The Adjutant General, Major General Daryl Bohac, speaks at the dedication of the new Nebraska National Guard Museum Building in Seward, Nebraska.

Grand opening of the museum building on July 4, 2015. Great weekend of events. Read about the Bob Hope style show that kicked off the weekend, building and dedicating of “Prairie Trails” in front of the museum, the dedication of the building and the record setting crowd that toured the facility. The museum has built up tremendous momentum to push exhibits and displays for dedications in 2016 and 2017.
From the Historian....

What a great July 4th weekend to celebrate the nation's most patriotic holiday and dedicate the new Nebraska National Guard museum building! The Museum saw a record one day attendance to view the $3 million dollar restoration of the 1956 armory into a state of the art facility for the storage and exhibition of our vast collection. The museum staff wishes to thank CFMO, BVH Architects, Lacey Construction for the team effort to get the project done in 9 months and ready to dedicate on July 4th. So many volunteers worked behind the scenes to make all the events successful. The crew that worked with Hughes Brothers to put in Prairie Trails in front of the museum worked under weather delays to finally get it put in a week before the building dedication. Great to see so many people come together to help. The Bob Hope style Show really provided a momentum builder for the weekend. Thanks to all that helped put that 1945 show on at the city band shell. With the successful dedication of the building, the momentum is on our side to build out the displays for the next several years. Working with the Fourth of July Committee in Seward, the themes have been set to help the museum achieve those goals. As the displays and exhibits are built we can celebrate our heritage and history at the new and the most state of the art facility in the Nation Guard Museum system.

NNGHS Mission Statement:

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.
Record Crowd Visits Museum

Following the dedication ceremony on July 4th, a crowd of 3,873 visited the new Nebraska National Guard building. This broke the 1992 record of 2,981. The crowd put over $1,000 in donations in the box for the Nebraska National Guard Historical Society. Volunteers assisted in giving informational tours on the future displays and exhibits. Each room had a board that showed the before and after construction and what the future construction will look like. The museum staff had temporary displays on hand to showcase some of the items from the State Arsenal. Some of the new items that were donated since moving to Seward were also shown. The crowd was especially pleased with the Prairie Trails artwork in front of the building.

TAG and Mayor Unveil New Sign

The 1956 Armory was dedicated in February, 1957 in Seward. The old plaque hangs proudly on the restored building. A new plaque is now hanging next to that one at the front entrance. The Adjutant General, MG Bohac and the Seward Mayor Josh Eickmeier unveiled the new plaque at the ceremony on July 4th.
Hughes Brothers Unveil “Prairie Trails”

John Hughes, president and CEO of Hughes Brothers in Seward, spoke at the dedication about the pride that his company had in designing and building “Prairie Trails” for the museum. He talked about how the idea formed from a young Air Force ROTC cadets’ statement about the Thunderbirds formation and how to configure the arms coming from the prairie grass. Larry Vandergriend and his group of engineers at Hughes were able to scale down the monument to fit perfectly in the front circle of the museum.

A great surprise came after unveiling the plaque for the memorial when Phil Bangert of the Seward Art Council presented John and the Hughes Brothers employees with the Mayor’s Art Award for 2014-15 for “Prairie Trails”. Thank you to Hughes Brothers!

Mayor’s Art Award for “Prairie Trails” is presented to John Hughes from Phil Bangert.
Volunteers Helping the Museum

So much to do as the dedication date approached. Volunteers saved the day to help make the dedication a huge success. So many volunteered to set up displays, wash and clean the outside, hang bunting, set up for the dedication program, provide a unique look at the facility before the exhibits are built for 2016 and 2017. The Museum wishes to thank all that helped make the dedication a huge success!

The Museum would like to thank the news crews that stopped out on July 4th. The first interviews started at 5:30am and went all day long. Great coverage across the state.

CHECK OUT THE WEBSITE: WWW.NNGHS.ORG

Ken and Ron putting up bunting out front

Lisa cleaning up display cases

Ron power washing the front

Darin setting up for the dedication

The Teegerstrom clan helping out

Cody and his gang setting up displays

Harry Barr flying his UH-1 Huey over the dedication crowd on July 4th. What a way to kick off the show!
“Prairie Trails” Memorial

The “Prairie Trails” 70th Anniversary of the Nebraska Air National Guard Memorial sits proudly in front of the museum. Its creation was a story of volunteerism that is the trademark of Nebraskans. Hughes Brothers of Seward designed and created the soaring pillars under the guidance of Larry Vandergriend and his engineer group. The Museum wishes to thank all at Hughes Brothers on the creation of the memorial. A special group of volunteers also worked behind the scenes to help erect the memorial. Volunteers, along with the city of Seward, dug the footings. Concrete and labor was donated to put the plates in for the footings. Dave Geis and his crane along with Hughes and Geis employees placed the arms. Landscaping rolled in right as the memorial was being completed. Just in time for the 4th. Fantastic work! Thank you!

Hughes Brother employees marking
Larry and city crew helping
Mark helping dig out holes

Photo’s of Volunteers helping to put in “Prairie Trails”, thank you to all who helped make this a success.
Bob Hope Style Show a Great Success

Bob Hope entertained the service members again just like 1945. Lieutenant Colonel Craig Strong put on a masterful performance as the late entertainer in front of a crowd of 600 at the Seward municipal band shell on July 3rd. The night featured the local Kiwanis Kitones, the fabulous 43rd Army band, and other local acts. The director of the production was Jessica Koltermann who coordinated between the acts in Seward and the military in Lincoln. The show was full of local talent and was assisted by volunteers that helped with sound and programming. A great chance to highlight the talents from around the state. Looking forward to the July 2nd, 2016 show!

Check out the website: www.nnghs.org

Blast From the Past...

Bob Hope and Frances Langford entertain the troops (Thank you to Craig Strong and Pam Shively).

The Andrew Sisters sing “Don’t Sit Under the Apple Tree”

Thank you Jay and all the volunteers for helping make the USO style show a huge success. Really appreciate the great help!
Remembering…..Kenneth Knott of David City. On a training flight out of Alpena, Michigan in 1966, his RF-84 suffered a catastrophic mishap and his body was never recovered. His widow, JoAnn Weaver, loaned artifacts and memento’s of his life to the museum recently. His memorial marker is at the St. Marys’ Catholic Cemetery in David City.

The Seward 4th of July Committee and Museum

The Seward Fourth of July Committee meets once a month to plan and execute the annual 4th of July activities for the city. The committee has developed themes for the next two years for planning:

1. 2016: Aviation in Nebraska (supporting the 100th year of NENG Aviation)
2. 2017: NE150 Celebration (150th Anniversary of NE Statehood)

This provides the museum with some guidance on the overall 4th of July activities for the next few years. Museum display and exhibit plans can focus on aviation related (Army/Air) for the museum opening in 2016. Plans for 2017 will be all the remaining ground and special exhibits.

The museum can open for patrons following the 2016 dedication on a Monday-Friday, 8:00am to 6:00pm schedule and focus on education programs and completing the remaining exhibits and displays. The 2017 dedication and completion of exhibits will allow the museum to expand days/hours to allow for weekend visitors and tours. Education programs during 2017-18 school year will focus on Department of Education standards and the museum can assist students in completing the requirements.
With the next two years mapped out for the 4th of July in Seward, the museum has the ability to utilize the momentum created by the events surrounding the 4th. Aviation in Nebraska is the theme of July 4, 2016. We have a display/exhibit in the replica of the Curtiss Pusher that will hang above the temporary exhibit area in the front of the museum. The story of Captain Ralph McMillen “The World’s Greatest Aviator” needs to be told right away in the front of the building. This is an Army/Air project that celebrates the creation of an Aviation Corps in 1915 and pushed Nebraska to the forefront of aviation technology spearheaded by McMillen. The Museum has an opportunity to work on a restoration of an RF-84 like the type flown by Captain Kenneth Knott in 1966 when he disappeared over Lake Michigan. Whatever project that is approved, the Museum and the Society can work together to help fund and build out. The theme of aviation will incorporate both Army and Air entities.

With the NE150 year coming up in 2017, the Museum can work on finishing up all the ground displays and special exhibits to tie in with the anniversary of Nebraska statehood. Cornerstone exhibits like the 1854 Proclamation from the Yale University Library, the Cornrows to Hedgerows room, unveiling the main room exhibits, etc…

How do we get there? The Museum is a state of the art facility and we need to build out impressive displays and exhibits to go into the building. Each display or room has an estimated cost for production. Donors, both corporate and private, need to be asked to help with the cost of the displays in return for naming rights and advertising. Some donors bring talents to create items for the museum. Members of the Society will work with the Nebraska National Guard to secure funds to build the exhibits and displays.

How can you help? Everyone has a story to tell about the Nebraska National Guard. Our best resources are the retiree’s and the networks they’ve created. We need that group to help the Museum find and locate the resources to build for 2016 and 2017.
Sponsors

Thank you for all your support

Higgins Memorial on Utah Beach

Andrew Jackson Higgins of Columbus, Nebraska (NENG Member and WWII Industrialist) now has a memorial to him and the soldiers who rode his famous landing craft ashore on Utah Beach in France. Representative Fortenberry and a delegation from Columbus were on hand on June 6, 2015 for the dedication of the memorial. Mr. Higgins served in the Nebraska National Guard and later helped the United States military during World War II with his unique landing craft. The memorial features the same elements at the Andrew Jackson Higgins Memorial in Columbus: a Higgins Boat landing craft, soldiers exiting, a statue of Higgins overlooking a real Higgins Boat at the Utah Beach Museum. The French moved a memorial at the causeway to allow the placement of the Higgins Memorial.
More Pics from the Museum……

VFW Auxiliary sponsored tour of the museum and memorials in Columbus and Norfolk.

Adjutant General, MG Bohac, thanking employees of Hughes Brothers for their support of museum.

Morning shot of the front of the museum.

The Museum Jeeps escorting the World War II Veterans in the parade.

Fairbury Tank wins award at the 4th of July Parade!

CSM Valenzuela stops in on his Victory Tour around the state.
More Pictures from the 4th of July Weekend….

Bob Hope rehearsing with 1SG Lewis of the band

43rd Army Band “Pride of the Nebraska National Guard”

The Ark Brothers—Clark and Mark singing

The Andrew Sisters singing to a packed venue

MG (Ret) Roger Lempke and MG Bohac after the dedication.

Ribbon Cutting at the front entrance of the Museum.

3,873 people toured the facility on July 4th….a record!

Jeeps lined up to escort the World War II veterans in the parade.
Education and the Museum

The museum was host to Mr. Harris Payne on September 2, 2015. His visit was to discuss Social Studies Standards and application for the museum. Strategies and “way aheads” were the discussed before meeting with local teachers and setting up Learning Center visits to the Museum.

Before his visit, museum staff reviewed the Social Studies Standards adopted by the state in 2012. There is no set test for Social Studies unlike Math, Science and Language Arts. The standards all contain perspectives in History, Geography, Civics and Economics.

Mr. Payne was given a tour of the facility and was very impressed with the Learning Center and the focus on education. His first point was to design lessons to utilize the perspectives in other curricular areas such as Science, Language Arts, and Math. This cross over into other areas will create “buy in” with school administrators to support resources to get students to the museum.

One of the best examples of this approach was a program called ArcGIS. The online system allows the student to create Storyboards to enhance curricular outcomes. There is a zero cost for site license within the schools. The Storyboards utilize all areas of education to create stories. The approach would work well in the museum in telling the human side of our history. Website: http://storymaps.arcgis.com/en/

He also shared the Stanford History Education Group (SHEG) which is a California based organization that assists with curriculum and resources to assist students with activities. Example of this would be Beyond the Bubble which is used in Lincoln Public Schools.

Another strength that he noted was the ability of Seward to promote civic education at the community level. He talked about how Columbus embraced Service Learning education in the creation of the Andrew Jackson Higgins National Memorial in 2000-2003. Seward and the surrounding schools promote civic responsibility and the museum can take on a role in Service Learning education.

His visit produced many notes to action. The ability to ask experts in the field of education (from Concordia to UNL) to assist the museum in providing students with an opportunity to learn outside the walls of the school.

The museum would like to thank Mr. Payne for the visit!
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
☐ Cash ☐ 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

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

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.