Before Charles Lindbergh and Billy Mitchell……there was Ralph McMillen of the Nebraska National Guard. Check out his story on page 9.

Roger Barganier of Creative Arts Unlimited and star of the History Channel show “Museum Men” visited the museum to discuss plans and exhibits for the 1913 Curtiss Model D “Pusher” and the story of CPT Ralph McMillen. The Museum enjoyed hosting him at several events at the museum and in Seward. More on this story on page 4.
The first quarter of 2015 is now behind us, but what a quarter! The Society staff conducted our first “State of the Museum” briefing to MG Daryl Bohac on January 8th and set our objectives for 2015. During the third week of January David Petersen, Jerry Meyer, Allen Bragg, Cody Cade, Ken Meyer, and myself escorted three WWII Japanese machine guns that went on permanent loan to the National World War II museum in New Orleans, LA. Upon our arrival, the museum staff rolled out the red carpet and we spent an entire day interacting with their various department heads and senior leadership to help us further develop our processes and procedures for both the Nebraska National Guard Historical Society and the museum. Because of generous contributions by both Cattle and Jones Banks located in Seward, NE at the end of 2014, the Society was also able to initiate display design work with our selected architectural firm Healy Kohler Design out of Washington, DC. A 3-day initial design summit was held during the first week of February and our second design meeting will be held during the first week of April. Later in February, we were visited by Roger Bargainer, from the History Channel show “Museum Men”. Roger’s visit was to not only potentially scout for a future episode shot of his show, but to also market his company as a possible future general contractor to manage the display construction and installation in the near future. We were also honored to host Ms. Sarah Polak, curator for the Mari Sandoz High Plains Heritage Center located in Chadron, NE during the last week of January. She facilitated a 4-day volunteer training program on the proper handling, repair, cleaning, and tracking of artifacts. March marked our second year that the Society’s Outreach and Education Committee collaborated with the University of Nebraska – Kearney by conducting five adult continuing education classes. The Society staff taught classes covering different aspects of World War II – Blitzkrieg Operations, The Pacific War Campaign, Music of WWII, Propaganda Art of WWII, and a Photojournalists tour of the European Theater with well over 300 students attending our five classes. The museum currently has four interns contributing their time and skills since the beginning of the year (two from Concordia College and two from Union College) and the Society ended the first quarter with over 1,117 volunteer hours generously completed by our ever growing host of volunteers. The second quarter will be just as busy with the ongoing renovation of the main level of the building, the installation of the 70th anniversary of the Nebraska Air National Guard memorial which was generously donated by Hughes Brothers of Seward, the Society will be hosting a WWII USO show on the evening of Friday, July 3rd at Seward’s band shell with the Nebraska Army National Guard’s 43rd Army Band providing the music that evening, and we will culminate the quarter with the rededication of the Seward armory into the Seward Museum with a ribbon cutting ceremony at 10:00 AM on Saturday, July 4th. As always, I want to thank each and every one of you that have donated your time, your treasure, and your support to the Museum.
Progress on the Museum

This last quarter has seen a lot of progress on the main floor. Framing and dry wall has transformed the main exhibit area, learning center and temporary exhibit area. The alcove design has really provided the main floor with light reduction and doubled the amount of display space above the floor. The alcoves are multi-function and have added a lot to the floor plan. The HVAC system is another behind the scenes project. The exhibit area has to be held at a constant temperature and humidity level. A new fire suppression system has been installed and is the top of the line dry system. Electrical work has upgraded all the inner circuits and lights and data ports. Plumbing has installed all new restroom fixtures and modernized the 1950’s era equipment. The humidity control system in the boiler room has been modernized to help control the amount of moisture coming into the building. Brick work has matched the 1950’s work and provides a seamless look from old to new. The museum staff wants to thank Lacey Construction and all the sub contractors for all the work to get the museum ready for the 10:00am, Saturday, July 4, 2015, dedication.

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.

“Fairbury Tank” at Seward County Government Day events in Seward.

Bringing in dry wall for the museum.

Brick work around the new double door entrance.
Roger Barganier, Creative Arts Unlimited Inc., and star of the History Channel hit show “Museum Men” visited the museum to discuss plans for the Curtiss Model D “Pusher” and to look at progress. Roger was given a tour of the facility and was shown the plans for the plane by Marc Forrester and Byron Diamond. He was also given an office call with the Adjutant General, MG Daryl Bohac, and the Assistant Adjutant General, BG Richard Dahlman. Roger was also the guest of Chuck and Jan Matzke for an evening meal and social at their home. The citizens of Seward rolled out the red carpet to make his stay a memorable one. Great to see all the people come to the museum to meet and greet. The status of season 2 of the “Museum Men” is still not known. Thank you to Roger and all who helped out with the visit.

Austin Van Velson gives Roger an Apple Pie from the ladies of Seward.

Roger talks with Major General David Petersen about the plans and exhibits for the museum.
National World War II Museum Visit

Sponsored by the Berry Law Firm of Lincoln, six members of the Society made the trip to New Orleans to deliver Japanese weapons to the National World War II Museum and to meet with directors and staff to discuss museum issues. The group stopped in Jackson, MS, for lunch and a visit with Dawn Higgins Murphy (daughter of Nebraska National Guardsman Andrew Jackson Higgins). The delegation met with Tom Czekanski, curator and display director for the museum. The group signed over the weapons and toured the warehouse and discussed possible ideas for loans in the future. The group was given a one-on-one with the major directors in the Higgins Conference Room. A lunch at the American Café VIP room with Stephen Watson, vice president of the museum. Meeting with Dr. Nick Mueller on the deck of PT-305 in the restoration bay. The delegation was hosted by Lucky Dogs CEO Jerry Strahan at their corporate HQ down the street from the museum. Thank you to Berry Law Firm and all the great people at the museum!

Join the Nebraska National Guard Historical Society today! Help us to preserve and tell “our story” for future generations.

Application form on page 13.
HealyKohler Design to do Exhibits for Museum

Terrence Healy and Alex Solecki from HealyKohler Design in Maryland came out to Seward to work up 30% design plans on the exhibits for the museum. HealyKohler has extensive work in museum design (see website) and has won numerous honors for display work. Terry and Alex spent three days on the ground in Nebraska and checked out the museum in Seward, Ashland training site and the boxing arena, SAC Museum and Cabela’s. At the end of the three days, the architects offered up preliminary drawings to turn into a 30% design for April. The museum staff was very happy with the overall preliminary design as it took into account the learning center theme of the museum. Terrence Healy will be back out to Seward in early April to present the concepts and provide the museum with 3D drawings to take on fundraising trips. The museum is excited to be working with HealyKohler design and look forward to Phase III design and creation of the exhibits.

Thank You Berry Law Firm for Sponsoring Trip

The Nebraska NG Museum staff would like to thank the Berry Law Firm of Lincoln for sponsoring the trip to the National World War II Museum in New Orleans. The delegation from Nebraska delivered Japanese Machine Guns to the museum for its’ Road to Tokyo exhibit to open later this year. The group brought back several items to present to the law firm as a thank you. The signed World War II print was presented to John Berry, Sr. and John Berry, Jr. at the firm's location in Lincoln. On hand to make the presentation were Byron Diamond, Ken Meyer and Chuck Matzke. The group was given signed copies of “Those Gallant Men” authored by John Berry, Sr. The law firm is a great supporter of veterans and the museum in Seward.
Where we came from.....

Check out the history that is in our communities where the Nebraska National Guard has an armory or readiness center. The Columbus Readiness Center is on the east side of town off Highway 30. The historian was there to look at the history displayed and stored and to make an assessment on what needs to be reproduced for the museum. Columbus did an excellent job of displaying past history and protecting the history of the National Guard from its training at the city auditorium to the “new” armory in 1956 to the current ultra-modern readiness center in 2011. The city of Columbus is home to Andrew Jackson Higgins who served in the Millard Rifles and went on to fame in WWII. The historian stopped and visited Duo-Lift Mfg where the Higgins Boat that is going to Utah Beach in France is being prepared for shipment. Great to see our history on display in Columbus, the “City of Power and Progress”.

The Congressional Medal of Honor

Private Francis W. Lohnes, Company H, Nebraska Veteran Cavalry. Born: 1840 in New York. Died: 1889 buried in Maple Grove Cemetery in Falls City, Nebraska

For action at Gilman’s Ranch, 3 miles southwest of present day Gothenburg. The four troopers of Company A, Nebraska Volunteer Cavalry were from Smith’s Ranch when they were attacked by 30 Lakota Sioux while returning with supplies. SGT Hiram Creighton was killed in the attack and the Sioux took off with 30 head of cattle. Another detachment of cavalry from Company H near Midway Station about 10 miles away was out gathering wood near Gilman’s Ranch. They came upon the scene and were able to save the three remaining troopers from certain death. The defensive stand allowed the troopers to return to Smith’s Ranch. In the fight, Private Francis Lohnes was wounded twice and was at times surrounded by Indians. He was cited for gallantry in protecting government property in the face of overwhelming numbers of hostiles. He was promoted to corporal and awarded the Medal of Honor on July 24, 1865, at Smith’s Ranch. A few weeks after the ceremony he deserted upon hearing of his stationing to Fort Sedgwick near Julesburg. He returned to his farm in Richardson County. We was scalded to death in a thresher accident in 1889. His charge of desertion was dropped enabling his widow to have his small pension. He becomes the only soldier/trooper from a Nebraska regiment who received the Medal of Honor as a result of action within the state.
Anniversaries

1 April 1951: 173rd activated for federal service during Korean War.

4 May 1980: Air Guard makes its first overseas deployment to Eskisehir Air Base, Turkey.

6 May 1975: National Guard called to Omaha in response to F4 tornado that killed 3 and wounded 133 and was on the ground for 28 miles.

12 May 1865: PVT Frances Lohnes is involved in a battle with Lakota Sioux near Gilman’s Ranch in Nebraska and is awarded the Medal of Honor (see story on page 7)

21 May 1991: elements of the 24th MED start arriving back from Desert Storm

25 May 1944: 134th entered the ETO upon arriving in England during WWII.

June 3, 1980: National Guard called up in response to the Grand Island tornadoes which killed 5 and wounded over 200.

18 June 2014: National Guard responds to twin F4 tornadoes that destroyed Pilger, NE, killing 2.

The Nebraska National Guard Historical Society

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Nebraska Military Retiree Council

One Square Foot Campaign:
David C. Petersen
A Nebraska Airman: Ralph McMillen

CPT Ralph McMillen (1889-1916) was probably the best known aviator in America before World War I. In 1913, he joined the Fremont Signal Unit and brought with him from Iowa a Curtiss Model D “Pusher” that he purchased for $6,000 (which would be equivalent to over $150,000 today). He was part of an effort by senior leaders in the state of Nebraska to try and promote aviation. McMillen became part of the Nebraska Aviation Corps in 1915 and under the guidance of Brigadier General Philip Hall, the Adjutant General, McMillen flew around to promote aviation and experiment with new concepts being explored in the early stages of the Great War in Europe. McMillen flew around the country to fairs and donated his earnings to the Aviation Corps to raise funds for more aircraft and trained crews. He experimented with the first aerial photographing with a crude box camera. He also worked with leadership to develop and drop specially designed bombs on unsuspecting residents in street cars in Lincoln to test theories about aerial bombardment years before Billy Mitchell. McMillen developed skills for night navigation and the use of lights on the aircraft. He also utilized the aircraft to deliver messages in war games and scout enemy positions to inform leadership in cities around Nebraska. Later, McMillen traded his “Pusher” for a Curtiss JN-4 “Jenny” and continued to fly around the country to promote aviation importance before the U.S. entered World War I. On September 2, 1916, in St. Francis, Kansas, he was killed when his plane crashed. He is buried in his hometown of Perry, Iowa. The new Nebraska National Guard Museum in Seward would like to honor the “World’s Greatest Aviator” with a full scale replica of the Curtiss Model D hanging from the ceiling above the temporary exhibits. The cost of the replica is around $85,000 and would need to be sponsored by individuals or corporations with an interest in aviation history.
State of the Museum Brief to TAG

The Nebraska National Guard Historical Society is required by Society by-law to brief the Adjutant General once a year on the State of Museum. In January, the Society gathered to brief Major General Daryl Bohac on the museum. Byron Diamond, Society President, gave the brief and answered questions from the General. Society members were also present to answer any questions in their respective areas. The General brought up many positive comments regarding the museum business plan and the goals for the future. LTC Shane Martin, CFMO, was also present to brief the General on current and future plans of construction. The General was given a tour of the Phase I and II areas of construction. This was his first look at the amount of construction that has been completed since the Phase II contract was awarded to Lacey Construction in October, 2014. MG Bohac commented on how important the museum was to “tell our story” and to keep up the great work.

Focus on Volunteers:

Sean Berry is a senior at Concordia University. He is studying History and is a pre-seminary student. His focus has been American history. He is an intern at the museum. Dr. John Hink is his advisor. Sean has been very busy with cataloging and helping input data into PastPerfect. His future plans are to attend Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri, in the fall of 2015. The museum is so glad to have Sean helping this past semester….good luck in the future!

Lisa Holmgren is a junior at Concordia University. She is majoring in history. Emphasis on American History. She is an intern at the museum. Dr. John Hink is her advisor. Lisa is very busy with cataloging artifacts and entering data into PastPerfect. Her future plans are to work in a museum after graduation. If given the opportunity, she would enjoy coming back and working at the museum. We are really glad to have Lisa helping out this past semester…..good luck in the future!
More Pics from the Museum……

Light coming in from windows…..soon to be covered with alcove shrouds

Snow coming down…..

Cutting out south exit

Erin and Mike moving 10K LB pound….wow….you guys are so strong!

Cutting brick to start the day

Major General Petersen and Colonel Bragg at the National World War II Museum discussing exhibits.

Ken checking out the 1940’s style soda fountain at the National WWII Museum in New Orleans

Portrait of Andrew Jackson Higgins in the conference room of the National WWII Museum

Mike and Cody volunteering in the arms room on cleaning weapons

Denise Diamond working on picture frames on a volunteer day

Front sidewalk going in.

Olivia and Sarah working on artifacts on a volunteer day.
Thank you for your Support!

Social Media Interns Help Museum

Courtney and Hailey Krueger are students at Union College in Lincoln. They are part of an internship to study the use of social media to promote the museum. The students showed the museum staff the outreach of Facebook to certain age groups and suggested utilizing Twitter and Instagram to get at younger audiences. They will assist the museum in reconfiguring the website to provide the user with easier access to data. The museum staff is glad to have Courtney and Hailey helping out with social media.

ON FACEBOOK!
We are exploring Instagram and Twitter Website—Under Construction

Courtney and Hailey work over details on Facebook page for the museum.
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.

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