The dedication of the building for the new Nebraska National Guard Museum and the Air Guard Memorial “Prairie Trails” is set for Saturday, July 4th, 2015, at 10:00am. Check out all the details on the festivities in Seward to include a 1945 Bob Hope USO Show to kick off the weekend on Friday, July 3rd at 7:00pm.
Welcome to the New Museum!

It has been an exciting year of construction at the new Nebraska National Guard Museum in Seward. Dedication is scheduled for 10:00am on Saturday, July 4, 2015. This dedication will open the building to the public to witness the tremendous transformation that has happened to the 1956 armory. This has been a team effort to make sure the building is ready for the annual 4th of July festivities in Seward and the celebration of the 70th Anniversary of the end of World War II. The people of Seward will kick off the weekend on Friday night at 7:00pm with a World War II Extravaganza similar to a Bob Hope show to the troops back during the war. The museum is hosting an Open House from 8:00am-3:00pm on Saturday. The 10:00am dedication will feature two big events: ribbon cutting for the new building and dedication of “Prairie Trails” the Nebraska Air National Guard Memorial donated by Hughes Brothers in Seward. The public will get a chance to tour the new construction and will be impressed with the massive changes to the interior of the building. Rooms will have boards on easels explaining what the original use for the space, the changes to the space, and the final utilization of the space will be. Temporary exhibits from the State Arsenal will also be put up with a focus on the end of World War II. Come to Seward and check out the new building!

Our Mission:

To collect, access, preserve, store, account for, de-militarize, and value historical artifacts and records for training, development, and interpretation of the Nebraska Army and Air National Guard and the State of Nebraska military history and heritage of its citizen-soldiers and airmen. To educate and “tell the story” to the members of the Army and Air Guard and the general public about the heritage of the Nebraska National Guard in both peace and war.
1945 World War II Style Show

Did you know that Bob Hope did his first USO at March Field in California in 1941 in the months prior to Pearl Harbor? He is also the first and only honorary veteran of the US military.

Kicking off the 4th of July Weekend on Friday, July 3rd at 7:00pm at the Seward Band-Shell is a 1945 Bob Hope Show featuring the 43rd Army Band and a cast of civilian and military acts directed by Jessica Koltermann. The Free show is also showcasing the building dedication on the next day.
HealyKohler recently unveiled its concept drawings for Phase III exhibit construction. Some of the key design elements include a track system over the mail area to allow projection units to display on four of the shrouds, cubicle areas that followed chronological time periods in the history of the Nebraska National Guard. As you exit the “I Am the Guard” room you will see the December 23, 1854 Proclamation that is currently part of the collection at Yale University and is our founding document.

The Main Floor exhibits include several see-through cabinets that allow a patron to see older and modern history from one vantage point. The rooms are also equipped with touch screen displays that allow for a patron to retrieve more information if they desire. Several exhibits will be hung from the ceiling to include the 1911 Curtiss Model D over the temporary exhibit area and an Airborne Soldier above the Learning Center.

Above: Several pics of the main area and temporary exhibit and Learning Center areas of the museum.
Hedgerow Display to honor 134th In World War II

Taking a one dimensional print and making it into an interactive box display is what the new Nebraska National Guard Museum is attempting to do on a display about World War II. The Cornrow to Hedgerow display features the patron walking into a tactical operations tent prior to going into the hedgerows. Once in the hedgerows, the visitor will be bombarded with light, sound and other state of the art methods to enhance their experience. HealyKohler has designed the experience to give the patron and idea of how hard it was to fight in this type of terrain in World War II. The scene is based on a famous painting by Keith Rocco. The museum visitor will experience the frustration of not knowing where the enemy fire was coming from and being bombarded by the sounds of battle. Museum design utilized display technology from the National World War II Museum and the Museum of the Marine Corps. The Hedgerow exhibit is the most interactive display in the museum and it honors the courage and sacrifice of the men of Nebraska in WW II.

Right: Cornrow to Hedgerows print by Keith Rocco and commissioned for the National Guard Heritage Collection depicts the 134th Infantry in combat in July, 1944 near St. Lo, France. The museum is attempting to replicate portions of this print in a display on WWII.

Above: Picture of the hedgerow of France during WWII. Some of them formed natural tunnels that soldiers had to fight through.

Below: Workers put final prep work on the Hedgerow Room. It will house state of the art equipment to enhance the visitor experience.
Before visitors venture onto the main floor exhibits they will encounter a one of a kind display room at the museum. It is called the “I Am the Guard” room and will allow a person to experience the joining of the military, taking the physical and oath and the shock of basic training. The concept was that a person entering from the Learning Center or Theater would be a new recruit and follow the process of induction into the military. The sight of a large LED monitor with a drill instructor transitions the visitor to training and leadership development and eventual service in the Nebraska National Guard. The Wall of Faces also shows the many people who have served the organization since 1854.
Where we came from.....

In 1981, the Society opened up the State Arsenal as the Nebraska National Guard Museum. The driving force behind acquiring the building and founding the Society were men like James Sweetman and Larry Lade who inspired others to assist in the effort as the museum grew. The volunteers who gave untold numbers of hours behind the scenes to bring the museum to life during the State Fair. The over 11,000 artifacts that were collected over the years. The new museum owes this group a debt of gratitude for collecting and preserving the history from 1981 to 2009.

Memorial Day—2015

Memorial Day, originally called Decoration Day, is a day of remembrance for those who have died in service of the United States of America. Over two dozen cities and towns claim to be the birthplace of Memorial Day. While Waterloo N.Y. was officially declared the birthplace of Memorial Day by President Lyndon Johnson in May 1966, it’s difficult to prove conclusively the origins of the day. Regardless of the exact date or location of its origins, one thing is clear – Memorial Day was borne out of the Civil War and a desire to honor our dead. It was officially proclaimed on 5 May 1868 by General John Logan, national commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, in his General Order No. 11. “The 30th of May, 1868, is designated for the purpose of strewing with flowers, or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who died in defense of their country during the late rebellion, and whose bodies now lie in almost every city, village and hamlet churchyard in the land,” he proclaimed. The date of Decoration Day, as he called it, was chosen because it wasn’t the anniversary of any particular battle.

The first state to officially recognize the holiday was New York in 1873. By 1890 it was recognized by all of the northern states. The South refused to acknowledge the day, honoring their dead on separate days until after World War I (when the holiday changed from honoring just those who died fighting in the Civil War to honoring Americans who died fighting in any war).

It is now observed in almost every state on the last Monday in May with Congressional passage of the National Holiday Act of 1971 (P.L. 90 – 363). This helped ensure a three day weekend for Federal holidays, though several southern states have an additional separate day for honoring the Confederate war dead: January 19th in Texas; April 26th in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, and Mississippi; May 10th in South Carolina; and June 3rd (Jefferson Davis’ birthday) in Louisiana and Tennessee. (Source: www.memorialday.org)
April 1, 1951: All Nebraska Air National Guard units ordered to active military service for a twenty-one month period during the Korean War.

April 9, 1865: During the Battle at Fort Blakeley, Alabama, a young Victor Vifquan of the 97th Illinois and future Adjutant General of Nebraska, was cited for gallantry and eventually awarded the Medal of Honor for his exploits on this day.

April 16, 1916: Headline of the Omaha World Herald reads “Aviation Arm of Nebraska Guard Ready if Equipped”. At the time the state had an Aviation Corps (second in the nation) based in Fremont.

April 23, 1899: COL Stotsenburg and three other members of the 1st Nebraska were killed in a battle near Quingua during the Philippines Insurrection.

May 5-6, 1975: F4 Tornado hits Omaha and kills 3 and 133 injured. The Nebraska National Guard is called up to assist. This tornado still ranks as the 3rd costliest (over 1.1 billion) in US history.

May 12, 1944: 35ID departs New York Harbor for England. Included are: 134th INF, 110th MED, and 35th QM.

June 4, 1980: Grand Island “Nite of the Twisters” F1-F4 tornadoes, killed 6, National Guard called to assist in response.

Focus on…..Founding the Society and Museum

According to documents in the current museum storage room, the founding of the Nebraska National Guard Historical Society dates back to August 25, 1979. Colonel James Sweetman, G1, was one of the founding members of the Society, along with Larry Lade (retired LTC). The mission was to: 1.) collect, preserve, store, and display, forever, historical artifacts of military significance to this nation and to the state of Nebraska, 2.) document, research and publish historical manuscripts to inform Nebraskans of the historical significance and importance of military defense in this state and nation, 3.) promote interest, citizenship and patriotism among young people of school age in their national and state heritage. On that date, discussions were going towards acquiring the State Arsenal near the Devaney Center in Lincoln to be the home of the future museum. They started to collect over 11,000 objects from 1979-2009 that make up the present collection in storage in Seward. Sweetman and Lade surrounded themselves with a dedicated group of volunteers that helped acquire the artifacts and displays that culminated on September 3, 1981 ribbon cutting on the new Nebraska National Guard Museum at the State Arsenal. The Society focused its effort on prime tourism time which was during the Nebraska State Fair and the State Arsenal had a great location near the south entrance to the grounds. Other visitations were scheduled throughout the year to school groups. The best single day attendance was 2,914 in 1992 during the State Fair. The Museum saw an average of 10,000 visitors over the years (mostly during the State Fair). Volunteers did all the work of manning the Arsenal during the fair, designing and building displays, fundraising, etc… The Society and volunteers left many lasting memories for fair goers throughout the years. Comments in the registration books show a lot of people from around the state and country visited the museum and were impressed with the displays. The current Society and Museum wish to honor the men and women who kept the museum going and helping to tell the story of the
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Focus on Volunteers:

Hailey Krueger is a junior at Union College in Lincoln, NE majoring in Communications with an emphasis in Public Relations and Emerging Media, as well as a minor in French. She hopes to work more with nonprofit organizations improving their online media presence. Hailey also has a passion for videography and music. Hailey and her sister are interns and assisting the museum with social media projects to promote future events. Thank you so much for your work this summer!

Courtney Krueger is a senior at Union College in Lincoln, NE. Majoring in Communications emphasized in Public Relations and a minor in Marketing, she is hoping to join the Nebraska National Guard or start her own business after graduating. Courtney has a passion for animals, specifically exotic pets. Courtney and her sister are interns and assisting the museum with social media projects to promote future events. Thank you so much for your work this summer!

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More Pics from the Museum......

Staining the ceiling. Making the 1956 building look brand new.

Plumber working on piping below the main floor. So much infrastructure behind the scenes that needed to be completed prior to opening.

Front door going in. The front entrance is a double set of doors and an enclosed area with another set of double doors.

Painting in the Gift Shop. Painters finishing touch up work all around the museum.

Painting the shrouds. The shrouds will provide the canvas and screen for still and moving images when the museum opens.

Lights above the docent station. Museum has had extensive electrical upgrades and lights put in over the nine months.
Seward, 4th of July Schedule 2015

**Friday, July 3rd:**
7:00pm-1945 Bob Hope USO Show, Band-shell (corner of Jackson and 5th Street), free to public. Come enjoy an evening of entertainment with Bob Hope and his troupe as they go back to 1945 and the Anniversary of the end of World War II. The 43rd Army Band will be Les Browns’ Band for the evening with acts and music from the era provided by civilians and military members. Help kick off the 4th, celebrate the Greatest Generation, and get ready for the building dedication on Saturday.

**Saturday, July 4th:**
8:00am—Family Fest activities on the west parking lot of the museum provided by the Nebraska National Guard. Come enjoy family activities to start the morning. Open House walk through of the building. Check out the new interior and look over plans for the future museum.
10:00am—Building Dedication and Air Guard Memorial Ribbon Cutting in front of the museum (201 N. 8th Street). South Jackson will be blocked off and seating is limited. Come see the ribbon cutting for the new building that will house the new Nebraska National Guard Museum in the future. Hughes Brothers will dedicate “Prairie Trails” the new Air Guard Memorial in front of the museum. Open House until 3:00pm.
1:00pm—World War II Veterans Reception at Harvest Hall. Chance to meet and greet with veterans. Enroll them in future interviews for the Veterans History Project. Stage and prepare them for the bus ride in the parade.
4:00pm—Parade. Will include historic Jeeps and modern equipment from the Nebraska National Guard. Honoring the Greatest Generation on the 70th Anniversary of the End of World War II. Parade route details on www.julyfourthseward.com.
The Nebraska National Guard Historical Society and Museum Staff Wish to Thank These Fine Businesses for Their Part in Phase I and II of Construction
We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude for your interest in applying for membership in the Nebraska National Guard Historical Society, Inc.

We further provide the following information in order to qualify this document as a true attestation that the donations received will be used for purely non-profit purpose(s), in our capacity as a 501(c)(3) charitable or non-profit organization.

Name:__________________________________________________________
Address:_________________________________________________________
City/State/Zip:____________________________________________________
E-Mail:__________________________________________________________

Applicant’s Signature:_________________ Today’s Date:__________________

☐ Individual Lifetime $250.00 ☐ Organizational Lifetime $250.00
☐ Individual Annual $30.00 ☐ Annual Family $60.00
☐ Family Lifetime $500.00 ☐ Check

This section to be filled out by the applicant and retained by the NNG Historical Society for their records

This section to be filled out by a NNG Historical Society Officer and returned to the applicant for their tax records

Name of Applicant___________________________________________________
Type of Membership: ☐ Individual Lifetime ☐ Organizational Lifetime
☐ Individual Annual ☐ Annual Family ☐ Family Lifetime

NNG HISTORICAL SOCIETY WITNESSING OFFICER ____________________________
SIGNATURE __________________________ Date ___________________________

This document is a true attestation that the donations received for purely non-profit purpose(s), of a 501(c)(3) charitable or non-profit organization.
The Nebraska National Guard Historical Society, Inc. expresses its heartfelt gratitude to you for donations to our “Square Foot Program”. Be one of the first to own a piece of the Nebraska National Guard Museum. Your donation of $500 per square foot will help establish a magnificent learning environment for many future generations to come.

We further provide the following information in order to qualify this document as a true attestation that the donations received will be used for purely non-profit purpose(s), in our capacity as a 501(c)(3) charitable or non-profit organization.

Number of Square Foot Requested _____ x $500 = Total___________

☐Cash Amount____________________________
☐Check Amount__________________________Check Date_____________________________
Check No._____________________________________________________Bank Branch________________________

Signed________________________________________________________
NENG Historical Society Treasurer

This section to be filled out by the applicant and retained by the NNG Historical Society for their records

This section to be filled out by a NNG Historical Society Officer and returned to the applicant for their tax records

Name of Applicant___________________________________________________________
Type of Membership:  ☐  “Square Foot Program”.

NNG HISTORICAL SOCIETY WITNESSING OFFICER ________________________________________________
SIGNATURE ___________________________________________________________ Date_________________

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In Memoriam…..

Thank you to the family of the late Herb Folkerts, Korean War veteran and museum volunteer, on the patriotic decorations, United States Flag, the military trophies for the car show.