired in November. The documentary will be about the history of the Jeep. And we have the Jeeps!

We have the Jeeps thanks to our display from Dan Janquitto. Dan owns most of the Jeeps we have on display, which will eventually show a model of every Jeep design made. Dan is the star of the documentary, but the museum will have credit lines, and shots outside.

Phillip Boag, of DTTV and his crew arrived early one morning and, after a long day of filming, completed the 43 minute documentary (the rest of the hour is commercial time). A set was put together outside by the static display where Dan was interviewed about his extensive knowledge of the Jeep. Several of the Jeeps were rolled outside by Stockton Lake so that film could capture their history.

The 250<sup>th</sup> Signal Battalion was doing a week of Annual Training at Sea Girt. They provided the latest "Jeep" for the documentary, the Highly Mobile Multi-purpose Wheeled Vehicle, or "HUMVEE." Rolling along on the hot pavement the latest "Jeep" passes by as the oldest "Jeep" comes into focus, thus completing the history of the "Jeep." Between these two vehicles is the history of one of the most versatile vehicles of the century.

The History Channel will be airing an hour documentary about the tank and an hour about the Jeep. The film crew spent time, the week before they came to us, at Fort Knox doing the tank documentary. Keep an eye out in your weekly television guide in November and watch the history of the tank and the Jeep!!!

## *An Artifact...*

**A**n incident with the 104th MPs stationed in Birmingham, Alabama, prior to going overseas in World War One, occurred during a night raid on a place that was, "...of a general vice resort, and the rendezvous of every sort of evil character." A detail of MPs was sent with the sheriff and chief of police on the raid. At the site was a civilian, a native of Anniston, who had a bad reputation. He was arrested and put in the custody of one Pvt. Nelson Kelly. After awhile the prisoner rose to stretch.

"Stretch anything but your legs," Kelly told him. "Oh, I ain't going to run away," said the prisoner, and with that took off across the fields. Kelly called twice to halt and getting no response fired. The prisoner ran in and out among the bushes not stopping even after Kelly fired two more times.

The next morning when the detail was returning back to camp they found the prisoner along the road with two bullet holes in his back. He was taken to the hospital in Anniston where he died the next day.

Now, Kelly was supposed to be a poor pistol shot, having not qualified at the range and his name was posted on the company bulletin board for failure to qualify as a marksman. The morning after the prisoner was shot, Kelly went up to the bulletin board, pointed at his name and said:

"Captain, don't you think you ought to take my name off this list now?"

***Volunteers Needed  
We Want You !!***

**D**ur volunteers continue to keep the museum open and running. At both Sea Girt and Lawrenceville volunteers are refurbishing equipment, setting up libraries, setting up displays and giving tours. At Sea Girt, the summer weekend volunteers enable the museum to be open to visitors. Their assistance is invaluable. However, there is always the need for a few more!

Volunteers are needed for painting both equipment and structure, sandblasting and weapons cleaning. A volunteer is needed for cataloging the large collection of photographs. Although letters have gone out to the units asking to adopt a vehicle to keep them in condition, volunteers still are needed to coordinate with the units and assist in the process.

There are many old soldiers out there who would like to tell their story! Volunteers are needed to take oral histories from these gentlemen and ladies, followed by volunteers to transcribe the oral history. A corps of volunteers is needed to assist with tours at the War Memorial in Trenton throughout the year.

If you have some time to spare there is something for you to do at Sea Girt or Lawrenceville. Call 732-974-5966 if you would like further information.

***Dues.....***

**A** reminder that the membership year begins in February and annual dues are due at that time. If you have not paid your 1999 dues yet please do so immediately. There is an indication next to your name if you have not paid yet this year.

The 1999 Annual dues are \$5.00 for individual, \$250 for life and \$1,500 for corporate. Beginning in February 2000 the individual dues will be \$10.00. Please make check payable to National Guard Militia Museum of New Jersey, Inc. and send to:

DMAVA  
101 Eggert Crossing Road  
Lawrenceville, New Jersey 08648  
ATTN: Ellen Fruscione

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**National Guard Militia Museum  
P.O. Box 277  
Sea Girt, New Jersey 08750-0277**